

## **BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of February 27, 2017 Meeting**

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met at 5:40 p.m. on Monday, February 27, 2017, in the McCloskey Conference Room of Showers City Hall. Present for this meeting were commissioners Byron Bangert, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Pete Giordano and Irena Otten. Commissioners Valeri Haughton Motely and Beth Applegate had notified staff that they could not attend. A quorum was present. Also present was Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney.

**Approval of minutes of January 23, 2017 BHRC meeting:** The minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

#### **Unfinished business**

**FLI update:** Bangert distributed a draft letter that he would like for the City to send to all of the restaurants that have signed up for the FLI. He asked the commissioners to review on their own and submit proposed edits to him via e-mail. McKinney will distribute it to the commissioners who missed this meeting. Bangert noted that the HT had published a good article on the DOL investigation. He said the MCHRC might do a similar program, although if the annexation plans don't change, there won't be many restaurants left in the unincorporated areas of the county.

**Essay/art contest:** McKinney said that Bangert and Otten had completed judging the art entries, and Calloway-Thomas and Giordano hoped to have the essays judged by the end of next week. The ceremony is set for April 20 at 4:30 in the council chambers.

**Sanctuary city update:** McKinney provided an update on this issue, explaining that the term sanctuary city is ill-defined and that the City was in compliance with the law while at the same time doing all that it can to provide services and support to people who might feel threatened by recent executive orders. Calloway-Thomas said she is concerned about people with education and skills who leave their countries for the US, when their birth country could benefit from their talents. Otten said that many such people return to their birth country after receiving valuable training in the US. Bangert said that the BHRC needs to do what it can to let the immigrant population know that we are here for them. McKinney said that a resource list is being distributed which includes information about the BHRC and other community resources.

## **New business**

**Advisory appointments to the BHRC:** McKinney said that the city council had passed an ordinance allowing some boards and commissions to advocate for allowing advisory appointments to be made to their groups. The commissioners discussed the ordinance but did not see the need to pursue this option at this time.

**Pending statehouse legislation:** The commissioners discussed pending state house bills of concern to the BHRC, particularly SB 439, a hate crimes bill that had passed a Senate committee. McKinney agreed to keep the BHRC informed of the progress of these bills.

**VITAL quiz bowl:** The quiz bowl will take place the week of April 24, and McKinney has registered the Rights Stuff. Team members will be Bangert, Haughton Motley, Nicole Bolden and McKinney. Giordano, Bangert and Calloway-Thomas contributed to the entry fee.

**Assignment of new cases:** Otten agreed to investigate a new complaint alleging sex and/or sexual orientation discrimination in employment.

**Other business:** Calloway-Thomas suggested that the ad the BHRC runs each year in the NAACP program be bigger next year, with a bigger logo. Giordano suggested that given the current climate, it might be good for the vacancy on the BHRC to be filled by a Latino.

**Public input:** No public input.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara E. McKinney  
Director, BHRC/Assistant City Attorney