

## MINUTES

### **Regular Meeting of the City of Goshen Community Relations Commission**

**Tuesday, April 12, 2016, 7:00 P.M., Goshen City Hall, 202 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Goshen, Indiana**

**CRC Mission:** *Our mission is to foster a climate of positive community relationships and non-discrimination in which all Goshen citizens enjoy equal opportunity for education, employment and access to public conveniences, accommodations and real property.*

**CRC Members Present:** Ed Ahlersmeyer, David Araujo, Rocio Diaz, John Ferguson, Bryce Gast, Sreekala Rajagopalan and Nathan Meteer-Rempel

**CRC Members Absent:** Anne H. Berry and Kelly Huffman

**CRC Consultant:** Darin Short

**Guests:** Richard Aguirre (Mayor's Latino Advisory Committee), Rich Meyer (Elkhart County Clubhouse), Sandra Palmer (citizen), and Mayor Jeremy Stutsman (City of Goshen)

#### **1. Call to Order & Opening (7:02-7:30)**

- a. Nathan called the meeting to order and welcomed guests, who were asked to introduce themselves (as above).
- b. Nathan added that an additional item for discussion – and not on the meeting agenda – was an update from the newly formed Mayor's Latino Advisory Committee.
- c. The ***Opening Reflection*** was offered by Rocio Diaz, expressing appreciation for the CRC and its mission. Rocio commented that the CRC can influence the thinking of various individuals and groups regarding issues of diversity. She encouraged proactivity in this regard. Rocio distributed a list of actions which might be undertaken to eliminate racist thought and behavior. She added that more might be done with our youth, who remain positively impressionable.

Ed commented that many in Goshen try to "live the list," but that too many do not. We may never achieve all that we'd like, but must still put forward the effort.

Sreekala added that much has changed through the years that she has lived in Goshen.

Nathan added that efforts must extend beyond the hosting of festivals. He noted that more must be invested in education, and listed a number of CRC initiatives that were very proactive in nature.

Darin brought attention to the CRC hotline. He suggested that in the future, the CRC may focus discussion on an issue(s) from Rocio's list. Darin added that the CRC must ensure that the voices of all citizens are heard.

#### **2. Review of Minutes for CRC Meeting of March 8, 2016 (7:30-7:34)**

***ACTION: Ed requested a language change, and moved that said change be adopted. The motion was seconded by David and passed unanimously.***

***ACTION: Further, Ed moved that the minutes of the meeting of March 8, 2016 be approved with the aforementioned change. The motion was seconded by Sreekala and was unanimously passed by members.***

#### **3. Treasurer's Report (7:34-7:36)**

Bryce reported that the CRC has paid Darin's fee for the month. He also noted a MLK Day related expense. Bryce added that the current account balance is \$44,634.

It was noted that \$1,000 has been received from Interra for the Diversity Day fund.

#### **4. Reports and Statistics (7:34-7:52)**

Darin reported an "active" hotline during the past month.

- a. Danielle Dean from the State of Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs called to introduce herself. She has heard much about Elkhart County and indicated that representatives from the State Commission will visit the County this summer.
- b. A reporter from the Elkhart Truth called, reporting that the Truth will be publishing a series of articles on the growing Latino community and requesting CRC assistance as appropriate.
- c. A citizen called, reporting an unpleasant experience at a local restaurant. Following a disagreement, the citizen was asked to leave the restaurant. A complaint was forwarded to a regional manager of the restaurant, who issued an apology. Darin commented that the CRC may log such occurrences, and may refer the parties in such a dispute to others for remediation. But, the CRC has no staff to directly investigate circumstances and take action.

The CRC also discussed recent violence at Brookside Manor and the fact that many citizens were drawing conclusions about this event, its circumstances and the people involved prior to knowing any details.

