

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF GOSHEN COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION Tuesday, March 8, 2016, 7:00 P.M., Goshen City Hall, 202 S. Fifth St.

CRC members present: Bryce Gast, Ed Ahlersmeyer, Anne H. Berry, Sreekala Rajagopalan, Nathan Mateer Rempel, Rocio Diaz, David Araujo, John Ferguson

CRC members absent: Kelly Huffman

CRC consultant: Darin Short

Guests: None

1. Call to Order & Opening (7:06-7:31)

- a. Nate called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.
- b. Meeting is being live streamed via Periscope.
- c. Brief introduction of visitors
 - i. John Ferguson was introduced as a new member, appointed by the Mayor. John gave a brief introduction and gave a little of his history in Goshen. The current commissioners then introduced themselves to John.
- d. The meeting agenda was reviewed with no comments.
- e. Opening Reflection

Ed presented a brief video on abortion breakdown by demographics based on CDC statistics from 2007. Ed noted that he was surprised by the numbers, citing higher expected reasons for abortion that he would deem justifiable, including rape, incest, and health reasons. Ed noted that regardless of the reason, he believes that every life is intended and reflected on whether Goshen could come together as a community to reach a consensus, or whether the issue would always be a divisive one. He noted that this may not be an issue for the CRC, per se, and did not expect a consensus, but it is an issue that affects the community as a whole. Ed also distributed two articles, regarding additional abortion statistics from 2012 and an article regarding opposition to Planned Parenthood. Ed reiterated that he was seeking an open-minded discussion and was simply expressing his point of view on the topic.

The first response was from Anne who stated that she wants to focus more on what is happening in Goshen. Anne noted that the article and video were focused predominantly the black population, but that said population is small in Goshen. She also noted that she felt put on the spot as sole black member of CRC. Ed replied that he feels the issue transcends racial boundaries

Sreekala followed up by stating that this is a very divisive subject. She feels that every woman has a right to her own body and that the decision to have an abortion is not a light decision. She supports additional education, but feels that the subject is a very hard one to touch

David noted that he believes that Goshen is not at a point to talk about this in a civilized way. He reiterated Sreekala's thought that education is an important thing and a good starting point, but Goshen is not ready for a civilized discussion yet.

Nate noted that he has always been struck by the seemingly disparate numbers based on race and that the underlying causes may be a topic of discussion for the CRC, but a consensus would not be reached in on night.

- f. April reflection: Rocio Diaz

2. Review minutes for February 9, 2016 (7:32-7:33)

Changed date to February 9 and Members absent to Rocio Diaz.

Motion to approve the minutes (Ed, Sreekala, motion carried)

3. Treasurer's report (7:33-7:35)

Bryce presented the monthly budget report

The ICRC dues request was discussed again and presented for approval. We have not previously paid dues; however, we have been active in the ICRC as of later with Darin presenting at an ICRC meeting last summer. Darin presented additional research on the ICRC and what the dues would cover. He referenced an email sent to the commissioners on March 1 and presented the agenda from the ICRC March 10 meeting. Dues would go to fund to pay for people who cannot pay to support their own way and mailings. (Ed, David, motion carried)

4. Reports and statistics (7:35-7:46)

We received one phone call in Spanish; Rocio followed up with the caller and re-counted the conversation:

The caller had received a survey from the hospital in English for their son. The survey in question had the CRC's number on it and that is the number that the caller had dialed in order to request a Spanish language survey.

After a general discussion amongst the commissioners, it was unclear as to what the survey was in regards to or why the CRC's number was included. It was decided to put the caller in contact with Heather Bridger-Ulloa for additional follow up. Rocio was tasked with putting the two in touch.

David noted that he has been approached by a potential vendor, Honduran food, for the Taste of Goshen. He has contact information that he will provide to Darin for follow up.

Darin has been receiving information from potential vendors/volunteers. Rocio asked for contact information for some vendors for future similar event.

5. Moving forward with Vision initiatives (7:46-8:20)

Darin presented a Vision initiatives handout based on notes from the CRC retreat including, next steps, timeline, etc. Darin also noted that the handout is available on the CRC Google Docs page. He noted that he would like to prioritize the initiatives soon so we can begin acting and putting initiatives in motion. However, Darin would like to still consider community input by going to the community for input to form the plan. He wants to give the community some tangible ideas from the existing bullet points.

Sreekala questioned on how we would reach out to the community and asked if it would be via more surveys. Anne stated she would like to gauge community reaction to some examples of what we have in mind; i.e., present some options, but let community decide. Nate noted that he would strongly value community input, but that we don't want a protracted process. He is also concerned about getting a wide range of input; we want a diverse input, not necessarily the same, like-minded individuals that have been involved in the process from the beginning. Rocio stated concern about getting involved in a cyclical process of survey, interpretation, survey, interpretation.

