

Owatonna Human Rights Commission Minutes

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, in the Meeting Room of the Charles S. Crandall Center. Chairman Jim Gunderson called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Commissioner Hansen took roll call: Commissioners Jim Gunderson, Jessica Bjore, Edgar Esquivel, Jennifer Hansen, Mustafe Ismael, Sherry Hill, City Administrator Busse; and Administrative Coordinator Clawson and Ethan Cords were present. Commissioner Julia Seykora was unable to attend.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Commissioner Gunderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and the new OHRC member, Sherry Hill was introduced. Mayor Kuntz recommended Sherry for council appointment during their October 1st meeting. The council approved this recommendation and Mayor Kuntz administered Sherry the Oath of Office during that Council Meeting. Following a brief exchange of personal introductions, Commissioner Bjore made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion, all members present voted aye in approval.

After review of Minutes of the last meeting, September 10, 2024, Commissioner Hansen made a motion to approve as presented, Commissioner Gunderson seconded the motion, all members present voted aye in approval.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commission Chairman Gunderson commented the main activities of the commission are Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Welcome Week. Another activity the OHRC has been involved in for the past two years is Owatonna Connect at Trinity Lutheran Church in April.

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

OHRC E-mail Account

Administrative Coordinator Clawson commented the IT Department directed the OHRC e-mail account to her Outlook to view messages and forward as needed. She reviewed the account, and no messages were present for response.

2025 MLK Jr Day Event Monday, January 20, 2025

There was a brief discussion on plans for the 2025 MLK Jr Day event. The speaker, venue, and cater will be the same as last year. Commissioner Gunderson commented he spoke with Riverland Community College, they requested detail of previous contributions and communications made. Commissioner Hansen presented a \$100 donation from Rainbowatonna towards the MLK Jr. Day event.

Commissioner Gunderson commented that the OHRC should have a separate Facebook page. Ethan Cords presented a sample page he designed for the OHRC with the OHRC Mural

as the background. City Administrator Busse commented the city has a Facebook page and separate pages are not needed for each board. With the new branding effort, the city needs consistency and have some control of what is posted. Commissioner Bjore commented timing is key, blasts should be daily prior to an event.

Administrative Coordinator Clawson commented that the OHRC should utilize the social media advertising Scott Limberg Productions offers on the screens posted in most local restaurants. There is no charge for non-profit groups, Scott requests a slide be sent to him via e-mail five weeks prior to the event. A slide will show for 15 seconds, if there is a lot of information, you should prepare two slides, and each slide will show for 7.5 seconds.

Commission Promotion

Slides from the Human Library and pictures from the Meeting on the Field will be posted to the City's website. Commissioner Bjore will follow-up with Legacy Signs for quote of larger Welcome Week banners for consideration. City Administrator Busse commented OHRC commissioners could receive polo shirts with the city's new logo. Commissioner Hansen made a motion to purchase polo shirts for each OHRC member, Commissioner Bjore seconded the motion. Administrative Coordinator Clawson will work with Communications Manager Deanna Sheely and Oak Glen Gear for OHRC member shirts.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

City Administrator Busse commented that the city has received requests for a community center. A Community Center Task Force was formed, they just held their first meeting as they begin to tackle the discussion about a potential community center. The panel consists of 20 members selected to represent a variety of groups and residents. Commissioner Gunderson commented that the OHRC should be a member representative in this group. City Administrator Busse commented this panel will determine what type of community center is needed within the community, this is not the Welcome Center the OHRC has previously discussed. Commissioner Bjore commented that OHRC will hopefully have an office or space at the Oak Hill project proposed at the former Mayo Clinic near the Fareway Store. Commissioner Hansen commented that the city has a lot of planning to do before we know what options we would have for a community center. Commissioner Gunderson commented he would like to know what the vision is for a center as it would be nice to have a Welcome Office within the community center.

Commissioner Mustafe commented the Adult Learning Center would like to learn more about the OHRC and asked if one or two members would make a presentation during one of their

meetings. Commissioner Gunderson commented he would be able to do this and will reach out to them and asked everyone to let him know if any civic groups are looking for speakers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ruth Klawiter commented she is a nurse at the Mayo Clinic and has been following OHRC activities for several years. She asked how the commission relates with community members, information should be transparent to the public. Residents should be shown how they could become more involved with social justice within the community. Commissioner Gunderson commented that the OHRC is an advisory board to the City Council. The Mission Statement is to assist with any type of discrimination matter and help educate the community and provide venues for community members to come together. Mrs. Klawiter commented the Human Library was a good idea, there were some good stories about community members shared. Commissioner Hansen commented that is what the Human Library was intended to do, many realize many similarities exist. We are challenged to get new subject books and present in a friendly manner.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:38 p.m., Commissioner Hansen made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Hill seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned. The next OHRC Meeting is planned for Tuesday, November 12th at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator