

Unapproved Minutes
Human Relations Commission
Thursday, March 2, 2023 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Relations Commission was called to order on Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Powell Conference room of City Hall.

1. Roll Call

Present: Jordan Bonstrom, Becky Rider, Mike Phelan, Michelle Kavanaugh (via Zoom)

Absent: Trevor Mandernach, Alexis Oskolkoff, Student Representative Deidre Whiteman

Staff Present: John Prescott, City Manager

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Rider motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of 6b - Discussion of Muslim student needs, 6c – Membership recruitment, and 6d – Leslie Gerrish email, seconded by Phelan. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Phelan motioned to approve the February 2, 2023 minutes, seconded by Rider. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Visitors to be Heard

None. Bonstrom noted that he had lined up a student group as a guest speaker but they recently cancelled their visit.

5. Old Business

5a. There was nothing new to report. The Commission decided to advance the proposed land acknowledgement statement that had been previously developed forward to the City Council without any further adjustments. The statement reads: *Our future as a community depends on recognizing our past. The City of Vermillion exists on the ancestral lands of the Oceti Sakowin and Omaha indigenous peoples. We honor and appreciate those who have the longest relationship to this place.*

5b. Selected March 28 as the next time to have a Listening Session. Will confirm if the Powell Conference Room is available for a 7pm meeting. Rider, Bonstrom, and Kavanaugh will be the Commission members attending.

5c. Bonstrom has students in his office who are addressing the pamphlet design. Mandernach had provided additional information for the pamphlet. Plan to have ready to provide to USD students arriving for the Fall 2023 semester.

6. New Business

6a. Reviewed the Brookings' non-discrimination ordinance and noted sections that may be problematic or that might take some adjustment. Requested to have the City Attorney review and offer comments for the next meeting.

6b. Muslim student group is looking for a regular place to pray. They have been using the Danforth Chapel on campus and a room in the MUC. They need the space five times a day. The Commission brainstormed potential locations for consideration. The Commission requested to have this item on the next agenda.

6c. Three terms are expiring with the first meeting in May. The Commission asked staff to contact those who had recently applied for the opening to let them know of the upcoming openings. The Commission would like to have the City Council make appointments at their April 17th meeting so that members are in place for the May 4th meeting.

6d. Reviewed an email that Leslie Gerrish had sent to the City Council and Commission. The City Council had not yet met since their February 21 meeting where comments were offered about the Black History month proclamation. The Commission did express interest in learning more about the housing study.

7. Standing Business

The following upcoming community events were noticed: Festival of Nations at USD on March 5 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm, March 31 is the Trans Day of Visibility, March is both Intellectual and Development Disabilities Awareness month and Women's History month, and Wacipi is planned for April 15 and 16, 2023.

8. Adjourn

Moved by Phelan to adjourn, seconded by Rider. Motion carried unanimously at 6:47 p.m.

Jordan Bonstrom, Chair

Vermillion Human Relations Commission