

Minutes

AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Meeting Held via Zoom
Thursday, April 23, 2020

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Chair Jill Crosser.

Members Present: Wayne Clinton, Madesh Samanu, Liming Pals, and Jahmai Fisher

Member(s) Absent: NA

Guests: None present

Staff Liaison: Deb Schildroth

Approval of Minutes: Madesh moved approval of the March 26, 2020 and April 8, 2020 minutes and Liming seconded. Motion carried unanimously

Public Forum: None

Appointment of a Vice-Chair: Liming moved appointment of Wayne serving as Vice Chair and Madesh seconded. Motion carried unanimously

Strategic Planning: Jill's review of the previous strategic plan prompted additional survey comments by the Commissioners. Wayne stated that there are people in the community that do not feel as accepted as they would like to be and how does AHRC respond to that? The survey skimmed the surface and we're seeing that people are scared. Jill asked if people know who AHRC is and what we do? AHRC can be a resource, but there is work to be done in conjunction with groups and individuals such as the Ames Chamber and the Ames Community School District Diversity Officer.

Wayne shared that there are concerns about the Asian community being targeted due to COVID-19. Deb stated that the concern had been shared with her and that in the Mayor's next video message, there will be content around inclusiveness. The Ames Police want to mirror that message. Jill asked if AHRC should consider doing a "post-COVID 19" survey?

Jahmai stated that there was a lack of responses to the survey and maybe a more relational approach should be considered to help people understand AHRC's role and feel more comfortable talking to Commissioners. She suggested the use of hashtags and phrases that align with AHRC and its mission and creating opportunities such as setting up a table at HyVee in order to establish more personal connections. Jill agreed and said that AHRC needs to be visible in the community; this would help instill trust.

Discussion ensued about increasing the use of social media to educate people about AHRC. This strategy can be included in the new strategic plan under public awareness and communication. Liming suggested that towards the end of each AHRC meeting, ideas are generated for social media posts. She offered to take that lead on that and Jahmai volunteered to assist. Jill asked about a list of annual events, and Deb will work on that for the next meeting.

Jill will work on incorporating changes to the strategic plan and send it out for review and comment prior to the May meeting.

Planning for the 2020 Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations: Jill reported the Committee is now planning a virtual conference with keynote speaker and break-out sessions instead of an in-person conference. The tentative date of October 27th is likely to change.

Commissioner Announcements: None

Next Meeting: May 28, 2020 at 5:30pm via Zoom.

Adjournment: Madesh moved adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.