



**CITY OF YPSILANTI
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, September 22, 2014
7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to at 7:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Benjamin Elmgren	Present
Claudia Pettit	Present
Arika Lycan	Absent
Krista Nordberg	Present
Glen Sard	Present
Darlene Scott	Present
John Shuler, Chair	Present
Jennifer Symanns	Present

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Elmgren moved, supported by Commissioner Pettit to approve the agenda as submitted.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- August 25, 2014

Commissioner Shuler made the following change; page six, fifth paragraph change invite to invitation.

Commission Symanns moved, supported by Commissioner Elmgren to approve the minutes as amended.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Latino/Hispanic Forum.

Commissioner Shuler stated he saw the invitations have been sent. Mr. Shuler asked if the Commission should send an RSVP.

Commissioner Sard responded an RSVP was not asked for in the invitation. However, it would be a good idea to send a follow-up email requesting a RSVP. Mr. Sard added the response should be sent by the Clerk.

Commissioner Shuler asked the Clerk to inform the Commission of the attendance list two weeks before the forum.

Commissioner Pettitt asked the Clerk to inform the Commission if no RSVPs are received. Ms. Pettitt added this will allow the Commission time to call those invited to see if they are able to attend.

Commissioner Scott asked if the question portion of the forum has been clarified.

Commissioner Symanns responded it will be a 3X5 card format.

Commissioner Shuler stated the 3X5 card format will allow the Commission to consolidate questions as well as answer any remaining questions after the forum has concluded.

Commissioner Scott asked if email addresses should be written on the 3X5 cards.

Commissioner Shuler stated the Commission could publish a questions and answers sheet on the website in order to make questions visible to the public.

Commissioner Sard asked if the sub-committee should meet a final time to finalize the forum.

Commissioner Symanns asked if the sub-committee would include discussion of the post-forum evaluation.

Commissioner Nordberg added Adreanna Waller has information to add to the evaluation.

Commissioner Shuler asked if there is an agenda for the forum.

Commissioner Scott responded the agenda can be announced at the forum.

Commissioner Scott asked if the Commission had received the draft resolution for the County ID program.

Karla Slazar, WICIR, stated the County ID is going before the County Ways and Means Committee which will examine its economic feasibility. Ms. Salazar added it is her organization's intention to gain the support of the Human Relations Commission before it goes to Council to request a resolution of support.

Commissioner Elmgren stated a motion would be in order to add this item to the discussion.

Commissioner Nordberg moved, supported by Commissioner Scott to add County ID program to the Section VI of the agenda.

Commission Shuler asked if there is any information on what the resolution looks like.

Ms. Salazar explained the program would cost \$25 for each applicant, a rubric would explain what items would be needed to fulfill the ID requirements.

Commissioner Shuler what does the ID legally provide.

Melissa Stek, WICIR, responded Washtenaw County taskforce put an information packet together.

Commissioner Symanns asked the WICIR representation if they were asking for comments or are you asking for a recommendation to Council.

Ms. Salazar responded her organization was referred by the Mayor to the Human Relations Commission to help construct the language of the resolution, and follow-up with the Commission through the process.

Commissioner Shuler asked what the timeline is.

Ms. Salazar responded the County Commission will be voting on this item in November, if it approved by the Ways and Means committee in October.

Commissioner Shuler asked how the implementation of this process will be designed.

Ms. Salazar replied the program will be incremental, the program still requires outside funding mechanisms so at the moment the exact schedule is not available.

Commissioner Symanns asked if other cities or townships have been approached in the County.

Ms. Salazar replied other jurisdictions have not been approached. However police chiefs in all communities have agreed to the usefulness of this program to law enforcement.

Commissioner Petitt asked if ID holders could use it to vote.

Ms. Salazar stated the ID could be used at airports and things such as that.

Commissioner Nordberg added the ID could be used to rent an apartment or open a bank account.

Ms. Salazar stated there is support from County leadership.

Commissioner Shuler asked if passed by the County would it automatically take effect in municipalities or would it need to be accepted by the individual jurisdictions.

Council Member Murdock responded it is within the authority of the County to produce a county ID.

Commissioner Symanns stated it is less concerning on who is going to accept it.

Commissioner Elmgren stated it will more likely be an issue of acceptance of the administration rather than creating an ordinance stating it will adhere to the County ID program.

Ms. Salazar stated all institutions in the County need to be reached out to in order to educate the principals of the program. Ms. Salazar added a large motivating factor of this program is law enforcement, individuals without ID are less likely to report crimes and more likely to flee when crimes are committed.

Commissioner Symanns stated this would be a benefit to transgender individuals who identify as a gender different than what there ID states.

Ms. Salazar added it can be a mental health issue, a feeling of self-worth and a sense of belonging.

Commissioner Symanns asked for clarification of difficulties of obtaining a state ID.

Ms. Salazar replied undocumented workers do not qualify and homeless individuals have issues due to their transient status, lack of address.

Ms. Stek stated it is the attention to include who is affected by the lack of an ID.

Commissioner Symanns asked which chiefs of police are behind this program.

Ms. Salazar responded all chiefs in the county are in support of this program.

Commissioner Symanns stated as a former police officer it is understandable why law enforcement would be in favor of this program.

Commissioner Shuler asked if people who do not have an address are unable to obtain a state ID.

