

APPROVED



**CITY OF YPSILANTI
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, August 25, 2014
7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

6 Present; 2 Absent (Elmgren, Lycan)

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Scott moved, supported by Commissioner Nordberg to approve the agenda as submitted.

On a voice vote, the motion carried and the agenda was approved.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- July 28, 2014

Commissioner Nordberg moved, supported by Commissioner Sard to approve the minutes as submitted.

On a voice vote, the motion carried and the minutes were approved.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Review/Approve Latino/Hispanic Forum proposal.

Commissioner Sard stated he, Commissioner Nordberg, and Commissioner Scott created a format for the presentation. Mr. Sard said Charo Ledon (Accion Buenos Vecinos), Adreanne Waller (Washtenaw County), and Martha Valdez have partnered with the Human Relations Commission and submitted how they prefer to have their contribution to the presentation structured. Mr. Sard stated Commissioners involved in the sub-committee and outside partners have narrowed possible forum dates to October 9th and 16th depending on what date works best for the Commission.

Commissioner Shuler asked if all individuals involved agreed on either dates.

Commissioner Scott responded yes, the sub-committee and forum partners have agreed on both dates, except for Martha Valdez, who has not provided her preference.

Commissioner Sard asked if either the 9th or 16th of October worked best with the Commission's schedules.

Commissioner Shuler asked if Felipe Riano would be invited to the forum.

Commissioner Nordberg responded the sub-committee would like to involve him, and will extend an invite once he returns in September.

Commissioner Sard explained he would have presented the Commission with a draft invitation however there was not time to complete it before the meeting. Mr. Sard stated he modified an email which could be used as an invitation. The email contains all the basic information that the invitation would include with a few minor changes to the structure of the forum. Mr. Sard informed the Commission that the forum would be 90 minutes total including; a 5 minutes introduction, a 40 minute presentation, and a 45 minute question and answer section. Mr. Sard added the presentation would contain two parts; the EBV Survey and myths of immigration.

Commissioner Symanns stated she is available both dates.

Commissioner Petitt stated she is only available on October 9th.

Commissioner Shuler asked if Martha Valdez and Felipe Riano agreed to participate would that change the forum structure.

Commissioner Sard responded one change that may occur is Mr. Riano would provide his perspective on youth and the school system.

Commissioner Sard asked if the items listed in the invite focus on the survey.

Commissioner Nordberg responded items 1 through 5 focuses on the survey.

Commissioner Sard added item 6 focuses on immigration, expelling the myths associated with the topic.

Commissioner Shuler asked if there was something unique that Charo Ledon would bring to the presentation.

Commissioner Sard responded Charo Ledon and Addreanne Waller developed the presentation with the addition of Martha Valdez's perspective regarding immigration.

Commissioner Nordberg stated it is the intention of the sub-committee to provide a cohesive and manageable presentation involving research developed from the EBV survey to provide the public with general information regarding this topic, such as "neighbors you don't know and why..."

Commissioner Sard stated the forum could take two directions, it could begin as a small event and expand into something larger and more publicized providing more specific detail. Mr. Sard added this initiative could be directed by community leaders. Mr. Sard emphasized the need for the initial forum to be generalized. Mr. Sard explained the initial forum should be designed to inform community leaders before the topic be brought to the attention of the greater population.

Commissioner Shuler asked if the presentation would be administered by a moderator.

Commissioner Nordberg responded Adreanne Waller would provide the bulk of the presentation. Ms. Nordberg explained that Charo Ledon, during the June 10th presentation provided an overview of the presentation while Ms. Waller went into detail of the survey.

Commissioner Scott stated that Ms. Ledon did an excellent job illustrating what the purpose of the survey was.

Charo Ledon, Accion Buenos Vecinos, stated that she had a discussion with Ms. Waller about touching on community stressors, immigration was not placed in the top ten of issues because it is outside the sphere of influence of their perspective organizations.

Ms. Ledon stated that she and her partners would be happy to adjust their presentation to reflect issues more related to Ypsilanti.

Commissioner Nordberg stated the Commission had not heard from Martha Valdez and asked if Ms. Ledon had heard from her.

Ms. Ledon responded Ms. Valdez is currently on vacation in California and asked if the Commission expected someone from Ms. Valdez's organization would be present to speak at the forum.

