



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Brooklyn Park City Hall, Room A203
and Microsoft Teams

Join on your computer or mobile app

6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

If you need these materials in an alternative format or need reasonable accommodations for a Human Rights Commission meeting, please provide the City with 72-hours' notice by calling 763-493-8394 or emailing Marcellus Davis at marcellus.davis@brooklynpark.org. Para asistencia, 763-424-8000; Yog xav tau kev pab, 763-424-8000.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order – Chair Aja King – 6:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call/Attendance – Staff Liaison Marcellus Davis – 6:02 p.m.
3. Approval of Agenda – All – 6:08 p.m.
4. Approval of August 20, 2023 meeting minutes – All – 6:09 p.m.
5. Welcome new HRC Commissioner Jenny Tam – All – 6:10 p.m.
6. Revisiting Sister Cities – All – 6:15p.m.
7. Update on the Minnesota Human Rights Connection – All – 6:45 p.m.
8. Racial Healing and Racial Reconciliation Opportunity October 21, 2023 – Dr. Davis – 6:55 p.m.
9. Preparing for HRC Leadership Transition/ Preparing the Baton – All – 7:15 p.m.
10. City Council Liaison Report – Council Member Boyd Morson – 7:45 p.m.
11. City Staff Report – Marcellus Davis – 7:50 p.m.
12. Old Business – 7:55 p.m.
13. New Business – 7:58 p.m.
14. Adjournment – All – 8:00 p.m.

Brooklyn Park

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES

Date of Meeting: August 20, 2023

Location: City Hall – Room A203

Time Began: 6:08 p.m.

Time Adjourned: 8:07 p.m.

Meeting Attendance—Commissioners							
Member	District	Present		Member	District	Present	
		Yes	No			Yes	No
				Mark Hostetler	West	X	
Andrea Perez-Maikkula	Central	x		Brenda Blackhawk	At-large	X	
				Kevin Xiong	Central	X	
Minn Wang	Central		X	Andy Vue	Emerging Leader		X
Aja King	At-large	X		Vacant	Emerging Leader		
Jen Best	At-large	X					
Marcellus Davis	City Staff Liaison	X		Council Member Boyd Morson	Council Member Liaison		X

1. Call to Order – Chair Dr. King – 6:08 p.m.
2. Roll Call/Attendance – Staff Liaison Dr. Marcellus Davis – 6:09 p.m.
3. Approval of Agenda – All – 6:10 p.m.
 - I. Motion: Brenda; 2nd: Mark
 - II. All in favor
4. Approval of minutes from the February & March 19, 2023 – All – 6:12 p.m.
 - I. Dr. Kevin requested a change - he was present in June, although arrived late.
 - II. Motion with change re. Kevin's attendance: Mark; 2nd: Brenda
 - III. All in favor
 - IV. There was no meeting in July because we did not have quorum
5. Sister City Human Rights Conversation with Community Engagement (Josie Shardlow)– All – 6:13 p.m.
 - I. Sister City Human Rights Conversation with Community Engagement (Josie Shardlow) Community Engagement Manager) – All – 6:10 p.m.
 - II. Here at the bequest of City Council - approved a new sister city and council; began discussing if we should be vetting sister cities for Human Rights

Discussion:

 - I. Who initiates the sister city relationship - BP city council has never sought out a sister city, we have been approached. This required a process. Relationships are not registered with the national sister city organization.
 - II. What are the benefits of having sister cities?
Opportunities to connect/share + connect subcultures

- III. Josie shared Ebola example and learning/triage that happened because of the sister city relationship
- IV. The relationship does provide some benefits for the sister cities - the sister cities have Feedback from Council
- V. Vetting/Evaluation - Ask HRC to review/vet sister city applications for human rights concerns:
- VI. Suggestion to have HRC to develop a rubric and have a subcommittee review application and give Council a recommendation. Caution against benchmarks that might exclude. Need to balance vetting with connecting with the diaspora here.
Involvement: Ask HRC to encourage sister cities to get more involved or find new sister city relationships. Look at the city's own contributions back to our sister city.

