



~ M I N U T E S ~

SPECIAL MEETING

City of Redlands Human Relations Commission
Council Chambers, Civic Center Plaza - 35 Cajon Street, Redlands, CA
Monday, November 23, 2015

PRESENT: Edward Gomez, Chair; Carole Coley, Secretary; Commissioners Judith Ashton, Donald Singer, Swathi Balaji (Student); Council Liaison Paul Barich, Staff Liaison Officer Chris Mead

ABSENT: Commissioners Gretchen Andrews, Gail Howard, Evelyn Maldonado, Ronald Venegas. (It should be noted that Commissioner Andrews is unable to attend HRC meetings for the next six months due to familial circumstances that demand her presence and attention. She has requested approval for these absences, which was granted by the body **by formal motion**).

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gomez called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Commission by formal motion approved the meeting agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Commission by formal motion approved (with one abstention due to one commissioner's absence at the last meeting) without corrections the minutes of the November 16, 2015 meeting.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Redlands resident Patricia Sacks spoke briefly on ways that she would like to see the city revitalize the vacant Redlands Mall, noting that she had previously addressed City Council on this and homelessness issues that confront the city.

Redlands resident Nancy Blastos questioned the amended ordinance concerning the homeless and wanted to be assured that they are not being arbitrarily rounded up, handcuffed, and taken away. It was suggested that after the meeting to meet briefly with Officer Mead for clarification of the amended ordinance.

Independent writer-director-producer and Yucaipa resident Dimitri Stoupis spoke of calling for a petition to the city, state, and the President of the United States to create a Department of Culture on the basis that such a move would improve news gathering and reporting of everyday activities of citizens and their cultures. [**Note:** Mr. Stoupis' letter to the commission explaining his rationale is on file and will be made available upon request.]

University of Redlands student Elana Rabb presented concerns regarding the lack of inclusion at the University. They alleged that although the campus is diverse, all are not included. They are concerned that the University is graduating students that don't possess an understanding of how to hold a respectful conversation with persons of different races and cultures. She lamented that there were not enough faculty members and administrators of color, citing that the faculty was approximately 79% white. The students are calling for more continued responsive action from the University.

Rabb was joined by students Jordon Ward, Jamine Rene, and Jewel Patterson and noted their demands, for which they were seeking support, include academics, student life, admissions, residential life, and finance. [**Note:** A list of these demands is on file and will be made available upon request.]

V. ACTION ITEMS

None.

VI. PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. *January Retreat Agenda*

The first meeting of the HRC is scheduled for Saturday, January 23, 2016, at the Lugonia Senior Center, 112 Lugonia Avenue in Redlands and will herald the first of two community forums on race. After coffee and donuts/bagels at 8:30 a.m., the meeting will begin at 9:00 and conclude at 10:00 and will include annual election of officers and other necessary items. The forum will begin at 10:00 a.m. Gomez noted that he is hoping that the HRC is able to secure participation from the Redlands Police Department but has been notified by the Chief of Police that a 'buy-in' for him to appear must first be secured from City Council. Council Liaison Barich, however, assured that a representative from the police department would be there.

After calling for suggestions from those from the public who were present, Citizens Action for Peace representative Jan Harvey recommended showing the video *White Like Me* in a room apart from the meeting room at the Lugonia Senior Center..

Keith Osajima, Professor and Director of the Race and Ethnic Studies Program at the University of Redlands, agreed to speak on "Unconscious Bias."

Jewel Patterson, a University of Redlands student, recommended having panels dealing with high school and college youth with a discussion on curricula and communities of color.

A suggestion that representatives from the Black Lives Matter movement be invited to participate in the forum with institutional racism being the forum's umbrella.

UOR student Jordon Ward suggested that at the forum students should have the opportunity to speak to dealing with racism in Redlands and how the social, political, and economics structure of Redlands is defined. Additionally, he stressed that diversity training for youth to include cultural competency should be included in schools.

Based on recent comments made before City Council by representatives from the Redlands Tea Party Patriots regarding Syrian refugees, it was noted that the subject of immigration should perhaps be included in the forum. However, Gomez stated that the January forum is the first one to be held and a later one will be held during the year when this topic can be fully introduced and discussed.

In other discussions, Jim Herries, applied geographer with Esri, attended this meeting to present an idea to the Commission for which he asked assistance. He stated that Esri founder and president Jack Dangermond had attended a conference in Boston and became enamored with the idea of mapping 'inequalities' and returned to see if it could be done in Redlands. It was generally agreed that there are issues of inequalities in Redlands that could be mapped, i.e., arrests, housing, income levels or economic status,

poverty, etc. Herries noted that he would like to engage with the HRC in developing this idea. It was suggested that 'mapping' be included as part of the January forum.

B. *MLK Essay Contest*

Commissioner Ashton presented two options for the essay: one dealing with the *I Have A Dream* speech and one that deals with peaceful communities. The former was selected as the topic of the essay with the deadline for the contest set for January 19 and a presentation of the winner during February, Black History Month. Winner(s) will be presented with a plaque.

C. *Humanitarian of the Year Award Criteria*

Commissioners were reminded to cite what they consider criteria for the award and to be prepared to present what should be considered in making a decision on those who are nominated for this award in 2016.

Due to time constraints, the balance of the agenda was suspended and ***the Commission by formal motion approved adjournment.***

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. with the next meeting being held at 9:00 a.m. and will be preceded by coffee and donuts/bagels at 8:30 a.m. on **Saturday, January 23, 2016** at the Lugonia Senior Center, 112 Lugonia Avenue in Redlands. Afterward, the forum will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Carole Coley, Secretary
January 4, 2016