Commissioner Nordberg stated that she and Ms. Waller thought Ms. Valdez could discuss myths surrounding immigration.

Commissioner Sard asked if Felipe Riano would be willing to participate in the forum.

Ms. Ledon responded that Mr. Riano will be returning tomorrow, August 26th.

Commissioner Sard asked if Mr. Riano would be willing to speak at the forum regarding youth and the school system.

Ms. Ledon replied she thinks Mr. Riano would be willing to participate.

Commissioner Sard stated the invitation can be modified to include Mr. Riano's participation.

Ms. Ledon stated she and Ms. Waller are meeting with Mr. Riano and his father tomorrow and will ask if he is interested. Ms. Ledon asked if she should contact individuals involved in the last meeting to add their insight to the agenda item regarding myths of immigration.

Commissioner Nordberg responded yes.

Commissioner Sard asked if this individual would be a back-up for Ms. Valdez.

Ms. Ledon responded no, they would work together. Ms. Ledon suggested Melanie Harner as a lead contact as Ms. Valdez is often out of town.

Commissioner Sard stated the Commission is thinking of scheduling the forum on either October 9th or 16th, with the 9th as the most ideal date. Mr. Sard asked if Ms. Ledon could contact an individual that could provide their insight on the myths of immigration. Mr. Sard also asked Ms. Ledon to contact Mr. Riano to discuss Latino youth and the school system.

Ms. Ledon asked if there is an email that could be sent to Ms. Valdez.

Commissioner Scott stated that Ms. Valdez has been included in the email chain discussing this forum.

Commissioner Sard asked if Ms. Ledon would contact Ms. Harner or if the Commission should contact her.

Ms. Ledon replied either way would be fine, but Ms. Harner may like the Commission to contact her.

Commissioner Nordberg asked if Commissioner Sard would contact Ms. Harner.

Commissioner Sard responded he would contact Ms. Harner.

Commissioner Shuler asked Ms. Ledon if demographic spatial trends could be discussed during item 1 and focus on who these people are and where they live. Mr. Shuler asked if this could be done as an introduction.

Ms. Ledon responded the County has that data and she believes Ms. Waller would be able to obtain this data.

Commissioner Sard stated he agreed with Commissioner Shuler it would be valuable information.

Commissioner Nordberg stated she would prefer locations not be too specific. Commissioner Scott stated zip codes would be specific enough in terms of location.

Commissioner Sard stated that he would like to see growth projections in the presentation.

Commissioner Scott said the Commission should offer an evaluation as a follow-up to the forum.

Commissioner Symanns responded the Commission has an evaluation form.

Commissioner Scott responded there should be something designed specifically to this forum since this is a topic the Commission has never addressed.

Commissioner Sard added a specific evaluation tool would be useful as the topic is specific to one demographic.

Commissioner Pettitt asked if there would be an RSVP in place to ensure attendance.

Commissioner Sard responded Council Members Robb and Murdock as well as Mayor Schreiber have given tentative agreements to attend. Mr. Sard did say that they will require RSVP's from others invited.

Ms. Ledon stated at the June 10 meeting an evaluation was given asking if the information was useful in the presentation. Also, "to get involved cards" were handed out so individuals or organizations could volunteer.

Commissioner Scott stated when you have the opportunity to speak with an audience those in attendance should be asked what they will do with the information they have been provided.

Commissioner Sard stated provided the Commission is in agreement considering the topics, once a firm date is decided the invites will be sent as soon as possible.

Commissioner Nordberg stated there is still a meeting scheduled before the forum leaving plenty of time.

Commissioner Sard responded there is time however the invite for government officials needs to be sent.

Commissioner Scott stated the invitation needs to provide information about how this initiative began and who is involved.

Commissioner Shuler stated he liked the informational content and asked what the forum will look like structurally; how will people be seated, will there be a moderator, how will questions be asked.

Commissioner Sard responded since the initial forum is planned to address community leaders there is not a plan to use a moderator.

Commissioner Shuler stated although this meeting is not going to be advertised it still will require a public notice. Mr. Shuler added he would be more comfortable having a more structured forum because it would take one individual to spark interest in the public creating a much larger audience than planned.

