

1                                   **Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**  
2   **Special Meeting Minutes**  
3   **June 9, 2021**

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5                                   *Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13.D.021,*  
6                                   *Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission members, City Staff, and*  
7                                   *members of the public participated in this meeting electronically*  
8                                   *due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*  
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11 **Commissioners Present:**     Keith Allen, Amanda Becker, Etienne Djevi, Paul Haas, Richard  
12   James, Grace Lee, Kathryn Macomber, Laura Palmquist and  
13   Adepeju Solarin.  
14

15 **Youth Commissioners:**     Beverly Yiling Xie  
16

17 **Commissioners Absent:**     None  
18

19 **Staff Present:**                 Thomas Brooks, Equity, and Inclusion Manager  
20

21 **Call to Order/Roll Call**  
22

23 The Human Rights, Inclusion, and Engagement Commission (HRIEC) meeting was called to  
24 order at 6:30 p.m.  
25

26 **Approve Agenda**  
27

28 Commissioner Macomber moved and Commissioner Solarin seconded a motion to approve the  
29 Agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.  
30

31 **New Business**  
32

33         **a. Discussion on Current and Future Work Plan Direction**

34                 Chair Djevi provided a recap on the reason for a special meeting. He discussed the  
35                 possibility of the Commission getting new work items with the Equity Diversity  
36                 Manager being hired.  
37

38                 Mr. Brooks indicated the special meeting is an opportunity for the Commission to get  
39                 together and express any thought the Commissioners had, both on the existing work  
40                 plan as well as the future work plan.  
41

42                 Vice Chair Lee indicated she hoped the new Commissioners will bring new ideas and  
43                 fresh energy. While the new Commissioners are coming in middle of the current  
44                 work plan, she thought there was still opportunity to utilize the Commissioners’  
45                 passion and experience in a way that will benefit the City and residents. She noted it  
46                 can be discouraging if the Commission proposes something to the Council and the

47 Council is really not onboard, but she thought that was a part of the Commission's  
48 responsibility for the City and its residents to promote different ideas or work for the  
49 City and, if necessary, try to bring the City Council onboard.

50  
51 Mr. Brooks showed the Commission questions on current and future work plans.

52  
53 Commissioner Allen indicated what came to mind for him was that he personally did  
54 not have any interest in changing the current work plan. His interest is after a work  
55 item is completed; he really wants the Commission to evaluate if it should go onto the  
56 next years work plan. There will obviously be things that come up during the year  
57 that the Commission might want to pivot or add on, just for the fact of responding to  
58 community need.

59  
60 Commissioner Becker explained she appreciated the special meeting and some of the  
61 context she has received prior to the meeting has been really helpful. She thought in  
62 thinking about the work Plan, from her perspective as a new person coming in, there  
63 are just a few items on there. She was curious about the process and how the  
64 Commission came to creating the work plan and being able to see that in the past,  
65 some of the plans have been done by consensus workshops, or facilitation is really  
66 helpful for her and feels like a really equitable process. When she thinks about a  
67 consensus or facilitated workshop and being a part of one of those, personally for her,  
68 for the next work plan, she thought it was really helpful to understand both a vision  
69 and a mission for this Commission specifically. She understood that, looking at the  
70 strategic plan, the City has CultureBrokers, staff and she thought it was pretty clear  
71 what their vision is for the next few years, some sort of mission behind that followed  
72 by some action steps. She thought it would be interesting to try to model that same  
73 process for the Commission, understanding the Commission only meets once a month  
74 and it might be a more micro-mission statement, but she thought her only  
75 recommendation would be if the Commission could figure out what that mission  
76 statement is and have that be a part of and physically listed on the agenda every  
77 month to help guide conversations and steer conversation in the right direction. She  
78 also agreed with Commission Allen that the current work plan does not necessarily  
79 need to go away but she was curious about the items that have been completed there,  
80 if there is a debrief on those, is there a decision then on how it went and how it should  
81 move forward, sort of the process of what that looks like when a work plan item is  
82 completed.

