

Isabella County Human Rights Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2019

Members Present

Maureen Eke, Chairperson
Laura Gonzales
Steve Swaney, County Commissioner
Matt Mertz
Cheryl Gonzalez

Un/Excused Absences

Justin Knott-Unexcused
Sarvjit Chowdhary
Alicia Paterni
Amy Shawboose
Dawn Jevicks
Anne Swift

Guests

Erica Hopcraft, Paul Lauria, Liz Busch

1) Welcome

Chairperson Maureen Eke called the meeting to order at 5:24 p.m.

2) Approval of Agenda

Strategic Planning Retreat and Isabella County Mental Health Court added to the agenda. Steve Swaney made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Matt Mertz seconded the motion. The motion passed with full support from the council to approve the agenda.

3) Approval of April 2019 Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Maureen Eke asked for a motion to accept and pass the April 2019 meeting minutes as amended. Steve Swaney proposed acceptance of the April meeting minutes with Laura Gonzales seconding the motion. April meeting minutes were accepted and passed with full support from the council.

4) Public Comments

Paul Lauria presented:

- Drafts of Policy 318 and Policy 401. He asked that the committee read over the policies and give him any suggestions we may have at the June 2019 HRC meeting. These policies should not be shared until Paul Lauria shares the final draft.
- He reported that there were no citizen complaints since our last meeting.
- He presented a draft of the Formal Complaint Form suggesting any edits that we have, be sent to him by May 13, 2019. Steve Swaney suggested a QR code be added.
- Matt Mertz asked how the fraternity house sexual assaults occurring in Mount Pleasant were reported and why the complaints have not resulted in arrests. Paul responded:
 - The location of the fraternity and where the assault occurred is dependent on who investigates. Paul does not know the circumstances of this case.
 - Additional investigations can impact the outcome of the case. I.e. CMU's Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity (OCRIE) investigation can interfere/impact the results of the case. If OCRIE gets to the suspect before the police and makes them aware of the complaint this can hinder the case by making the perp aware of the complaint and providing him with extra time to destroy evidence.
 - Maureen Eke suggested sending a letter to CMU requesting a copy of the OCRIE policy so we better understand the process for handling these issues.

Liz Busch from Mt. Pleasant Public Schools present the committee with a brochure and information regarding "Academic Year in America," hosting an exchange student. She believes this program is related to human rights in an effort to strengthening ties to the international community in Mount Pleasant and the program accepts same-sex parents. She asked that those interested contact her at tanglesprout@gmail.com, 989-400-6813. More information can be found at www.academicyear.org.

5) Reports:

- HRC Budget - Maureen Eke plans to submit a request to keep the 2019-2020 budget the same as this year.
- CMU Presentation with Paul Lauria - Maureen Eke reported that the presentation went well. Laura Gonzales suggested providing folks with the HRC Rack card from now on when presenting.
- Maple Syrup Festival Parade - Cheryl Gonzalez reported a good turnout of folks walking with HRC ranging in ages.
- Events Calendar - Laura Gonzales provided the updated calendar and discussion followed.
- Isabella County Court/Mental Health Court - Maureen Eke attended the meeting and plans to find out if HRC is privy to attend.
- Citizen's Academy discussion regarding folks who attended the 8 to 12 week program seeing the workings of different county units.

6) Subcommittee Updates:

- Community Education - Laura Gonzales reported no update activity to report.
- Law Enforcement - Maureen Eke will schedule an online meeting soon.

7) Old/New Business:

- HRC Bylaws - finishing edits noted, the plan is to vote to approve in June 2019.
 - i) Steve Swaney stated that HRC could use improvement with representation for Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant School District and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.
 - (1) Whoever represents that particular entity should be appointed by that particular unit that they "come from and has an interest in."
 - (2) It is unrealistic to say CMU/SCIT/School "agency will request" - request to remove.
 - ii) Should be uniformly consistent with language throughout bylaws. Each item should be listed once and stated that each unit (CMU/SCIT/School) representative will follow.
 - iii) Add that each representative (including at-large) are expected "to report back to the HRC." Meaning the representatives should share information of what they presented to the community.
 - iv) Add "each representative is expected to attend each HRC meeting."
- Let Peace Reign event is currently in planning.

- i) Erica Hopcraft has volunteered to contact same groups as last year for sponsorships and donations.
- ii) Shirts, signs and postcards were all discussed.
 - (1) 11x14 posters - 250 each
 - (2) Tshirts - estimated at \$6.50 each - will order enough for HRC members and volunteers.
 - (3) Yard signs - 12 new signs with location, date, and time listed to be placed in members yards leading up to event.

8) Announcements

Chairperson Eke will not be at the next HRC meeting, Vice Chairperson Cheryl Gonzalez will conduct meeting in her absence. There is a possibility that the July meeting will be conducted in the same manner if Chairperson Eke is unable to attend.

9) Adjournment

Chairperson Eke asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was proposed by Steve Swaney, seconded by Matt Mertz, and passed unanimously. The HRC adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

10) Next Meeting

June 3, 2019 at the Isabella County Courthouse, 2nd floor, 5:15 p.m.