

Owatonna Human Rights Commission – Minutes

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, August 10, 2021, in the Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall. At 5:30 p.m. Vice Chairman Cords called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioners Cords, Gillespie, Emanuelson, Vanoosbree, Effertz and Worden. Also present were City Administrator Busse and Administrative Specialist Clawson.

Commissioner Cords welcomed everyone to the meeting and lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Cords commented OHRC has resumed holding In-person Meetings with the option of virtual participation with Commissioner Worden participating virtually during this meeting. Clawson advised the Agenda was corrected to include Approval of Agenda and not Election of Officers which was completed during the OHRC June Meeting. With these changes made, Commissioner Worden made a motion to approve the Agenda, Commissioner Gillespie seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Cords, Effertz, Emanuelson, Gillespie, Vanoosbree and Worden, with no other votes, the motion carried.

Minutes of the July 13, 2021, OHRC Meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Emanuelson made a motion to approve as presented and Commissioner Worden seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Cords, Effertz, Emanuelson, Gillespie, Vanoosbree and Worden, with no other votes, the motion carried.

During Commissioner Comments, Commissioner Gillespie requested commissioner recommendations for topics or engagement opportunities on the Engage Owatonna's website. Rebecca Moore and Todd Buegler spoke during the July OHRC about their groups online platform offering opportunity for the community to listen, share and connect. Commissioner Gunderson commented he is preparing summary of local information included in the MN House Select Committee's Racial Justice Report to the Legislature on December 22, 2020; he believes this topic could lead towards discussion on the Critical Race Theory (CRT). Commissioner Gillespie commented CRT is currently a hot topic with many misinformed; the Engage Owatonna Taskforce does not believe current discussion on CRT would generate productive discussion, she asked Commissioner Emanuelson forward her a copy of his report for consideration. Commissioner Gillespie suggested OHRC members attend an ISD#176 School Board Meeting to make a comment regarding CRT. All commissioners thought this would be a good opportunity for community connection; Commissioner Effertz stated the commission should simply present the commission's current Mission Statement. City Administrator Busse asked for suggestions of 2022 MLK Day/Day of Service Activities, many cities offer this program, and this could also be suggested as a conversation topic on the Engage Owatonna website.

Commissioner Worden gave a brief update on the OHRC Mural Project. He met with Artist DeLaitsch and Girl Scout Leader Jodie Smith to discuss the mural plans. This project includes thirteen concrete panels located on the city trail near the Blast. During discussion, the agreed the Girl Scouts will frame the project and paint the outer three panels on each side and Artist DeLaitsch to paint six inner panels. Painting of the seventh inner panel has not been decided. Project timeline was discussed, Artist DeLaitsch advised he would be available next July-September, and the Girl Scouts offered to begin their portion this year or next spring. During discussion, the commissioners agreed it would be best for the project to begin and end during the same year as winter weather would impact prepping and sealing the surface. Artist DeLaitsch has verbally agreed to receive \$9,600 for his services. A contract will be prepared listing responsibilities, project scope, timeframe and cost. Commissioner members suggested the Girl Scouts begin next Spring when outdoor temperatures meet paint requirements and Artist DeLaitsch finalize the project, Commissioner Worden will request a brief artist's sketch of the proposed project to share with City Council during their Study Session next week.

At 6:00 p.m., Commissioner Gunderson joined the meeting.

Commissioner Cords prepared a proposal for a \$11,700 OHRC 2022 Budget Request:

- \$2,800 advertisement on the LED Billboard on Hoffman Avenue (quarterly ad at \$700 each)
- \$1,400 OHRC Member training (\$200 per OHRC member)
- \$1,500 Alliance for Greater Equity community activity
- \$5,000 OHRC Mural Project
- \$1,000 MLK/Day of Service speaker or program options

Commissioner Gillespie requested review of the current OHRC Budget and YTD expenses. There is currently \$2,600 available; Commissioner Gillespie made a motion to allocate \$2,600 towards the mural project, Commissioner Emanuelson seconded the motion. During discussion, Commissioner Worden commented the mural contract includes a \$400 expense to power wash the panels which could be done this year or City Administrator Busse commented she will ask if City Staff would do this. Commissioner Cords amended the motion to allocate \$2,200 to the project fund; Commissioner Gunderson seconded this motion. With a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Cords, Effertz, Emanuelson, Gillespie, Vanoosbree, Worden and Gunderson, no other votes were heard, and the motion carried. The commissioner then voted on the original motion to allocate \$2,600 to the project fund if no expense incurred this year for power washing the wall panels; with a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Cords, Effertz, Emanuelson, Gillespie, Vanoosbree, Worden and Gunderson, no other votes were heard, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Gillespie asked members to prioritize activities planned during 2022; she considers completion of the mural the highest priority and suggested other items should be scaled back in the Budget Proposal. After discussion, Commissioner Emanuelson made a motion for an OHRC 2022 Budget Proposal of \$4,200 including:

- \$3,000 OHRC Mural Project (balance needed to meet \$9,600 project cost)
- 1,000 Community Engagement (AGE or MLK, Day of Service activities)
- 200 OHRC Member training
- \$4,200 Proposed 2022 OHRC Budget Request

Commissioner Worden seconded this motion, with a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Cords, Effertz, Emanuelson, Gillespie, Vanoosbree, Worden and Gunderson, no other votes were heard, and the motion carried. Commission Chairman Gunderson and Vice Chairman Cords plan to present this proposal to City Council during the Study Session on August 17th at 5:30 p.m.

At 6:23 p.m., Commissioner Effertz made motion to adjourn, Commissioner Emanuelson seconded this motion, with no objections, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 14th at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Specialist