

Duluth Human Rights Commission
Minutes
April 13, 2011

Commissioners Present:

Jennifer Barry, Colleen Belk, Rebecca Domagala, Allegra Henderson, Robert Kaner, Tracy Montanye, Margie Nelson, Brian Thorbjørnsen, Emily Westerlund.

Commissioners Absent:

Sheryl Boman Schneider, Cruz Mendoza, Michele Naar-Obed, Cynthia Strange, Scott Yeazle.

Others Present:

Henry Banks, Bob Grytdahl of Duluth Human Rights Office, Robin Roeser of Duluth Police Department.

Meeting called to order at 5:00pm.

Approval of Minutes:

Previous meeting minutes were unavailable.

Speaker & Discussion:

John Gilbertson from the Minnesota Department of Human Rights presented on the topic of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Plans for Minnesota Employers. John noted the following statistics:

- a.) Minnesota ranks #1 in the nation in the disproportion of white people and people of color receiving prison sentences;
- b.) African Americans in Minnesota have the highest unemployment rate in the country.

John Gilbertson and Bob Grytdahl co-facilitated a discussion that highlighted the need of employers for trained workers. Training programs must identify specific employers that the State has issued Affirmative Action Compliance certificates to, and what type of training these employers are looking for so that the training agencies can offer that type of training to disadvantaged individuals. If this could be done, it may be possible to have an effect on the rates of unemployment in communities of color.

Motion made by Allegra Henderson to implement a way to communicate the Human Rights Commission's concerns to the media. Second by Rebecca Domagala. Motion passes 9-0-0.

Business:

Bob Grytdahl presented information on a Racial Equity Logo contest being initiated by the Clayton, Jackson, McGhie Memorial, Inc., (CJMM) which he is a part of. Bob indicated that the

initiative seeks to solicit for entries of art that if selected, will be used on lapel pins, t-shirts, hats, billboards, etc. to communicate that Racial Equity is a community standard in Duluth. The winner will receive a \$1000 prize. "Racial Equity Allies" would prepare and submit a brief essay, and in exchange receive a pin. The contest, as well as the logo that emerges from it, is expected to generate discussion in Duluth about how racial equity is being established as a community standard. *Motion made by Emily Westerlund to support the project to establish racial equity as a community standard. Second by Margie Nelson. Motion passes 9-0-0.*

Reports on Community Events:

1. "Pucks Against Poverty", a program of Community Action Duluth, is scheduled for Sunday, April 17, 2011, beginning at 11:00am at the Sports Heritage Center here in Duluth.
2. "Take Back the Night" is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2011 at the Washington Center on 310 N. 1st Ave. E. here in Duluth. Doors open at 5:00pm.
3. "Day of Remembrance", marking the anniversary of the lynching of three African American men and sponsored by Clayton, Jackson, McGhie Memorial, Inc. (CJMM) is scheduled for June 15, 2011, beginning at 11:30am at the Memorial site at the corner of 1st St. and 2nd Ave. E in Duluth. More details to follow.

Motion made by Margie Nelson to adjourn. 2nd by Emily Westerlund. Motion passes 9-0-0.
Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brian Thorbjørnsen

BJ:jm