

SPOKANE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

May 26, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

City Hall, 808 W Spokane Falls Blvd. Lower level, City Council Briefing Center

Commissioners present: Barbara Ann Bonner, Skyler Oberst, Blaine Stum, Kitara Johnson, Ronald Toston

Commissioners absent: Lisa Rosier, Jamie SiJohn

Also present: John Lemus, Jonathan (NFHA), and Donald.

Facilitator: Blaine Stum, chair

Minutes: Blaine Stum

Call to order by Comm. Stum, 5:30pm

- 1) Quorum established.**
- 2) Guests welcomed.**
- 4) Minutes from the April meeting were reviewed and approved without revision.**

Follow-up Business

1) Electing a Secretary: As Andrea was already taking notes, she suggested she may be able to do it. The Commission agreed to this.

2) Priority Policies: Commissioner Oberst briefed the full commission on the progress of the Gender and Race Pay Equity Task Force. He noted that they are currently finalizing the list of participants and getting together meeting materials, etc.

Commissioner Stum said that the Earned Sick and Safe Leave Workgroup had its last meeting and would now be waiting for staff to finalize the documents and recommendations that emerged.

2) Police Militarization Letter #2: Working to respond to Police Militarization letter by Chief Straub.

4) Letter to CHHS regarding LGBT Homelessness: Commissioner Stum said he was still trying to get a meeting with representatives of the CHHs Board, but had received no response. He said that he would likely be sending out the letter soon if he does not hear back.

5) One and All Campaign: Commissioner Stum solicited input on the design from Marvo Reguindin, owner of the graphic design firm Thinking Cap. He included the email Marvo sent to him in the materials for the commission to read.

New Business

1) Resolution in Support of Fully Funded Education: Commissioner Stum drafted a resolution for the Human Rights Commission to support that calls on legislators in our state to fully fund education per the McCleary decision. He noted that he brought this forward as he began hearing about the teacher walk out. Commissioner Bonner made a motion to approve the resolution; Commissioner Toston made seconded that motion. The resolution was approved unanimously.

2) HRC Response to Anti-Homeless Laws: Commissioner Stum brought forward information from a report drafted by students at Seattle University Law School. The reports aim to quantify the cost of criminalizing the homeless. Commissioner Stum noted that the reports single out Spokane as an example of what is wrong with criminalization of the homeless and asked commissioners what they believe our response should be. Commissioner Bonner noted how offensive it is that we include “body odor” as an offense that could potentially receive a civil infraction. She said many people have chemical balances or genetic variations that make it difficult for them to mask their body odor.

Commissioner Bonner said she understands the portion of our municipal code that creates a civil infraction for defecation or urination in public; as it is a health concern.

Commissioner Stum said he agreed, but noted that we should look for ways to provide greater access to restroom facilities for homeless individuals. He noted that the port-a-potties provided under the freeway on 4th and Jefferson and 4th and Division have been successful in regards to their intended purpose.

Commissioner Johnson said she would like to see the full commission take action.

Commissioner Toston noted that we should consider what alternative solution we can provide regardless of how we choose to respond. The full commission supported taking action, but what type of action that could be taken was not defined.

3) Religious Intolerance and Need for Education: Commissioner Oberst wanted the full commission to be aware of events that happened recently which show a great need for interfaith dialogue. He specifically noted that there had been a Pastor in Spokane Valley that recently made Islamophobic statements in the media. He said he would be crafting a letter to the editor in response. Commissioner Bonner suggested inviting him to one of our meetings so we could have a discussion with him.

Member Updates/Announcements

N/A

Public Comment

N/A.

Adjourned at 6:45pm.

Next SHRC meeting:

Tuesday, June 23 at City Hall, City Council Briefing Center 5:30-7:00.