

Unapproved Minutes  
Human Relations Commission  
Thursday, January 9, 2020 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Relations Commission was called to order in the Large Conference Room at City Hall on January 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Travis Letellier, Lamont Sellers, Jolly Omar, Calvin Petersen, Shannon Cole (7:05), Mark Daniels, and Wendy Hess.

Absent: None.

Staff present: John Prescott, City Manager

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Wendy Hess motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of item 6d - Home Rule Study Committee report, seconded by Lamont Sellers. Motion carried 6-0.

3. Approval of the Minutes

3a. Calvin Petersen moved to approve the November 7, 2019 minutes, seconded by Jolly Omar. Motion carried 7-0.

4. Visitors to be Heard

None.

5. Old Business

None.

6. New Business

- a. President Gestring's Council for Diversity and Inclusiveness.
- b. Discussion regarding City of Vermillion land acknowledgement statement.
- c. Spring panel on missing and indigenous women.
- d. Home Rule Study Committee update.

6a. Caroline Bates and Bruce Kelley from USD President Gestring's Council on Diversity and Inclusiveness were present. The Committee has been reconfigured over the last year to be a smaller, more nimble group. The President is interested in learning how the work of the USD Committee and community overlap. Kelley stated that they want to hear from the community and that was their role at the meeting. For example, is there training that can be connected with the community that meets their needs as well as that of USD. Bates asked if there are projects USD can support. They do not want to dictate the training needs of the community.

Travis Letellier noted that during a recent USD Strategic Planning Commission session there was some discussion about a Joint Task Force working community wide to address discrimination. Other ideas

discussed were: providing trainings to local businesses, community members participating in the free Safe Zone training available via USD's website, MLK Day of Service workshops being expanded, a community member serving on the President's Council on Diversity and Inclusiveness, enhanced coordination between HRC's Facebook page and the Center for Diversity's Facebook page, and having some of the relevant events off campus to encourage community participation.

6b. It was suggested that the HRC might be the genesis for drafting a land acknowledgement statement. The HRC could study the option, draft one, and provide the statement as a sample for the community. Mark Daniels provided three examples. It was noted that development of the statement might be a longer process than originally anticipated and that significant efforts need to be made to provide for a broad participation of the community. The HRC agreed to place this item on the next agenda as Old Business to keep the discussion moving forward.

It was noted that perhaps Public Relations related to the HRC should also be on the next agenda to continue to build awareness.

6c. The idea for a Spring panel on missing and murdered indigenous women came from a research project that was part of the same USD class taught by Dr. Julia Hellwege that produced the idea for the Fall panel. Potential panelists were discussed. Work will continue to determine the panelists, date, time, and location.

6d. Travis Letellier noted that the Home Rule Study Committee will be presenting their recommendation to the City Council at their Noon meeting on Monday, January 20, 2020. The recommendation of the Committee, on which Letellier serves, is to move forward with bringing home rule forward for the community to vote on. It was noted that the City Council would not make a decision at the Noon meeting. Given the timelines in state statute, the City Council may not begin the process immediately.

The next meeting is Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 7:00pm.

## 7. Adjourn

Moved by Mark Daniels to adjourn, seconded by Calvin Peterson.  
Motion carried 7-0 at 8:15 p.m.

Travis Letellier, Chair

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Vermillion Human Relations Commission