Commissioner Sard asked who would be the ideal person to moderate.

Commissioner Shuler responded it depends on what course the forum takes, allowing only 5 minutes for each question may take a person to expedite the process and ensure single questions do not take up too much of the forum.

Commissioner Symanns asked if Commissioner Shuler were advocating 3X5 cards.

Commissioner Shuler responded not necessarily, however with limited time for questions the 3X5 cards could allow questions to be answered after the forum.

Commissioner Sard asked if Mr. Shuler were suggesting we should allow more time for questions. Mr. Sard added his thought was that community leaders would prefer to speak in person but they may also want to ask questions anonymously.

Ms. Ledon stated 3x5 cards could include email addresses so that questions could be answered after the fact, the downside is others in attendance would not hear the answers.

Commissioner Shuler responded he wanted to ensure all questions were public. Mr. Shuler added a questions and answer sheet could be published to cover questions not answered during the allotted time.

Commissioner Scott stated the Commission should not limit itself to a certain structure of the forum.

Commissioner Shuler stated the forum should be scheduled for two hours. Mr. Shuler asked if there are any other rules the Commission would like to add to the forum, such as not allowing protest signs inside the forum.

Commissioner Nordberg stated those protesting the forum should be allowed to bring protesting materials into the forum. Ms. Nordberg added the information being presented is not controversial.

Commissioner Shuler responded he does not think there will be an issue he simply wants to plan for every scenario.

Ms. Ledon stated during the U of M reagents meeting discussing undocumented immigrants applying for instate tuition, had many in attendance but all were respectful and no issues arose.

Commissioner Symanns stated the forum is not designed to advocate only to present information.

Commissioner Sard asked if the Commission require RSVPs to attend the forum to avoid any disturbance. Mr. Sard also asked what individual would be the best to moderate the forum.

Commissioner Shuler responded the moderator should be a person with experience with this type of scenario.

Commissioner Symanns asked how this forum is different from other forums the Commission has held. Ms. Symanns added Commissioner Shuler has moderated the forums in the past, why have an outside moderator.

Commissioner Shuler responded he would be comfortable with moderating, however he would prefer to sit and listen. Mr. Shuler recommended State Representative David Rutledge be the moderator.

Commissioner Nordberg responded no, if Representative Rutledge were to moderate it would politicize the information presented. Ms. Nordberg offered to be the moderator.

Commissioner Symanns stated she would assist in the moderation.

Commissioner Shuler asked if the forum should have a police presence.

Commissioner Nordberg responded no.

Commissioner Symanns stated she feels strongly against having a police presence adding if needed the police department is close to the forum location.

Commissioner Shuler asked if the police should be notified of the forum in order to prepare them if there is an issue.

Commissioner Symanns responded as a former police officer she is familiar with these scenarios and police are often made aware of forums before they take place. Ms. Symanns added she does not believe there will be an issue based on the content of the forum.

Commissioner Scott stated the Commission decided to hold the forum as the October meeting, if this is not considered the normal meeting would the public need to be notified.

Commissioner Shuler responded that if there is no business conducted it would not be considered a meeting.

Commissioner Nordberg stated once we have a solid estimate in attendance the Commission can purchase refreshments.

Commissioner Scott asked what will be the start time of the forum.

Commissioner Sard responded he will need to confirm with the Senior Center.

Commissioner Nordberg stated a seven o'clock start time will allow those who work during the day ample time to make it to the forum.

Commissioner Symanns asked if next month the Commissioner will decide on an evaluation for the forum.

Commissioner Scott responded yes, the evaluation should be decided at the next meeting. Ms. Scott added that the evaluation should be a blend of the County's evaluation used at the June 10th forum and the evaluation the Human Relations Commission already has in place.

Commissioner Sard moved to approve the general invitation and provide the sub-committee with the authority to provide language for that invitation, supported by Commissioner Pettitt.

On a voice vote, the motion carried.

Commissioner Symanns asked that the evaluation be added to the September meeting's agenda.

Commissioner Shuler stated the forum will be held on the 9th of October beginning at 7 p.m.

VII. NEXT MEETING DATE

September 22, 2014

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Pettit moved, supported by Commissioner Nordberg to adjourn the meeting.

On a voice vote, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.