

Minutes

AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Conference Room 235
City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue
Thursday, November 30, 2023

Call to Order: Chair Wayne Clinton, who joined telephonically, called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Vice Chair Chunhui Chen, Commissioners Marty Martinez and Angie DeWaard, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator Casandra Eames were also present.

Public Forum: Chair Clinton opened and closed the Public Forum as no one came to speak.

Approval of Minutes: Moved by DeWaard, seconded by Chen, to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2023, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Feedback from Meet and Greet: Chair Clinton, Commissioners DeWaard and Martinez, and Coordinator Eames were able to attend the event, and all reported that it was a success. The Commissioners discussed possible improvements for the next meet and greet. The following comments were shared on sticky notes at the event:

- How can Ames citizens be better allies?
- Idea – collaborate with the Red Shirt Foundation
- Intersex/DSD awareness
- Religious clinics awareness
- Charities being religious-based and potentially unwelcoming
- Desire for more informational forums about topics like education
- Accessibility at Stephens Auditorium is not great
- Curb cuts

One takeaway from this feedback was the need to better communicate what the Commission does and what types of issues are within its sphere of influence. Chair Clinton discussed the importance of doing something with feedback rather than soliciting and then ignoring it. He proposed adding a section for displaying feedback on the website, and Commissioner DeWaard suggested including actionable ideas in the annual report. The Commissioners all concurred that this topic was important, and planned to revisit the discussion at a future meeting.

Brainstorm Ideas for New AHRC T-Shirts: Coordinator Eames noted that there are only two shirts left, so more are needed soon. Vice Chair Chen suggested creating a contest to invite community members to submit t-shirt designs, perhaps including some kind of catch phrase or slogan related to the Commission's mission. Commissioner DeWaard suggested partnering with

the Public Art Commission. The Commissioners planned to revisit the topic in the future, with the goal of putting out the call for submissions in the spring before the school year ends.

Coloring Book Pages Update: Commissioner DeWaard shared several of the pages-in-progress she had drawn, as well as an example of a completed coloring book she had created for a friend. Chair Clinton expressed enthusiasm for the project, and staff planned to research options for printing the coloring books once the pages were ready.

Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations: Chair Clinton and Commissioner Martinez spoke highly of the event, noting a good variety of topics. Chair Clinton hoped that more of the local business community would get involved. Coordinator Eames noted that she would be able to share the feedback from the event planning committee at the next meeting.

Community Outreach Template and Calendar with Celebrations Each Month: Staff created these drafts in response to comments from Commissioners regarding the need for a more organized approach to outreach. Commissioner DeWaard noted that the template would be helpful to use in conjunction with the calendar, as it provides steps to follow in connecting with new groups. She suggested that staff could send an introductory letter or email out and build up a database of local organizations. Vice Chair Chen emphasized the Commission's role as a facilitator. The Commissioners agreed to move forward with the drafts.

Postings and Social Media Content: Vice Chair Chen spoke in favor of using the City's social media presence to promote events and campaigns by local organizations.

Commissioner Announcements: Chair Clinton discussed his idea of scheduling a strategic planning retreat with a facilitator to guide the conversation, noting that it would make sense to wait until late spring to have such an event. He also congratulated Commissioner DeWaard on her election to the Ames Community School Board.

Coordinator Eames reminded the Commissioners that they would be reviewing the nominations for the Humanitarian Award and making a selection at the next meeting. Vice Chair Chen suggested that staff reach out to the nominators of past nominees who were not selected to let them know that they were welcome to nominate those individuals again.

Next Meeting: December 14, 2023

Adjournment: Chair Clinton adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.