

Minutes

AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Conference Room 235
City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue
Thursday, January 27, 2022

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Chair Jahmai Fisher. Members present were Wayne Clinton, Chunhui Chen, Jahmai Fisher, and Madesh Samanu. Commission member Lynette Plander joined the meeting telephonically. City of Ames Staff Liaison Deb Schildroth was also present.

Approval of Minutes: Moved by Clinton, seconded by Samanu, to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2022, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Forum: Chair Fisher opened the Public Forum. No one was present to speak, and Chair Fisher closed the Public Forum.

Annual Report Review: Chair Fisher introduced the annual report and Assistant City Manager Schildroth elaborated on the presentation of the report to City Council.

The Commission members reviewed the outreach events they attended including the painting of the Inclusive Crosswalk, International Friendship Fair, National Night Out, Play Ames, See Yourself in Ames, Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations, WelcomeFest, and others.

Samanu inquired about the data the Commission would request from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) noting that City Council asked that the Commission provide longitudinal comparisons. Assistant City Manager Schildroth stated that longitudinal data can be specified in the request to ICRC.

Samanu recommended that the data be presented visually rather than numerically in the report when possible. Chair Fisher stated that Samanu will serve in the primary role to review the data once the Annual Report is drafted.

Discussion of Martin Luther King, Jr 2022 Community Celebration and Humanitarian Award: Plander noted that the virtual delivery of the event did not have closed captioning. Assistant City Manager Schildroth stated that the City's delivery system does not have the capability for closed captioning; however, Facebook and YouTube can autogenerate closed captions. Samanu noted that on Facebook and YouTube the closed captions must be enabled at a user lever and are not always the most accurate. Plander stated that services that provide live closed captioning are available for hire. Clinton said that he would bring Plander's concern to the

planning committee for further discussion. He noted that it was something that the committee could work on.

Clinton gave an overview of the committee debrief and toughed on logistical improvements they would be making next year. He noted that the event this year was a success with a large number of virtual attendees.

Plander inquired if there was an interpreter in attendance at the live delivery of the event. Clinton noted that an interpreter was not present this year. He stated that many years ago the committee hired an interpreter for the event upon request and was willing to do that again.

Chair Fisher asked for other thoughts or feedback on the event that Clinton could take back to the planning committee. With no other comments, Chair Fisher reviewed the presentation of the Humanitarian Award. She noted that in the future the Commission will be more clear on the time limit for the awardees acceptance speeches. She stated that she was putting together the statement of recognition for the planning committee and wanted to be clear on the expectations so it would be true to Clinton's initial idea. Clinton clarified his idea for the statement of recognition and Chair Fisher noted that she would plan to send it to the planning committee the first week of February.

Discussion of AHRC Involvement with Black History Month at the Ames Public Library: Chair Fisher reviewed the partnership with the Ames Public Library. She noted that the series titled "Sharing Our Own Stories: Ames' Black Voices" which focuses on the importance of storytelling to The African Diaspora will kick off on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. live at the Ames City Auditorium or via Zoom. Chair Fisher stated that she will pass along more information about the series to the Commission as it comes.

Posting and Social Media Content – Plans for Chinese New Year: Chen provided an update on the status of the video to celebrate Chinese New Year by noting that he had collected pictures, videos, and interviews to be compiled. He sent these materials to Bill Gebhart, City of Ames Media Production Services Coordinator, and they reviewed the script. Gebhart planned to compile the video by the end of the week and noted that he will send the draft to Chen and the volunteers who are featured for them to review. Chen noted that they would put the final touches on the video on Monday of the following week so it would hopefully be ready to post on February 1, 2022.

Clinton thanked Chen for everything he did to make the video possible and asked if there was a way to publicize it. Clinton mentioned that one idea he had would be to have a proclamation made at a City Council meeting. Assistant City Manager Schildroth noted that would be a possibility for the February 8, 2022 City Council meeting if members of the Commission are available to attend. Chen stated that he was available to attend and would put together the wording for the proclamation. He also noted that the volunteers would be distributing the video to their email lists for publicity.

Clinton noted that an idea he had for next year would be to see if the Commission could arrange an event with the Library to celebrate Chinese New Year. He thought that an open house style presentation with booths set-up featuring different aspects of the Chinese culture would be a great way to actively involve the community.

Postings and Social Media Content – AHRC Bookmark Revisions and Fact Sheet: The Commission reviewed the AHRC Bookmark. Chair Fisher noted that it takes too long to get to the point and the appearance is busy. Chen agreed by stating that the bookmark is impossible to read in a few minutes and that people probably won't read it in its entirety. Clinton noted everything that could be found on the webpage could be eliminated from the bookmark.

The Commission discussed what revisions to make to the bookmark to make it more visually appealing while highlighting the important information. Chen mentioned that the bookmark should outline what kind of service or help the Commission can provide to the community. Chair Fisher agreed and noted that the size of the bookmark is flexible because the revised information may not fill the layout of the of the current bookmark. Assistant City Manager Schildroth stated that the revisions would be drafted by City Staff and available for the Commission to review prior to printing.

Chair Fisher shifted discussion to the Fact Sheet stating that the Fact Sheet does not need to be tangible in her opinion. She said her idea would be to put together a message in the Spring either in the form of a social media post or video. Chen stated agreement with that idea and Chair Fisher inquired on where the Commission would locate the data. Assistant City Manager Schildroth said that she would ask Vanessa Baker-Latimer, City of Ames Housing Coordinator, to see if she has data that the Commission could use. Chen also said that he would ask the Iowa State University Statistics Department to see what data they have available. Chair Fisher clarified that it's not necessary for the Commission to have counts or percentages, if the focus can be on the cultural, demographic, or ethnic groups, that would be sufficient for the Commission to put together a meaningful message.

Commissioner Announcements: Chair Fisher called for announcement before moving on to discussing the date of the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: Moved by Chair Fisher, seconded by Samanu, to adjourn at 6:37 p.m.