



CITY OF MADISON, INDIANA

Meeting of the Human Relations Commission

Thursday, August 16, 2018, 9:00 AM
City Hall Conference Room

MINUTES

Approved June 26, 2019

Present: Nathan Montoya (Chair), Sue Livers (Vice-Chair), Bob Pimlott (Secretary/Treasurer), Bill Johnson, Shirley Kloepfer, Allen Watson

Absent: Chris Albers, Bob Canida

Guests: A. J. Brammer, India Cooper, Andrew Forrester, Vinal Lee, Katrina Pekich-Bundy, Annie Schroeder, James E. Smith, Nancy Watson, Rev. Evelyn Wheeler

- I. Meeting was called to order at 9:03 AM by Chair, Nathan Montoya.
- II. Minutes of the August 2, 2018 HRC meeting were distributed and reviewed and corrected. A motion was made by Bill Johnson to approve the minutes with corrections. Motion was seconded by Sue Livers. All in favor. Motion passed.
- III. There was lengthy discussion of the content and presentation of the HRC's position statement vis-à-vis the pending visit to Madison by members of the KKK. Bob Pimlott put forth a motion, which he subsequently withdrew when he had to leave the meeting early to meet professional obligations. Bill Johnson continued the minutes after Bob Pimlott's departure.

After considerable further discussion, Bill Johnson put forth the same motion as Bob Pimlott, in compliance with Robert's Rules of Order, but splitting the motion into two motions. First motion made: To reuse the statement from 2017, "The Human Relations Commission and the Office of the Mayor of the City of Madison affirm the inherent worth, dignity, and equality of all people, and declare any message of hate or discrimination to be counter to the values of our diverse and inclusive community," and to place the statement as an ad in the Madison Courier, to be paid for with private funds, if necessary. Sue Livers seconded the motion, after which there was, yet again, considerable discussion. Nathan Montoya summarized the history of the

statement and clarified the charge and limitations of the HRC. Pastor James E. Smith, a guest at this meeting, expressed concern regarding wording used in the past by the newspaper. The word “ignore” was used in an article prior to the KKK rally in 2016. Pastor Smith encouraged us to discuss “what are our values as a city?” Nancy Watson, a guest at this meeting, asserted that we need to challenge present day reality. There were suggestions regarding various ways in which the statement could be put forward. Community members present offered support for using this statement again. It was stressed by several persons that an on-going initiative is the approach needed in our community. This way we are not responding to a KKK rally, but taking a more proactive, long-term stance. It was agreed that other groups in town might choose to affirm this statement along with a more specific statement of their own. The Chair called for a vote, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Bill Johnson then presented the second motion, “to seek the official support and affirmation of the Madison City Council and the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners in the promotion of the statement.” Sue Livers seconded the motion, and there was no further discussion. The vote was called by the Chair, and the motion passed unanimously.

Nathan Montoya gave an overview of a 30-page publication entitled "Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Resource Guide" offered by the Southern Poverty Law Center. The ten points are: 1. Act, 2. Join Forces, 3. Support the Victims, 4. Speak Up, 5. Educate Yourself, 6. Create An Alternative, 7., Pressure Leaders, 8. Stay Engaged, 9. Teach Acceptance, 10, Dig Deeper. It was suggested that a web link to this document be provided on the City of Madison website.

Allen Watson made the following motion: “That the Human Relations Commission find creative ways to utilize the resource, “Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Resource Guide.”” Shirley Kloepfer seconded the motion. Having no further discussion on the motion, a vote was called by the Chair, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Update regarding Kindness Matters mural, and NAMI/CIT status:

A brief statement of support on behalf of the city was sent to the Madison Community Foundation to seek a grant in order to fund a Kindness Matters mural.

Nathan Montoya, gave a report from a recent meeting held by Carri Dirksen with Healthy Communities Initiative of Jefferson County. Pastor Jeff Pflug will follow up with the leaders in Dearborn County folks with CIT if they would allow Jefferson County to send some folks to be trained as a way to evaluate the viability of replicating a CIT here in the Madison area.

V. New business:

Shirley Kloepfer expressed concern for the mental health of the children of Hispanic parents who are undocumented. Shirley said three parents have been detained for deportment and the local Hispanic community is fearful more may come. She went on to state her frustration at the paid advertisement played on local radio stations produced by One Nation who claims "Indiana has millions of illegals." This language and the frequency of the ads create anxiety in the Hispanic children and families. "The children live in constant fear." Ms. Kloepfer will be gone for five weeks this fall and expressed her concern and plan for offering support to the Hispanic community while she is out of town. The annual Hispanic Festival is Saturday, September 15th at Broadway Fountain Park.

VI. Open discussion:

Nathan Montoya brought to the meeting a copy of the August 13, 2018 Madison Courier. The headline read "Twice as many Hoosiers die annually by suicide than by homicide." There was an article in the same issue about Kevin Hines who would be speaking at Hanover College regarding his personal journey after attempting suicide.

Meeting adjourned by Chair, Nathan Montoya at 10:41 AM. Next meeting date TBD.

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert L. Pimlott (Secretary/Treasurer) and Bill Johnson