

## DULUTH AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, March 19, 2012 – 5:15 p.m.

Room 303, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor City Hall

### MEETING SUMMARY

**Present:** Babette Sandman, Terry Goodsky, Terry Smith, Donna Bergstrom, Ricky DeFoe, Ron Hagland, Priscilla Fairbanks.

**Staff:** Char McLennan, Ben VanTassel

1. Meeting was called to order at 5:17
2. **Approval of Agenda and February Meeting minutes** was made by Terry Smith and Seconded by Donna Bergstrom. The agenda and minutes were approved. Introductions were made.
3. **Old Business**
  - a. Review of Mission Statement: Gabrielle Peltier is working with the Commission to draft a Mission Statement. He will bring it to the April meeting for review and approval.
  - b. Review and approve the 2012 Work Plan: Donna Bergstrom moved and Terry Smith seconded approval of the Work Plan. The motion carried. Donna also asked that Commission members approve a Forum date at the next meeting.
  - c. Review and approve Commission Member Job Description: The job description was not approved. Members expressed concern that the work they do and the Commission itself was not valued by the Mayor. They stated that they Mayor referred to the Commission as a 'buffer' between him and the American Indian community and they found that word offensive. Commission members also expressed frustration because they did not have input into who the Mayor appointed when there were openings on the DAIC. They would like an opportunity to review the names of those who have applied and provide input to the Mayor about the most suitable candidates among the possible appointees. Members decided they would like to schedule a meeting with the Mayor to discuss this and other issues.
4. **Committee Recap**
  - a. Housing Committee: People from AICHO were invited to speak. See New Business (b).
  - b. Health Committee: Today is Native American HIV awareness day. Call CAIR for information.
  - c. Education Committee: Ron Hagland made a motion, seconded by Donna Bergstrom, to join with UMD and ISD #709 to draft action plan to address student achievement gaps.
  - d. Crime Committee: There will be a Human Traffic meeting on 4/9 at Mending the Sacred Hoop. Community Police Office Wright did not attend the meeting today.
  - e. Child Welfare – Members stated that domestic violence getting worse and would like to have some discussion with the Police department about this topic.
  - f. Civilian Review Board: An ordinance was drafted by the City Attorney's Office. Members would like to see some of the language changed and would like more input on the ordinance.

## 5. New Business

- a. ISD #709: Superintendent Bill Gronseth was invited to attend the meeting to discuss education policies and practices. He shared information about assessment and intervention policies being implemented that are showing positive results in reading and math skills. He also spoke about integrating cultural learning into the curriculum. He told them that there is Intercultural education opportunity for teachers that is scheduled for April 23rd – 25th.

Commission members also expressed concerns about student safety in the schools. The Superintendent stated that the district was addressing bullying more aggressively. A new position was filled—a Climate Coordinator—to address bullying and other safety issues. In the past, individual schools addressed safety needs, but now policies are being developed for the district. The new model will incorporate new State legislation on bullying. Carol DeVerney announced the formation of a “Bully Free Campaign”, which will be holding their first meeting in the Community Room at the CAIR Bldg.

Commissioners also asked about the rate of Native American graduation rates and about student expulsions. Bill told them that the graduation rate has risen among students. He also stated that expulsions rarely occur, maybe 1 – 2 per year, which are generally related to drug sales or extreme assault. However, he further stated that it is the drop-out rate is where many youth are lost.

- b. AICHO Giimajii Housing Project: Janell Burton and Michelle LeBoe from AICHO attended the meeting to answer questions that Commission members had about the new Giimajii Supportive Housing Project. AICHO will provide their Tenant Section Criteria to the Commission once it is finalized. Janelle stated that AICHO is striving to be transparent and to partner with the DIAC. Janelle further asked if any Commission members would participate on an Advisory Committee to provide input and feedback to AICHO on issues, policies, etc.  
John Daly, a member of AICHO’s Board further encouraged Commission members to partner with AICHO by recommending a Commission member to sit on the AICHO Board. Janelle also announced that AICHO will be holding an Open House at Giimajii housing project on Wed. April 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. DIAC Chairs were invited to speak at the Open House—all were invited.
- c. City Departments: Commissioners discussed inviting various City Departments to DIAC meetings. Those they expressed interest in inviting included the Parks & Rec Department (invite for April), the Police, Human Rights Departments and the Arts Commission.
- d. City Council Discussion: Commission members identified the following topics to discuss with City Council members, CRB, Education, and Child Welfare. Commission members also expressed interest in setting up a meeting with Mayor Ness. At the April meeting, members will identify topics for discussion with the Mayor.
- e. Feast & Forum: Donna announced that she had applied for a grant from the Duluth Superior Community Foundation and that she is working to find a sponsor agency. She asked that the Commission think about possible locations and that a decision for the location of the Forum be made at the April meeting.

## 6. Announcements

- a. Terry Goodsky announced that a Pow Wow will be held at Northland College in WI on March 24<sup>th</sup> and another to be held at the College of St. Scholastica on Sat. April 1<sup>st</sup>.

- b. Donna Bergstrom announced that she had looked into signage costs at Sharing Access. They charge 75 cents per letter or \$8 per foot. She stated that this cost could be tied into a language grant. It was also suggested that the Commission check with the Legacy Fund about applying for funds to help support the signage. Donna wrote a grant application to the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.
- c. The Duluth American Indian Commission along with the Human Rights Commission are encouraging attendance at a meeting where the MN Commissioner of Education, Brenda Cassellius and Department staff who will present information about Minnesota's No Child Left Behind waiver request and plans for a new accountability system. Teachers, parents, administrators, and interested community members are invited to attend this public meeting to be held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3:30 PM in the Denfeld High School (44<sup>th</sup> Ave West) Media Center.

**7. Next Meeting: April 16, 2012 at 5:15 PM**

**8. Adjournment**