

Isabella County Human Rights Committee
September 9/13/2021

ATTENDANCE:

Elizabeth Husbands, Chair
Laura Gourlay, Vice Chair, Community School Representative
Erica Hopcraft, Secretary,
Laura Gonzales, At Large
Sarjvit Chowdrey, At Large
Steven Swaney, County Commissioner Liaison
Amy Pershbacher, At Large
Maureen Eke, CMU Representative
Shelly Smith, At Large
Danny McQuarters Jr. At Large
Joyce Hendricks, At Large

Absent/excused; Amy Shawboose

WELCOME/ CALL TO ORDER:

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:18PM BY ELIZABETH HUSBANDS

Welcomed newest members, Danny McQuarters Jr. and Joyce Hendricks both At Large members.
Introductions made by other members of board.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES:

Maureen Eke recommended minutes be corrected to reflect the Micro Aggression Grant funds can only be expended for Micro Aggression related items, discussion was had to do training for all members on the Micro Aggression Presentation. Corrections were made by Laura Gourlay immediately.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Additions to the agenda as were made as follows:

Motion to approve amended agenda made by Laura Gourlay, second by Steve Swaney. The motion was carried unanimously.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT:

Department of Mt Pleasant Public Safety, Director Paul Lauria arrived around 5:45pm, and the floor was yielded to him, which interrupted Laura Gonzales' updates on Community Education Sub committee actions.

- Dir. Lauria reported 2 new officers started with his department and are working well with the community.
- He also announced the retirement of his Lieutenant Sytsma, applications will be sought within the department to fill his position.
- Dir Lauria reported a new program that he will go in front of City Commissioners with, in partnership with R.I.S.E for a Mental Health/ Drug Addiction Professional to be hired to work alongside the Police Officers. It will be recommended that the position be a full time position with an office in the MPPS Building.

Elizabeth Husbands asked, "How can HRC continue to help the Police Department?" Dir. Lauria responded with "Weigh the merits based on the officer, not the situation." Placing accountability where it belongs in situations without applying what has been happening elsewhere in the world.

There was discussion about the Departments Youth Officer being extremely busy at the schools due to bullying and other issues that have resulted out of this past year and a half and the Pandemic.

- A question was asked if CMU Officers could possibly help Youth Officer Bliss and Public Relations Officer Balcom out in the schools. Not out of the question but the mention of pay for services rendered could pose a problem.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no general public comments.

CHAIR REPORT:

Election of Secretary:

- Laura Gourlay nominated Erica Hopcraft to fill the vacant position. Erica graciously accepted. Steve Swaney moved to install Erica as secretary, Shelly Smith seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Changing of meeting time:

There was discussion regarding changing time and date of HRC meeting due to conflicts with Mt Pleasant school board meetings. Meetings will continue to be held on the 1st Monday of month at 5:15pm.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE:

Showcase:

Located in the basement of the County Building. Members will provide a color self-portrait/ headshot (4x6 inch) and biography to Laura Gonzalez (Laura will email specific details). She and Laura Gorlay will work together to update the showcase with members' information. Using a portion of the showcase to include a memorial for Matt Mertz and other deceased members of the HRC was discussed as well. Laura will update the Committee on when she wants photo's and how it will be decorated.

Township Meetings:

Laura Gonzalez also addressed Township meeting attendance by Board members. Google calendar and list of meetings was not found by a few members. Elizabeth emailed the link for access to the Google calendar to all committee members during the meeting. Laura Gourlay stated that she will attend Deerfield Township meetings. HRC Members will take HRC Rack Cards and business cards with them.

LAW ENFORCEMENT SUB COMMITTEE:

Maureen Eke wants to move forward with an amended letter to our Law Enforcement Partners. It was recommended that the letter be amended to invite the Department or a representative of that department. Members were in agreement.

- Commissioner Steve Swaney had spoken with Sheriff Main about attending but was told that he had a pretty full schedule and would not be able to attend. It was recommended that he be asked to send a representative.
- Erica Hopcraft and Laura Gonzalez recommend scheduling regular meetings of the entire sub committee as soon as we can.

NEW BUSINESS:**Intern Posting:**

Updated Graduate Intern job posting will be emailed to members and posted on several job recruitment sites.

Review of Bylaws:

Copies of the ByLaws were given to members for review and reflection. Per the Chair the Goal is to review and update them during the October meeting. A question was raised about the responsibility of the Chair to schedule and attend HRC Officer monthly meetings. It was addressed by the Chair and will be implemented as soon as possible.

Micro Aggression Training:

This was tabled until the October HRC monthly meeting.

Disability Sub Committee:

Shelly Smith asked about existing Sub Committee's why we had them. Elizabeth listed the committees, (Law Enforcement, Community Education & Disability) and explained the origin of each sub-committee was out of community need due to Incident reports completed in past years. We also discussed renaming the "Disability Committee" to a more inclusive/ non labeling title.

Next Community Event:

The Dickens Parade: This was tabled for the next HRC Monthly meeting due to time constraints. We also no longer had a quorum due to several members leaving due to other commitments (Danny McQuarters Jr. 6:00pm, Maureen Eke and Amy Pershbacher 6:40pm).

OLD BUSINESS:

Let Peace Reign Event:

Erica updated the board on printed materials being present on the table for members to take and distribute. Lists of names to be read were being compiled. Members of MPPS and the Magistrate of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe will be present. Suggestion of inviting Mayor Wil Joseph. In a later email from Laura Gonzalez, Amy Pershbacher, Vice Mayor, will attend on City's behalf.

- T-shirts should be delivered this week.

Mt. Pleasant School Board Update:

This item was tabled for the October HRC monthly meeting due to time constraints and members leaving early.

THERE WERE NO ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05PM. A motion to end the meeting was made by Joyce Hendricks, second by Sarjvit Chowdry. The motion was carried unanimously.

Minutes compiled by
Erica Hopcraft, Secretary
Isabella Co Human Right Committee
09/15/2021