Anne expressed support for planning and sponsoring some activities, to actualize the Vision and get the ball rolling. She suggested presenting to Neighborhood associations for additional ideas. Nate suggested sending some Vision ambassadors to neighborhoods over a multi-month process. Ed spoke in favor of engaging the youth, perhaps providing a treat at first Fridays in exchange for completing a survey of favorite activities. Nate noted that the CRC is not in the business of starting youth engagement activities ourselves, but suggested looking in to partnering with existing entities like the Boys and Girls Club.

Sreekala suggested reaching out to the existing entities before conducting more surveys. John noted that the Boys and Girls Club provides services for children aged 6-18. David suggested an open forum sponsored by the CRC for education purposes, perhaps with a sponsored speaker. Darin noted that he wants community ownership; the more ideas the better. Nate suggested that this survey should not be as open ended because we want to be able to act on something sooner rather than later. Darin suggested presenting a timeline and options at the next meeting. Sreekala suggested pursuing block parties. Rocio stated that these are existing events, with neighbors already interacting with one another. She would be more interested in a presenting a movie or high visibility award. Nate noted that a high visibility award would be quick, cheap, and easy. Darin will put together a survey for the top three choices amongst CRC members (movies, award, block party) and will have the results and a proposal for timeline to get feedback from community at the next meeting.

6. Marketing Sub-Committee Report (8:21-8:42)

Anne, Sreekala, Rocio, Kelly, and Darin met March 7th to discuss marketing. Darin noted that the meeting focused on two things, the CRC logo and a tagline for Vision. All of the resulting documents from the meeting are in Google Docs. Anne further discussed the logo, noting that the CRC is gathering a lot of logos for our satellite events and projects. The sub-committee liked the idea of developing a base logo for the CRC that could be present in a common theme among all of our events, including Vision, Taste of Goshen, etc. The marketing sub-committee would like to incorporate some keywords from our Vision project into the logo. Some options and phrases combinations were discussed. Anne will present some options at the next meeting. Nate asked if we would have the logo by the Taste of Goshen. Anne noted that it was not likely. Darin noted that we would just like a Vision logo and tagline for use at the Taste of Goshen booth for use with more information on a Vision kick-off in August. Anne will work on a Vision logo design before the Taste of Goshen and will work on tying in the other logos afterwards. The sub-committee will try to convene again before the next meeting.

7. Annual Report Draft approval (8:42-8:44)

There were minor changes to the draft since last meeting including the addition of more detailed encumbrance numbers and removal of references to the chorale. Nate will present the draft at the next available meeting on the City Council schedule.

(Ed, Bryce, motion carried)

8. Taste of Goshen activity report (8:44-9:12)

Darin noted that the planning group has met and identified ten potential members. The group is planning on approaching 8 members and using the other 2 as backups. Some vendors from last year have already approached Darin about participating again this year. The group is in the process of contacting all vendors with one to two more weeks expected to complete the task. The group has also discussed alternate layouts and have come to a consensus on the best option. The layout will be presented to DGI for approval.

Darin presented the budget to the commissioners, and highlighted the following differences from the previous budget.

- Photographer – May request a budget number for a photographer this year
- Entertainers – Anticipated \$600 this year, up from \$300 last year
- Grand Rental Items – Last year’s cost plus the cost of inflation
- Generators – An additional generator will be used, adding a cost of \$70.98
- Miscellaneous Supplies and Printing – Similar to last year’s costs.
- T-shirts – 10 new t-shirts at \$10/piece

- Producing extra t-shirts for sale was briefly discussed. This may be problematic as there are no precedents for making a profit or returning money to the general fund. Additional shirts may be produced for use by vendors.
- Credit/Debit Card Fees – A flat rate per transaction will be charged.
 - Bryce noted that we can't currently accept debit or credit card payments because we have no account to deposit them to and suggested that we direct cardholders to the nearest ATM.
- More logistics to be discussed with DGI and Clerk Treasurer
 - Can CRC take money and distribute at event?
 - Is accepting debit/credit cards acceptable?
 - Darin and Bryce to follow up with Tina.

Darin and Nate noted that the street department generator will not be provided. Other organizations/entities have been approached about providing a generator. We are currently seeking an electrician for support with generator operation and maintenance during the event.

9. For the good of the CRC

No additional comments at this time.

10. Announcements by CRC members

Sreekala noted that the international coffee shop will be at Goshen College on March 14th at 5:00. Cost is \$18 per person for food and entertainment starting at 7:00. Tickets are still available.

David asked if anyone had attended the Vibrant Communities meetings. Darin attended the countywide event. Multiple commissioners are planning on attending the upcoming event.

11. Adjournment (9:14)

Motion to adjourn (Ed, Anne, motion carried)

Next meeting is April 12, 2016

Bryce Gast, Recorder