**5. Amend 2016 Slate of Officers (7:52-7:54)**

Nathan reported that John Ferguson has agreed to serve as CRC Secretary. **ACTION: Ed moved that John so serve. The motion was seconded by Rocio and was unanimously passed.**

**6. Report from the Mayor's Latino Advisory Committee (7:54-8:13)**

Richard Aguirre, with Mayor Stutsman, presented, reporting that the Mayor has formed the Committee, which will advise on issues regarding the growing Hispanic/Latino community. The group is in its organizational phase. Richard distributed a description of the responsibilities of the Committee, stating that the Committee will not duplicate CRC responsibilities.

All noted the need for communication and coordination between locally forming advocacy groups, ensuring that all minorities are not solely heard, but are actively engaged in the development of our vibrant community.

**7. Results of Vision Initiatives Survey (8:13-8:43)**

Darin distributed Survey results, noting that the presentation of a high visibility award is most popular among respondents. Said award will not only recognize past achievements, but will also establish a standard for future behavior and activity.

It was suggested that a subcommittee be formed to discuss award criteria, etc.

Darin also distributed the document, "Vision Project: Initiatives Development Proposal." Members are directed to details of the proposal contained in that document.

The CRC engaged in discussion regarding the Proposal. To some, it appears that we have already posed a number of questions to community members, only to now pose a new set of questions. The question was asked whether or not the CRC should proceed to some action based on information gathered from responses to the first questions.

There was also comment regarding the need to be aware of Vibrant Communities conversations and to coordinate as appropriate.

CRC members agreed that additional discussion is required and to continue the conversation in May.

**8. Marketing Sub-Committee Report (8:43-8:48)**

There has not been a meeting of the Committee and there is nothing to report. Design of the CRC logo remains as very important. Sreekala commented that she still prefers the "3 hands" logo with the tagline, "Many Cultures, One Community."

The Marketing Committee meeting will be rescheduled, with a report to the full CRC in April.

## 9. Taste of Goshen Activity Report (8:48-9:26)

Darin distributed the "Taste" menu and map, adding that Boys & Girls Club members will distribute same the night of the event. CRC members discussed signage and the possible inclusion of descriptive information of each represented country, culture, food, etc. It was noted by Nathan and Darin that much attention this year has been given to "Taste" logistics, and that planning for more of this description will be addressed for the 2017 "Taste."

Darin discussed the budget for "Taste," noting its increase. Rentals from Grand Rental Station are up, as are costs relating to signage and printing. He also added that the CRC will have "Taste" T-shirts printed. Springer Design is offering a 20% discount on the shirts. Shirts will be worn by CRC members and other volunteers, and by Boys & Girls Club members. Shirts will also be available for sale.

It was noted that Interra should be listed as an event sponsor.

The CRC still intends to offer sales via debit/credit cards. But, we will not advertise same, allowing for unforeseen "issues" that might prevent same.

Members discussed the possible need to utilize money from the Diversity Day fund. ***ACTION: Following said discussion, Ed moved to permit the use of up to \$500 from the Diversity Day fund for "Taste." The motion was seconded by Sreekala and was unanimously passed.***

Additional "Taste" notes:

- a. Food vendors are aware that they will not be paid the evening of the event and are "OK" with said arrangements.
- b. Ed suggested that food vendors have specific containers for returning sales tickets.
- c. It was noted that cash boxes will be required for ticket booths.
- d. Nathan is obtaining electric generators.
- e. Nathan also commented that we need to secure executed Forms W-9 from food vendors.
- f. A "Taste" volunteer sign-up sheet was distributed.

***Ed moved to approve the "Taste" budget. The motion was seconded by Bryce and was unanimously passed.***

## 10. For the Good of the CRC (9:26-9:27)

The meeting was open to comments from members or the public. None were offered.

## 11. Announcement by CRC Members (9:27-9:33)

Sreekala briefly commented on the formation of the Moral Mondays group in Elkhart County. Spearheaded in part by former Goshen Mayor Mike Puro, Moral Mondays shares much community wellness philosophy with the CRC.

## 12. Adjournment (9:33-9:35)

The next meeting of the Goshen CRC is scheduled for May 10, 2016.

***Ed moved to adjourn the CRC meeting of April 12, 2016. The motion was seconded by Bryce and was unanimously passed.***