Ms. Salazar responded it is one instance why individuals are not able to obtain a state ID.

Commissioner Symanns stated homeless individuals can use a P.O. Box or a shelter as an address.

Commissioner Shuler asked if Washtenaw County is the only county in the state that would provide this service. Mr. Shuler added the reason he asked is if an individual outside the County could obtain a County ID from Washtenaw.

Ms. Salazar responded the individual would need proof of residency.

Ms. Stek stated there is a list of possible documents needed listed in the packet.

Ms. Salazar stated the County ID system abides by a point system which each document provided has a point attached, applicants would need to earn 300 points.

Commissioner Symanns stated she would need to see a presentation or be provided more information before placing a vote.

Commissioner Shuler asked if WICIR is seeking recommendation from the HRC or is it your intention for the HRC vote on a resolution of support.

Ms. Salazar asked if Council would prefer to be provided with a presentation.

Commissioner Shuler responded he does not feel a presentation is necessary however a packet detailing the County ID program in advance and a representative

be present for questions. Mr. Shuler asked Council Member Murdock if there is something more formalized he would like from the Commission.

Council Member Murdock responded the Commission has provided good information. Mr. Murdock added Council is well versed in the details of this program so a whole presentation may not be needed.

Commissioner Nordberg stated an obstacle, especially for the elderly, is obtaining a birth certificate which in some cases that is not possible.

Ms. Salazar thanked Council for their input and stated they will be kept informed of progress for the County ID initiative.

Commissioner Nordberg added when money is involved things become more difficult with a greater showing of support in the County would be helpful in passing this resolution.

Commissioner Sard asked if a formal resolution has gone before the County.

Council Member Murdock explained this item should come before the County Commission on October 8th; City Council meets on October 7th. Mr. Murdock added the intention is to support the process not necessarily go into the detail.

Commissioner Nordberg asked Mr. Murdock if this matter is going before Council or are you asking for the support of the Human Relations Commission.

Council Member Murdock responded this issue is timely as well as localized and could be passed easily. Mr. Murdock added he hopes to bring it before Council at the October 7th meeting.

Commission Shuler asked if the resolution already had sponsorship for the resolution.

Council Member Murdock replied the matter was brought up during Council Proposed business.

Commission Nordberg asked if the Commission as a body was not comfortable passing a resolution of support at this time.

Commissioner Symanns replied it does not appear Council needs the support of the Commission.

Ms. Salazar stated the initial strategy was created as a resolution regarding immigration enforcement, national order for immigration family relief and the County ID. Ms. Salazar added this issue was more pertinent due to its effect on a larger cross section of the population.

Commissioner Sard stated he felt the strategy was sound, bringing it as one resolution may create a difficulty passing it.

Council Member Murdock stated there are many other issues involved in this process, possibly the Commission could explore other issue such as; how the police department handles immigration situations, relationship with I.C.E., and possibly Ypsilanti becoming a safe haven. Mr. Murdock added a simple issue would be adding immigration status to the City's non-discrimination clause.

Commissioner Symanns asked that the Commission be provided with the comments of the individual regarding issues with the Heritage Festival.

Commissioner Shuler asked if the issue should be added to the next meeting's agenda and the individual invited to address the Commission.

Commissioner Symanns replied she would prefer to see the comments before making any decisions.

Commissioner Shuler stated he is not inclined to make decisions based on transcript and would like to ask the individual questions. Mr. Shuler asked if the Commission had any objections with adding the issue to the next meeting's agenda.

Commissioner Sard stated he would like to read the comments before inviting the individual and adding the issue to an agenda.

Commissioner Scott asked why the comments would matter individuals have always been allowed to come and address the Commission.

Commissioner Elmgren asked if the Heritage Festival is operated by the City or by a private organization. Mr. Elmgren added if the festival is operated by a private organization why is the Commission discussing the matter.

Commissioner Shuler responded it is an event held in the City.

Commissioner Sard added that a lot of what the Commission does is an investigation of issues occurring in the City that affects residents, those employed in the City and visitors.

Commissioner Symanns stated based on the referral from City Council and emails she expected there to be a representation of the “Boycott Israel” movement in attendance.

Commissioner Scott asked what the Commission’s role in that situation.

Commissioner Shuler responded the Commission’s role would be to understand both sides of the issue and decide how the Commission would proceed from that point.

Commissioner Symanns stated until someone asks for the Commission to make a recommendation to Council she is not sure what should be done.

Commissioner Shuler responded Council referred the organization to the Commission.

Commissioner Elmgren stated if this item will be added to a future agenda the Commission should examine the financial activity of the City and if it is invested in any Israeli products.

Commissioner Sard stated the Commission’s charge is to examine issues affecting those who live, work and visit the City. This is not a local issue.

Commissioner Scott asked how this matter aligns with the charge given to the Commission.

Commissioner Sard stated if individuals come and address the Commission than the Commission should listen and decide how it wishes to move forward, until then the Commission should not move on this item.

Commissioner Elmgren asked that a “Proposed Business” section be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Symanns asked for the “Audience Participation” section to be moved after the minutes.

The Commission directed the Human Relations Commission Clerk to add a second “Audience Participation” section at the end of the agenda.

VII. NEXT MEETING DATE

October 27, 2014

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Elmgren moved, supported by Commissioner Symanns to adjourn the meeting.

On a voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.