83  
84 Commissioner Haas explained for him being a new member as well, it feels like he  
85 would rather stick with the current plan rather than develop anything new. He  
86 indicated he was more passionate about the engagement piece with the community  
87 and trying to get, not only input from the Commission, but even with regard to the  
88 next item, the commitment statement, etc., it is helpful to talk to other people in the  
89 community. If he were going to push in one direction, it would be towards the  
90 engagement piece and seeking to connect more for the work plan. He was in favor of  
91 continuing the current work plan.

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Youth Commissioner Xie agreed with Commissioner Haas regarding community engagement and thought COVID has been hard on that piece. She thought the Commission could implement more community engagement into the work plan since the Commission serves the community and all of the Commissioners are community members.

Commissioner James thought there are some things that will be continuing items on the work plan. The City Council is very interested in the Essay Contest, and he thought that is something the Council will still want to continue. The Commission started but have not finished the proclamations which is also going to be an ongoing thing because they want to be able to tie in the activities and action to go along with the proclamations. This can also involve community outreach. One the work plan everyone has, including the one Mr. Brooks presented to the Commission, there are two items that are not on the work plan that had been on there before. One is the community involvement and outreach and the other one is the proclamations. Those two things need to be added in so on the spreadsheet all of those things are listed on there. The community outreach part is something the Commission started working on a little bit but has fallen by the wayside and no one has been reporting back about that. Even though they are restrictive on COVID, it does not mean the Commission could not be thinking about and generating ideas and plans for the future. He thought these are things that will be ongoing because the community is changing and will not always be the same from year to year and work plan to work plan.

Commissioner Macomber explained she worked through each of the questions and ended up with more questions instead of answers. For the first question regarding the new tasks to come from City Administration on equity work, what modifications should be made to the current Council approved work plan. She thought that was hard for the Commission to know at this point because the Commission does not know the importance, the priority of a task that might come from the City Administration and they really have not prioritized the tasks in the current work plan to see which could be removed or delayed if another task came up because they do need to be aware of how much the Commission can accomplish with the time given. The question about which part of the work plan she was most passionate about; the engagement piece and proclamations were important to her. She thought it was powerful to take what could be just a piece of paper with no teeth and add action items, pick out specific proclamations.

Commissioner Macomber explained on the third question about what community outreach by the HRIEC look like to be effective, mostly it would be is if the community is aware of the Commission, are the communities the HRIEC trying to reach aware. She thought that was kind of hard to measure. Thoughts about a current timeline for developing the next workplan, she thought it would be nice to be jotting down ideas about that now as they begin to see the new priorities come from Mr. Brooks and CultureBrokers. She thought it was so hard to know how current and

137 future equity initiatives impact. They have to be embedded in the work the  
138 Commission is doing but she did not know what they are right now. When  
139 Commissioner Becker talked about a Mission Statement, she always goes back to  
140 their duties and functions of evaluating City outreach efforts, advising the City  
141 Council on recommendations and strategies an engaging residents and business  
142 through City Council programs. That is kind of the lens in which she used to look at  
143 things, but she thought there will be some major changes as a result of the  
144 CultureBrokers reports and Mr. Brooks's work and observations. Much of it will be  
145 internal to the City but much of it involving the Commission and community and she  
146 did not think there was sufficient information yet. She would be happy if the  
147 Commission could pick out three or four high priority items and drill down into them  
148 the strategies and tactics and develop those outcome measures moving forward.

149  
150 Commissioner Peju thought most of her comments were going to be emphasis. In  
151 line with what Commissioners Allen and Haas have shared she agrees with. She also  
152 agreed with what Commissioner Macomber has talked about. Specifically, since the  
153 new Commissioners have come on, her role is to evaluate everything mentioned but  
154 what she has observed so far as when it is either CultureBrokers or staff or the City  
155 still figuring out stuff, the Commission would need enough time to support the work  
156 itself. As Commissioner Macomber mentioned that is still in flux for the City  
157 leadership and all of that together.

