

# HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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September 13, 2018 5:30 – 7:30 pm  
CIC Room, City Hall, 300 LaPorte Ave., Fort Collins, CO

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- **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

- **ROLL CALL**

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Julia Mackewich, Colleen Conway, Victor Smith, Susan Mathre, Jessica Gengler, Cynthia Davis

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Hillel Katzir, Jean Runyon

STAFF PRESENT: Carol Thomas, Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office- Staff Liaison

- **AGENDA REVIEW**

- **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT:

**Fred Garcia**, Independent Consultant, Chair of Board of Directors for SummitStone; **Gretchen Haley**, Senior Minister of Foothills Unitarian Church; **Barb Kistler**, Co-Founder of Diversity Solutions Group, Leader of the Multicultural Community Retreat; **Kelsey Lyon**, Health Planner and Evaluation Specialist of Larimer County; **John McKay**, Assistant Director of Student Services for English Language Acquisition and Federal Programs at Poudre School District; **Mary Ontiveros**, Vice President of Diversity at Colorado State University; **Beth Sowder**, Director of Social Sustainability for the City of Fort Collins; **Alma Vigo-Morales**, Co-Founder of Diversity Solutions Group, Leader with the Multicultural Community Retreat

**Barb:**

- Advocacy: Top goals: continue to partner with the city for increased resources and attention. Would be good to do a community audit.
- Collaboration: Increase or enhance collaboration with CSU with Mary's office at CSU as well as international and cultural centers. Should host a meet and greet with new Chief of Police. Want to continue a strong relationship with social sustainability.
- Education: Critical focus should be on race and racism. City continues to sponsor retreats, which is good, but other communities do more work around restorative justice. Perhaps put together a summit?

**Fred Garcia:** Bottom line: We all have choices on how we can respond to certain situations.

- Be color-brave when something needs to be brought to the attention to the community.
- Each board and commission in the city and county should have discussions on diversity.

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**Kelsey Lyon:** runs the 5-year community health improvement plan for the county- an unfunded state mandate

- While our community prioritizes mental health care and early child healthcare, need more of an all-encompassing approach.
  - Put emphasis on diversity and leadership in workforces and boards.

**Beth Sowder:** Director of the newest city department (6 years).

- Being inclusive was one of the top goals discussed in the State of the City.
- Chief chats put on once a month.
- Definitions of terms. Want to work on them with this board.
  - Diversity, equity, inclusion
- Think this board could influence common principles of equality across all boards.
- Next Tuesday at city council will be discussing mental health services for the community with raising taxes; on the upcoming ballot.

**Colleen:** when planning HRC reunion, looked over old minutes. Noticed some of the same complaints in minutes from the 80's, 90's. Suggested listening forums

- **Kelsey:** We have a promise of what to expect from their feedback.
- **Fred:** 64-66% of Latinos are multi-generational US citizens. We need to give them a voice by speaking up with them.
- Individually board members can support mental health and present it to city council
- **Alma:**
  - Wants HRC to get a hold of its authority. Work on changing laws if they aren't effective.
  - Hold the city accountable. Evaluate plans/ goals periodically.

**Mary:** her office is 8 years old. We cannot be excellent if we are not inclusive.

- **Priorities:** Educate staff and students about free speech. What can you say/not say?
- **Difficulties:** People focusing on what they can't do rather than what they *can* do.
  - Fall Forum: diversity and inclusion were the second priority. Need to come at it from every angle to impact all sectors.
  - Remaining silent sends lots of messages.

**John:** His position broke off the department of human services then morphed into something bigger because we need to look at diversity as an asset, not an annoyance or something in the way.

- **Priorities:** After school programming, professional development, work with LGBTQ communities to properly identify themselves.
  - Should be trying to understand: what is the childhood experience? Need to look through the lense of a child. What is the experience of diverse community members?
- **Wants from HRC:** start raising our voice and awareness for the kids who don't have a voice. Why are we still stuck celebrating the iconic people (MLK, Cesar Chavez) and not the people who have contributed to communities? We need to look at diversity as an asset.

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- Poverty has no color boundary. There are expenses that are associated with everything in the city, even “free events” like New West Fest. We have a responsibility to educate.
- How are we going to speak up and hold each other accountable? We know what we should be doing but how are we going to be a voice for change?
  - Victor: Allow HRC to help by putting resources towards what everyone has already been doing (all the guests here).

### Gretchen:

- Support and partner to other organizations
- Looking at what’s next for the church:
  - Put together a fund for local immigrants who experience a sudden big change;
  - Working with the Food Bank, One Village One Family. Mobile food banks feed 80-100 families each week.
  - Thinking about how we can empower and follow the lead of the people directly impacted by these issues.
- Want HRC to help with how to look for leadership of people of color and give them real authority.
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Colleen made a motion to approve the August 2018 minutes. Cynthia Davis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

- (LIST OF TOPICS BEING ADDRESSED AT MEETING)

- Guests share the work they are doing in the area to promote equity and inclusion.
- Budget Discussion
  - Invoice in April for FoCo Speaks Out
  - \$60 taken out for poster company. \$300 was not taken out for Kaylee McGonigal. Roughly at \$2030.55. Colleen Conway will follow up via email.
  - Budget for HRC Reunion may be a little less than \$1300.
  - \$350-400 in recording fees for rest of year.
  - Cynthia Davis moved to approve budget of \$1300 for HRC Awards; Victor Smith seconded it. The Vote passed unanimously.

- **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

- (COMMITTEES, EVENT ATTENDANCE, ETC.)

- HRC Awards Updates

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- Have asked for a conversion to Spanish for online form. Move deadline to October 31st. Change deadline to Oct. 31st.
  - Everyone should communicate directly with Carol regarding the forms.
- Colleen: Vic needs to order prints for the awards (takes 6-8 weeks)
- **OTHER BUSINESS**  
(BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS, ANNOUNCEMENTS)
  - 27th: room is reserved from 4:30-8:00. Meeting 5:30-7:30.
- **ADJOURNMENT**  
Cynthia Davis made a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 PM. Seconded by Susan Mathre. The Vote passed unanimously.