

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of March 27, 2017 Meeting

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 27, 2017, in the McCloskey Conference Room of Showers City Hall. Present at this meeting were commissioners Byron Bangert, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Pete Giordano, Irena Otten and Rhonda Gambill. Commissioner Valeri Houghton Motely was absent with notice. Also present were Kit Gambill, a first year law student, and Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney.

Introduction of newest commissioner, Rhonda Gambill: Gambill and the commissioners introduced themselves.

Approval of minutes of February 27, 2017 BHRC meeting: Calloway-Thomas moved that the minutes be approved as presented. Approved unanimously.

Unfinished business

FLI update: Bangert described the Fair Labor Initiative program to Gambill. McKinney reported that only one restaurant had returned the postcard. Bangert said that was discouraging and surprising to him. He said the BHRC had spent a lot of time on this project and he was not sure how much difference it was making. Giordano said that getting restaurants to sign on was more time-consuming than he had expected. The one restaurant that did respond reported satisfaction with the program. Bangert said he wanted to think about how to proceed with this initiative in the future. He asked McKinney to keep it on the agenda.

Essay/art contest update: McKinney reported that all of the entries had been judged and invitations to the ceremony have been sent out. Both Giordano and Calloway-Thomas expressed disappointment with the caliber of the essays. They said the students took a cookie cutter approach; the essays seemed heavily coached. The commissioners talked about how to reach more teachers, sending e-mails directly to teachers who have not entered before, having less broad topics, including more description in the theme, stressing that uniqueness and creativity were important, etc. Rhonda Gambill said that she has access to a good email list of teachers. Bangert thanked the judges for their work.

Legislative update: McKinney said that one hate crime bill had passed a committee and then died. There was talk about bringing it back, but that does not seem likely this session.

VITAL quiz bowl update: Bangert explained the purpose of the Rights Stuff participation in the quiz bowl. Bangert and Rhonda Gambill contributed to the entry fee.

Sanctuary city update: Bangert discussed a recent article about how the ACLU is gearing up to take on President Trump one city at a time.

New business

Fourth of July parade: The commissioners expressed interest in participating in the parade again this year, perhaps with a better float.

Assignment of new case: Rhonda Gambill accepted a new case alleging discrimination in employment on the basis of race.

Other business: No other business.

Public input: Kit Gambill said she enjoyed the meeting.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara E. McKinney
Director, BHRC/Assistant City Attorney