158  
159 Commissioner Palmquist echoed the new Commissioners and indicated she was  
160 happy with where the work plan is currently at and she thought it was really helpful  
161 being new, coming in and seeing what the Commission is currently working on. She  
162 wanted to specifically echo Commissioner Haas on sticking with what the  
163 Commission has got and then the emphasis on engagement. It sounds like everyone  
164 is pretty passionate about that so finding a way on how to put a lead on it. She  
165 thought it is something they will all be focusing on in their own way, so engagement  
166 is a tough one, specifically looking at it as a specific work plan topic. She thought the  
167 current equity plan is really good coming from what the City Council wants. She  
168 indicated she was really happy with where the Commission is at right now and she  
169 thought the subgroups help to with the engagement and driving them forward as a  
170 Commission.

171  
172 Vice Chair Lee explained she was fine with the current plan and made sense. She  
173 agreed with sticking with that and finishing out and as they go evaluate things and  
174 when the Commission starts to work on next year's work plan to evaluate and  
175 consider if the Commission wanted to continue to do that. For her, personally, the  
176 City Council are elected officials that are supposed to serve the resident and the City,  
177 and she did not really care what they want to do every year. She thought it was the  
178 Commission's responsibility to engage with the community and find out what is  
179 helpful and useful and what the residents would like to see happen. Also, the  
180 Commission can use their own thought and judgement to determine what they think is  
181 best for the residents. She thought the proclamations are good as well to bring to

182 light different educational topics. She wanted to add that while the Commission does  
183 have this work plan that is being worked on, when things come up, she thought the  
184 Commission does have the flexibility to work on other items as well.

185  
186 Chair Djevi explained by going back to the past a little bit, one thing he has to pause  
187 over, over the last several years has been to take a two-handed approach. When the  
188 City and different City departments have specific activities or programs that need  
189 engagement of the community, the Commission could be a liaison and help do the  
190 community engagement. For example, Just Deed, staff did most of the work and the  
191 Commission took a look at it to see if they agreed that it was something they could  
192 encourage the City Council to take on and to be able to do that they were also  
193 supposed to reach out to the community as well as to the commitment on the  
194 CultureBrokers. Specific programs that the City has and need engagement on, the  
195 Commissioners could be helpful in doing part of the engagement. That would mean  
196 that the Commission knows who to engage and who are the stakeholders so there is a  
197 plan in place to help. This is where, once the Strategic Action Plan comes out and  
198 finalized, the Commission will need to know the specific things that the  
199 Commissioners need to do.

200  
201 Chair Djevi indicated that is one approach, the second approach is, when he  
202 interviewed, one thing the Council was pretty particular about was the desire to reach  
203 out to people who traditionally do not get involved in city government and this is  
204 where, in thinking about different ways of engaging people in minority communities,  
205 particularly in other marginalized groups, using the proclamations could be a way of  
206 inviting people to participate in something that is of interest for them. Something that  
207 they could see themselves in and that is how having activities linked to proclamations  
208 came about. This is also getting a diversity group, for example, in the parade, became  
209 something. The question always is going to be “from where we are, where do we  
210 go”. He believed that some of the activities that the Commission has proposed  
211 around proclamations, around the parade are specific methods of reaching out to the  
212 community and getting people engaged. If they get to a point where CultureBrokers  
213 and Mr. Brooks have different ways of doing things better than he thought they can  
214 get involved. He thought the only strategy here is to better their engagement  
215 processes so that they actually do the engagement as opposed to talking a lot about it.

216  
217 Chair Djevi explained what he was hearing from everyone is that they want to do  
218 engagement and are flexible about adding things from CultureBrokers and Mr.  
219 Brooks that they may have for the Commission to work on. Hopefully, the City  
220 Department, as they need engagement from the community, will involve the  
221 Commission and the Commission will get more tasks. He thought the Commission  
222 should continue with the current work plan and as things come up the Commission  
223 will modify what can be modified and maybe combine what need to be combined so  
224 the Commission is effective reaching out to the community.

225

226 Commissioner James agreed with the focus being on community involvement. He  
227 thought they needed a subgroup or a new subgroup to come back with some basic  
228 plans and ideas or have a specific agenda item each month to talk about community  
229 involvement for new ideas.

230  
231 Mr. Brooks explained he appreciated everyone's commitment to weigh in on this and  
232 have a healthy discussion. This discussion is not unique to the Roseville HRIEC.  
233 Many of the HRIEC's in other communities are having the same type of discussions  
234 as well. The HRIEC's need to always evaluate where they are, what their role is in  
235 all of this, and he did think that the one thing that is unique about this Commission is  
236 that the Commission does have the added task of engagement. As a City, they are  
237 still thinking through this and many of the Commissioners have alluded that so much  
238 is still in flux and are still working through so many of the details that come with the  
239 equity action plan and some of the other initiatives that are happening throughout the  
240 City, but his group is getting to work on a communication plan that would include  
241 how they want to communicate to staff and to the community, how they want to  
242 educate the community and staff. He thought as he continued to work on that he will  
243 certainly invite the Commission into that decision as they get some more progress on  
244 it and learn about how this should all work out. He thought one of the things the  
245 Commission can do and should do, individually and maybe as a collective group, is  
246 solidify what each persons' network is.

247  
248 Commissioner Peju indicated she would like more guidance, less from the  
249 Commission and more from City leadership, especially with time sensitive items.

250  
251 Mr. Brooks indicated guidance from staff is coming as they work through the  
252 communication plan.

253  
254 **b. Discussion on Support of 2021 Proclamations**

255 Chair Djevi indicated this item is to gain consensus on HRIEC support of 2021  
256 Proclamations.

257  
258 Commissioner Allen explained he and Commissioner Macomber met and came up  
259 with a list of recommendations for the Commission to look at to decide to move  
260 forward but the list is not complete yet. He indicated he was thinking about this a lot  
261 and from looking at this, his view is that they need a bunch of people to serve on this  
262 Proclamations subgroup in order to look forward and determine what is going to be  
263 done in each month for each proclamation. This is an ongoing project, and you do  
264 not want to repeat things year after year, doing the same thing. Every year there  
265 should be at least one different thing done in the month that the Commission is  
266 looking at doing. He saw this as something the subgroup would meet regularly and  
267 report back to the Commission for more input and ideas.

268  
269 Chair Djevi hoped that when the Commission looks at all of the Proclamations, try to  
270 find concrete activities, whether it is education or policy change, it should not be

271 viewed as the responsibility of two people. It is everyone's responsibility. In the past  
272 he has proposed that each Commission should come up with educational  
273 programming or policy changes and propose it to the whole group as opposed to two  
274 people being in charge of having to find those things that have to be done. This is  
275 also where he needs each Commissioner to tell him what they are passionate about  
276 and what they want to work on so there is a concrete plan for the next six to twelve  
277 months. He would like for everyone to come prepared to the next meeting indicating  
278 what proclamation they want to work on.

279  
280 Vice Chair Lee thought the report from Commissioners James and Macomber was a  
281 great report with really good ideas. She thought one of the suggestions was to  
282 coordinate more with Nine North and she indicated once the Commission is able to  
283 meet more in person maybe they could include Nine North in recognizing the  
284 Proclamations and doing some sort of programming for some of them.

285  
286 Chair Djevi agreed and thought the Commission needed to be proactive and reach out  
287 to the communities.

288  
289 Commissioner James indicated he was willing to continue as the lead person if the  
290 Commission would like him to do that, but he needs structure to feel comfortable and  
291 be able to work.

292  
293 Commissioner Peju left the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

294  
295 Commissioner Becker agreed with Commissioner James. She thought if the goal is to  
296 get a process around the proclamations than starting with the list of suggestions is a  
297 perfect entry point for these subgroups. She thought Commissioners James and  
298 Macomber already put a lot of work into this and felt this provides a good enough  
299 framework to get the proclamation process going.

300  
301 Chair Djevi concurred.

302  
303 Mr. Brooks thought there may be a problem if all of the Commissioners gravitate  
304 toward the same few proclamations there will still be more work to be done. He  
305 thought the Commission could come up with a few suggestions for at least a few of  
306 the proclamations so they can all get covered in the next meeting and not have  
307 everyone gravitate to a few proclamations.

308  
309 Chair Djevi noted if people do not come prepared to take a proclamation, then he will  
310 assign them to the Commissioners.

311  
312 **Adjournment**

313  
314 Commissioner Macomber moved and Commissioner Allen seconded a motion to adjourn.  
315 Motion passed unanimously.

316

317 Chair Djevi adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

318

319 Respectfully submitted,

320

321 Sue Osbeck

322 *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*