

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF GOSHEN COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 7:00 P.M., Goshen City Hall, 202 S. Fifth St.

CRC members present: Anne H. Berry, Sreekala Rajagopalan, Nathan Mateer Rempel and George Smucker

Absent: Bryce Gast, Ed Ahlersmeyer, Kelly Huffman and Sandra McMasters

Consultant present: Darin Short

Others present: Matt Wimmer, Barnabas Sangbae Jun, Gilberto Perez, Jose Elizalde, Jose Chiquito, David Araujo

1. **Call to Order & Opening** at 7:00 by Nathan Mateer Rempel, Chair

- a. Nate introduced visitors Matt Wimmer, Goshen college student and Barnabas Sangbae Jun, student at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary
- b. Reflection by Bryce Gast was deferred until December
- c. Nate reviewed the agenda, noting that we will not deal with action items since we do not have a quorum. We will meet as planned to receive the Neighborhood Outreach report. Sandra's schedule has changed such that she will not be able to continue with the CRC

2. **Minutes for October 13, 2015**

With regard to #5, Vision Retreat Date and Planning, Sreekala clarified that CRC should not consider changing the CRC mission statement, but should review it lest we forget why CRC was started and why we are doing this work

3. **Treasurer's report**

Nate noted that we are coming up on the encumbrance deadline; funds for Taste of Goshen will be encumbered. The only expenses recorded in October were \$496 for vision project.

4. **Reports and statistics**

Darin Short reported no complaints were received either by phone message or by email. A verbal report was received of possible discrimination in terms of denial of access to voting due to discrepancy between the name on the individual's driver's license and the individual's voter registration. The individual was not offered a provisional ballot. Task: Nate will follow up with an attorney to assess whether action is warranted or whether referral to another authority is indicated

5. **Latino Neighborhood Outreach**

Gilberto Perez, Jose Elizalde, Jose Chiquito and David Araujo led a lively discussion on the accomplishments and status of the project

- a. The project is focused on 5 Neighborhood Associations out of 12 in Goshen
- b. Although the Contract with CRC ends in February 2016, they hope the work can continue and take the project to the next step, which would involve having Latinos participate as officers
- c. The current strategy shows the way to open the door as a pilot project via building relationships and removing language barriers
- d. Initially, many Latinos thought the Neighborhood program was only for Anglos so they never felt welcome to the block parties. Leaders are mostly Anglos
- e. It is a challenge to create spaces where people feel comfortable
- f. Equipping leaders with regard to the multicultural context—beyond simple translation—can be complicated. Plus training is indicated to address personality issues
- g. There is a complication getting families involved in that most families have younger children—may not participate due to lack of child care

- h. A new need is relocating displaced families from properties to be demolished for bypass project
- i. Many needs have surfaced: Need for street lighting—streets are dark. Crime. Sidewalks. Speeding. Graffiti. School transportation. Issues that surfaced include complaints of too loud and too much music, too many cars, too many persons
- j. Needs include a welcome program for newly arrived Latinos. Leaders need to learn the entry points to city structure to address issues by issue. To improve our neighborhoods—how do they take a message to the appropriate channel?
- k. There are neighbor disagreements and conflicts—thus need for meditation
- l. Where does CRC fit in, in terms of streaming support for these neighborhood activities?
- m. When it is important that mediation take place, who pays the bill?
- n. Can we find ways to better integrate and engage leaders among the several neighborhoods?
- o. How do we include the voice of non-Latino minorities? Can we get the demographics for the various neighborhoods?
- p. Perhaps CRC can get out in front with their own proposals and issue an RFP (request for proposal)
- q. With regard to budget, of the \$3,000 grant, all has been spent except \$1325. Project ends in February
- r. Neighborhood development is a 5-year process—we need to think intentionally about the stages from immediate objectives to the longer term
- s. In conclusion, this team is committed to bringing different ethnic groups together. Stay tuned

6. Revised MOU for Consultant to CRC

Nathan Mateer Rempel referenced the revised Memo of Understanding and asked each commissioner for feedback or support in advance of the December meeting when this contract will be an action item

7. Vision Statement

Consensus: Defer this item and process it at the up-coming retreat where more of our members will be present

8. Retreat Details

Darin Short provided an overview of the retreat scheduled for Saturday, November 14. He noted that several members of the Vision Steering Committee would be at the initial part of the retreat

8. For the good of the CRC

There was a suggestion that we find ways to connect with new City Council members and the new mayor at the start of the new year, 2016.

9. Announcements by CRC members: None

10. Adjournment: 8:50 p.m.

Next meeting is December 8, 2015

— George Smucker, Recorder pro tem