

## **Owatonna Human Rights Commission Minutes – March 11, 2025**

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, in the Meeting Room of the Charles S. Crandall Center. Vice-Chair Bjore called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Commissioner Hansen took a roll call, present were Commission Members Jessica Bjore, Jennifer Hansen, Sherry Hill, Mustafe Ismael, Julia Seykora and Edgar Esquivel, City Administrator Busse and Administrative Coordinator Clawson. Commissioner Member Jim Gunderson was unable to attend.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Commissioner Bjore welcomed everyone to the meeting. Commissioner Hansen made a motion to approve the agenda, Commissioner Hill seconded the motion, and all members present voted aye in approval. During review of the February OHRC Meeting Minutes, Commissioner Bjore requested a correction regarding the OHRC tent, the tent approved and ordered is white with a full-color logo displayed. Commissioner Hansen made a motion for approval with this correction, Commissioner Bjore seconded the motion, and all members present voted aye in approval.

### **ITEM OF DISCUSSION – 2025 OHRC Activities**

- 1) March 18<sup>th</sup> – HomeTown Credit Union (HTCU) Annual Meeting. Commissioners Gunderson and Bjore plan to attend to receive a \$500 donation requested by HTCU Board Director, Ethan Cords. Other commission members were encouraged to also attend if available.
- 2) April 30<sup>th</sup> - Owatonna Community Connect at Four Seasons – Commissioner Gunderson reserved a table for OHRC use at this event. Commissioners were asked to review their calendars prior to the April OHRC Meeting for availability at this event.
- 3) Downtown Thursdays – held on the first Thursday of each month during June to September.

Commissioner Bjore commented she may not be able to attend all four sessions. Commissioner Seykora commented there will be five sessions planned this year; July 24<sup>th</sup> will be a Downtown Thursday event when the Model-T Convention is in town. Commissioner Seykora asked how many of five Downtown Thursday events will the OHRC plan to participate in? City Administrator Busse commented that last year, the OHRC participated in only one Downtown Thursday event; OHRC was present at the September event as a kick-off to the 2024 Welcome Week.

Commissioner Hansen commented that tentative plans were to display 6-8 books at each monthly event; but, if OHRC attends only one event, there should be 18-24 books available during this event. She suggested human books be available in one-hour increments between 5-7 pm; five books per hour would require 10 human books be available to check out and an additional 10 books offered by scanning the QR code on the book's poster. She commented that the largest task preparing for this event is to secure the human books, she asked all commissioners commit they ask three or four people be

books and she will share her list of suggested subject matter.

Commissioner Bjore confirmed the tent is ordered and banners will be prepared by Legacy Sign after the tent is received; the banners will be sized to fit within the tent.

4) Welcome Week – Soccer Game

Commission members discussed whether the game should be held at another location and agreed the teams participating prefer to play at Daiken Soccer Fields. Increased promotion of the event to encourage spectators would be easier than finding new teams to participate. City Administrator Busse commented that someone will need to contact the Soccer Association to confirm the availability of Daiken Fields and file an Event Permit. Participant T-shirts and additional plans will be discussed at the next OHRC Meeting.

5) Steele County 2025 Health Fair – September 10<sup>th</sup> at the Four Seasons Centre. Commission Members were asked to keep this date open; Commissioners Hansen and Bjore will participate with other groups. OHRC participation will be discussed at future meetings when event information is available.

**Commissioner's Comments:**

Commissioner Hill commented she was tasked to revamp the OHRC Newsletter but prefers to prepare a short article for the local newspaper. She has drafted an article which will be shared with commission members for discussion during the April OHRC Meeting. A copy will also be sent to Deanna Sheely, Communications Manager, the article includes the city's support of the OHRC. She asked if future additional articles could feature other city boards or commissions, City Administrator Busse encouraged her to promote the OHRC activities.

Administrative Coordinator Clawson commented that the application for commission/board openings will be posted on the city's website within the next few weeks. Mayor Jessop is contacting current members whose terms expire this year and are eligible for reappointment if they wish to continue to serve. The application will be posted when confirmed which boards have current openings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:28 p.m., Commissioner Seykora made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Hill seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned. The next OHRC Meeting is planned for Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator