

Chaska Human Rights Minutes

Thursday, May 23

Meeting called to order at 6:30

1. Roll Call – Haga, Leggett, and Scarborough absent
Present: Bean, Carlson, Dunbar, Spreadbury, Welvaert, White
Absent: Haga, Leggett, Scarborough
2. Motion to adopt the agenda. Motion by Carlson, Second by White. Motion carried.
3. Open Forum:
Jim Accurso, U.S. Census Bureau, Minnesota Partnership Specialist, Chicago Region

Accurso presented the Census Bureau's Community Partnership and Engagement Program (CPEP). He explained Complete Count Committees (CCC) and their role to promote the US Census and encourage participation. He provided background on the Census and the importance that everyone be counted by the Census, and the challenges that prevent participation. He explained that all people will receive a flier that directs to either call the Census or complete the Census online.

Accurso explained that a CCC is a way to collaborate with the Census Bureau to receive support to promote participation in the Census. He stated that the Bureau allows the local community to take the lead and will provide support as desired. A CCC will appoint a Chair, which is the liaison to staff at the Census Bureau. CCCs can help to promote the Census to both the general population and more targeted harder to reach populations.

Dunbar asked what kind of budget is needed to support a CCC. Accurso responded that the funds needed depends on the amount of outreach that a community decides to conduct. He offered that the Census Bureau has premade materials available for communities to use in order to decrease cost. Welvaert asked how many people typically sit on a CCC. Accurso stated the number of participants might range between 3 and 12 people, and depends on the community, the size of difficult to reach populations, and the interest that exists. Welvaert asked how best to reach difficult to reach populations. Accurso mentioned that community events, church bulletins, job fairs, media messaging, op eds in the newspaper, social media, and face to face outreach are all useful approaches. Dunbar stated that she heard each count is worth \$1,500 per year and asked where those dollars go. Accurso clarified those dollars go to the State to support various government programs. Councilmember-Elect Taylor Hubbard, a meeting observer, asked whether questions are being challenged by the courts. Accurso confirmed this is the case. Hubbard asked whether respondents can omit responses on the survey. Accurso clarified that the Bureau wants respondents to respond to all questions, however an incomplete response will still count the individual. Carlson asked what the training for CCCs consists of. Accurso explained that the three-hour training provides in-depth information about how the Census works including geography, apportionment, tools to access data, and federal funding impacts.

Carlson asked the Commission about next steps, and whether there is interest to proceed. Kabat explained that there has been no decision made about the City's participation to this point. He offered that dedicating dollars or City staff time would require some discussion to determine the correct level, however using the premade materials offered by the Census Bureau to do some simple outreach is doable. Accurso noted that materials can be found on 2020Census.gov, and materials can be ordered and sent within a couple of weeks. Dunbar stated she has already asked for information to provide at the River City Days booth in July. Scarborough asked about how much of an impact CCCs have on participation rates in communities that have high participation rates. Accurso stated that CCCs do have an impact but he did not have numbers to offer on volume.

Jenny Stone, SD 112 School Board Member and Teacher

Stone shared a statement with the Commission about the need to address racism in schools and the community. She shared that the District is working with the U of MN to conduct an equity audit and this will be positive. She offered thanks to the Commission for its partnership and support in working on racial issues throughout the community.

4. Approve Minutes

Dunbar asked for a correction on page 4. She stated instead of "school board members" at her table, the minutes should state "district employees."

Motion by Carlson, Second by Dunbar. Motion Carried.

5. Treasurer's Report

Kabat reported that \$44.87 was spent on granola bars and water to support the Pow Wow which occurred last weekend. He asked the Commission whether they would be OK with this expenditure coming from their budget consistent with last year. If the expenditure is approved, the current 2019 balance would be \$1,955.13.

Motion by Carlson, seconded by White. Motion carried. Old Business

6. Old Business

a. Joint Work Session Reminder

Welvaert reminded the Commission about the joint work session to be held on June 17, 4:30-7:00 pm at the Chaska Fire Station. A representative of the League of MN Cities will present a training on open meeting law and governance best practices.

b. Update: Equity & Inclusion

Kabat summarized the staff report. Dunbar asked about the status of the letter that the Human Rights Commission drafted and published on the City website. She was hoping it would be published in the Herald but has not seen it. Other Commission members agreed. Kabat agreed to follow-up and submit to the Herald to request publication.

Carlson asked how the Human Rights Commission can assist. Kabat explained that there will be a role for more involvement as plans come together and move towards implementation. Welvaert suggested that support for the efforts being made and speaking against racism in the community is also helpful at this time. Jenny Stone added that 120 people applied to the School District's Equity Committee from which 20 people have been selected with Commissioner Leggett's assistance. Jenny Stone stated that a webpage has been created on the School District's website to share updates of the Committee's work. Spreadbury emphasized the importance of regular updates on progress is important for people who may be less connected to the School District. He offered that the Chaska Herald is a good place that many people read.

c. Update: River City Days Booth July 26-27

Welvaert shared a sign-up sheet with the Commission asking for volunteers to staff the booth. White stated that the giveaway items still have plenty except for the fans. White recommended that fans be purchased again for this year as they were a popular item. Last year the Commission spent \$325 on the fans.

Carlson motioned to spend up to \$450 to purchase fan swag items for the River City Days Booth. Second by White. Motion carried.

Welvaert asked about candy. Kabat agreed to include that in the swag purchase.

Hubbard shared some history on engagement activities with kids that the Commission did when she was on the Commission. Welvaert suggested that maybe an activity that ties to the Census would be a way to engage with kids. White offered to think about ideas to present at the next meeting. Bean offered to come to City Hall to sort through the River City Days bins in order to organize and remove dated materials. Kabat will assist.

7. New Business

- a. Dunbar asked to discuss the idea of a Complete Count Committee in more detail. Welvaert offered her support of the idea. She stated that targeting the harder to reach populations would be a good focus for a CCC. Carlson read from materials that were provided by the Census Bureau about possible participants on a CCC and suggested that multiple partners being involved would be important. Dunbar suggested that including representatives from the Somali and Hispanic populations and other harder to reach populations. Kabat stated he would present a report at the next meeting to outline a recommendation to proceed. The group agreed to have more discussion at the next meeting.

White asked that information be sent to the absent members so they have time to do some research into the Census as well.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Carlson. Second by Dunbar. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm