

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Date: August 12, 2013
Item No.: 10.a

Department Approval

City Manager Approval



Item Description: Human Right Commission Meeting with the City Council

BACKGROUND

Each year, the Human Rights Commission meets with the City Council to review activities and accomplishments and to discuss the upcoming year's work plan and issues that may be considered.

Activities

1. Wrote successful grant to Bush Foundation for \$2,500 for community dialogues
2. With grant proceeds organized and promoted two 'Creating a Safe & Connected Community' dialogues
3. Organized programs related to constitutional amendments on gay marriage and voter identification
4. Co-sponsored and promoted two events with Shoreview Human Rights Commission
5. Commission training on Communications through Small Groups
6. Finalized Commission Meeting Rules & Procedures
7. Participated in Police Department's New American Forum with local Karen community
8. Updated HRC Brochure and HRC Webpage
9. Student Essay Contest
10. Youth Commissioners organized several gatherings of high school youth interested in Human Rights; and Chair spoke on human rights issues with student minority groups at Roseville High School
11. Participated in Rosefest Parade
12. Continued to promote civic engagement efforts as a way to achieve responsive government and create community on the neighborhood level

Accomplishments

1. Provided public forum on concerns and issues of Roseville citizens relating to human rights and civic engagement
2. Achieved higher profile in Roseville community
3. Continued to expand public understanding of human rights and appreciation of diversity
4. Involved more residents in work of commission through concerted and intentional recruitment efforts
5. Developed effective relations with local press in order to achieve coverage
6. Collaborated effectively with other Roseville groups and governmental entities

Work Plan items for 2013-2014

[Items 1-7 are adopted from the 2013-2014 Strategic Plan approved last spring and updated on

July 8 in preparation for the joint meeting with Council.]

1. Whenever possible enlist others in the work of Commission as exemplified by planning for last spring's dialogues
2. Continue working with neighboring cities and Roseville groups and organizations, to sponsor and/or co-sponsor various initiatives relative to our purpose and mission
3. Develop and expand a communication network, such as a media site or listserv of Roseville residents, organizations, businesses, and churches
4. When participants agree and when feasible televise HRC events so as to make programs/events more accessible to the Roseville community
5. Develop programs to encourage and assist in the development of neighborhood groups, forums, and networks in order to provide residents with a sense of belonging and facilitate effective citizen engagement
6. Build upon current programs and diversity dialogues with a focus on local and state issues to encourage recognition and respect for civil and human rights, and mutual understanding and appreciation of the community's diversity
7. Continue to consider whether and how the commission should take positions on issues impacting human and civil rights while maintaining focus with the HRC's purpose, and so advise the City Council
8. Focus on ethnic minorities, including new immigrants
9. Continue to explore ways to involve dialogue participants in achieving implementation of some of this spring's dialogue small group priorities/projects

Issues for Discussion with City Council

1. Support to the HRC should be commensurate with level of support the City provides other commissions;
2. In order to be sustainable the Commission needs to better prioritize its work, and if possible confirm that those priorities conform to the Council's expectations;
3. Consider low-energy and sustainable ways to develop programs suitable for the Roseville community on human rights and civic engagement issues;
4. Action needs to be taken on the Commission's recommendation to create a Civic Engagement Commission focused on the implementation of the sixty specific recommendations contained in its task force final report; and
5. Current Commission can only do so much with current resources. Staff need to proactively seek out other ways to support the Commission's work, such as aggressively searching out grant opportunities, internships, allowing Commission direct access to its own webpage on the city's website, and developing more aggressive community and press outreach.