Discussion:

- I. There is value in BP residents feeling international connections to people in their home countries.
- II. Valuable to look at what other cities are doing with sister cities.
Concern with the policy of only having 1 city within a country. If this is on a first-come-first-served basis, there could be lost opportunities.
Oversight of Sister Cities –
What is the relationship after the sister city relationship is established (is it more than a status?).
What about the experience of our residents? Can we bring residents back to the country?
How can we engage residents in the process, beyond politics and govt.?
HRC Role:
HRC members feel unclear about the process of vetting sister cities.
Are we being asked to develop HRC standards for this county?
There are political vibes in this request
HRC may be more involved in identifying potential sister cities that correspond with identifies of BP residents

Ideas for connections:

- Sister cities can be in the parade
- Festival of nation event that could highlight sister cities
- As part of the sister city agreement - encourage Human Rights support and awareness - need a unified definition with action.

Other ideas:

- I. Share Human Rights issues with sister cities
Connect on a common platform (i.e. education goals for all children, etc.)
Reach out to residents and connect with leaders - are sister cities something we want?
Specifically prioritizing cities connected to immigrant residents in BP.
3 school districts and 2 colleges need to be at the table.
HRC role should be purely human rights - focused on developing relationships and sharing experiences. HRC is not interested in vetting.
HRC is interested in developing authentic relationships over transaction interactions. The vetting process is from a place of white supremacy, especially since the United States is not the standard for Human Rights.

Next Steps:

- II. Add this conversation back to the agenda next month
Council member Morrison may add additional context to this conversation.
Look into Sister City international - while this has a cost, it may provide structure and resources. <https://sistercities.org/>
Develop recommendation to Council
Can name that the vetting process and grading human rights is steeped in white supremacy.
Could recommend adding the HRC mission/vision to the application to ensure that it is a part of the conversation when engaging with new sister cities.

- 6. Juneteenth & Pride Event Updates-Dr. Davis– All – 7:40 p.m.

- a. Pride event - have not heard much about it
 - i. Suggestion to reach out to the Park Center student and invite her back to hear how the event went and how the HRC can be involved more next year.
 - ii. Juneteenth - over 1000 attendees (this is a low estimate); received about \$45K in sponsorships.
- 7. Attendance – All – 7:46 p.m.
 - 1. We gotta show up.
 - 2. 2-3 unexcused absences = a conversation
 - 3. Do we need to consider taking a month off in the summer?
- 8. Bias Report – All – 7:48 p.m.
 - 1. Next month. Have 2-3 sitting - 1 from HOA complaint and 1 from police.
 - 2. Dr. Davis is still trying to connect with the state to see how we can do this better. Ask the Dept. of Human rights to provide education on our roles.
 - 3. HRC scope - we should/could be reimagining what we do (examples - include Spaces for healing or conflict transformation).
 - 4. Right now we have the capacity to educate and bring awareness to human rights.
- 9. Back 2 School Drive-All-7:52
 - 1. August 19th at Zanewood from 11-4. Handing out backpacks to students.
 - 2. Looking for donations of youth gear that is new or gently used.
 - 3. <https://www.honored2help.org/events-2>
- 10. City Council Member – City Council Member – Boyd Morson – 7:58 p.m.
.Nothing to report.
- 11. City Staff Report – Marcellus Davis – 7:59 p.m.
 - 1. Dr. Davis and Andrea working with a peer on the white privilege conference being held in Tulsa, OK.
 - 2. They are looking to host a smaller build up to the WPC in Tulsa in the Twin Cities known as the White Privilege Symposium.
 - 3. City Budget process is coming up
- 12. Old Business – 8:00 p.m.
.Nothing to report.
- 13. New Business – 8:01 p.m.
 - a. Dr. King and Mark's terms expire in April. Group should be thinking about future leadership and initiatives.
 - b. Future meetings:
 - 1. Inquire about the long range planning and budget committees coming to our meeting to discuss Human Rights and the interaction with their work.
 - 2. Violence Interrupter programs.
 - 1. Kelvin who works at Zanewood might be a good contact.
 - 2. Dr. Davis can put together an overview of what exists (lots of moving parts)
 - 3. Budget Advisory Council
 - 4. School Districts - inequities in school districts impact health, wellness and that can trigger violence.
 - c. Acknowledgement that there are a lot of requests of HRC right now. Defining our scope is necessary.
- 14. Adjournment – All – 8:07 p.m.
 - a. Motion to adjourn - Brenda; 2nd - Mark

Submitter: Marcellus Davis