

## ISABELLA CO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Date: June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### Members Present:

David Ling- County Commissioner  
Laura Gonzales  
Anne Swift  
Amy Shawboose  
Elizabeth Husbands – Vice Chair  
Karen Rau  
Wendy Hovey  
Sue Poindexter  
Kristin Lalonde  
Mark Sanderson

Called to order: 5:20 PM

### Excused Absences:

Maureen Eke – Chair

### Also Present:

Jessica Axe, Graduate Intern

### 1. Welcome:

The meeting was called to order at 5:20 pm. (chaired by Laura Gonzales)

### 2. Approval of Agenda

Wendy Hovey moved to approve the agenda. Sue Poindexter seconded, motion passed.

### 3. Approval of May 1, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Karen Rau motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Wendy Hovey seconded. Motion passed.

### 4. General Public Comment

- Karen Jackson, Register of Deeds, was present. Karen mentioned CMU student orientation and stated that there are 3 sessions per week for 5 weeks on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Laura will forward this information when it is received from Jackson.
- Paul Lauria, Public Safety Director with Mount Pleasant Police Department was present. Lauria was interested in hearing what the potential “tensions” between police and the community are. He suggests that isolated incidents are not indicative of a problem and warns that Mount Pleasant should be careful comparing themselves to other communities and basing our judgement on THEIR needs. Lauria said that statistics are a start but do not paint the whole picture. He also noted that transient communities bring their experiences with them and therefore harbor distrust for Mount Pleasant police.

- Jon Arlt, CMU Sociology Professor and Lead Organizer for Central Michigan Action, was present and wished to announce the proposed anti-sanctuary-city bill (HB4105), the effects of which will be discussed in a committee hearing on Wednesday at noon in Lansing. Central Michigan Action will be meeting with Senator Roger Hauck and his legislative aide at 4:00 pm and will be hosting a phone-banking to Senator Hauck the night before. Arlt requested that the HRC members help in any way they can. Of particular interest would be law enforcement or other concerned citizens who would be willing to speak out against the harms this bill will cause to families and communities.

## 5. Old Business

- The rack cards are with the printers who are working on a proof for the HRC, which could be ready as early as this week. A new storage location is needed. Laura Gonzales spoke with the office and learned that the Micro-aggression study full report should be stored in a different place than the rack cards in case of natural disasters so the information is not lost.
- Elizabeth Husbands is looking into sheets with borders on them in letterhead stock but thinks that the rack cards printing has maxed out the HRC budget for the year. There are still a lot of business cards and pens in the office.

## 6. Reports

### A. Chair's Report

- Maureen Eke, Committee Chair, is absent. Gonzales chaired in her place.

### B. Micro-aggressions Subcommittee

- Gonzales stated that no meeting was held this month.
- David Ling revealed that the larger report would be distributed to Tribal leaders and others who can use it. Ling asked who was getting the list of potential recipients.
- Husbands said she drafted the letter to send to the tribes and that she sent it to the committees. She stated that she will resend the letters.
- Gonzales stated that the budget has not changed from last month.

### C. Disability Subcommittee

- Gonzales presented a "thank you" card from Alison (?) about the barrier free parking. The card mentions sidewalk shoveling as a serious need.
- Anne Swift announced that the April 24<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting went well and that shoveling the sidewalks is a definite need for all community members.
- Swift said that the two parking spaces downtown were established and that the committee is working on getting a third approved. There is a need to encourage the community to use them frequently.

- Mark Sanderson asked about spaces by the Old Ward Theatre. It was stated that the Sponcellers want to put a building there. Kristin Lalonde said that a grant was requested to put an amphitheater in Island Park.
- Swift revealed that an ADA chair walkway was being created in the downtown area.

#### **D. Law Enforcement Subcommittee**

- Hovey said the committee is meeting every month but struggling to reach a consensus. Hovey believes HRC should focus on tensions between police and citizens. She notes that there have not been many but thinks it would be prudent to address potential issues before they arise. Hovey's suggestion is to find someone from each minority group to speak on this and inform police that actions of one cop reflects on the character of all; community must be assured that not all police are going to treat them the same way. Shawboose suggested that Jeff Browne could be the police liaison. Other group members want more statistics before any action is taken.
- Husbands asked if any incident report forms had been turned in lately. Eke must speak on this when she returns.

#### **E. Community Education Subcommittee**

- Hovey met with Black Lives Matter group. No police at incidents group as the group did not fully support this
- Hovey said that the opiate-heroin overdose is the focus of the Community Collaborative and that police are hesitant to arrest because they don't want to encourage 911 calls in the event of an overdose.
- The Salvation Army is having Pathways of Hope and would like HRC members to make an appointment if they send someone to assist.
- Hovey presented a memo of understanding that is required by the Community Collaborative for participation. Karen Rau made a motion to approve the memo of understanding and list Wendy as HRC representative and Lalonde seconded. Shawboose and Husbands abstained.

### **7. New Business**

- Gonzales asked if the committee was interested in participating in the annual Pow Wow event. Husbands asserted that the cost of entry is \$75-100 dollars. Husbands motioned to approve this decision and Amy Shawboose seconded the motion.
- Gonzales asked if CMU's Main Stage was an event of interest to the committee. Ling advocated for this because Freshman students may want to attend our meetings. Poindexter stated that Main Stage is very impersonal. Students go through quickly, grab things off the tables with minimal talking and then move on. There will be more

opportunities for discussion at Get Acquainted Day and this event is more inclusive of people of color.

- Karen Rau agreed to coordinate Get Acquainted Day
- Mark Sanderson asked if HRC has any contacts at MMCC. Gonzales said that Eke knows Syed “Sammy” Ahmed. Sanderson stated that MMCC students are more likely to be residents and to stay as residents than CMU students. Gonzales suggested that HRC improve outreach to MMCC and the Tribal College.

#### **8. Announcements**

- Amy Shawboose will be at Honoring and Healing as a teacher.

#### **9. Adjournment**

- Poindexter motioned. Shawboose seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.