

MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the City of Goshen Community Relations Commission

Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 7:00 P.M., Goshen City Hall, 204 East Jefferson 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, John Ferguson, Evan Miller, Sreekala Rajagopalan, Nathan Mateer-Rempel, Judy Snider and Angie Troyer

CRC Members Absent: David Araujo and Rocio Diaz

CRC Consultant Present: Darin Short

Others Attending: Lizzy Diaz and Rob Roeder

1. Call to Order & Opening (7:03 - 7:04)

- a. Angie called the meeting to order.
- b. Those in attendance introduced themselves.
- c. Angie asked that Commissioners review the evening's agenda, requesting any additions or corrections. None were offered.

2. February Reflection: Darin Short (7:04 – 7:14)

Darin briefly reviewed his evolving life, offering a basis for his interest in intercultural work. He grew up in "European-centric" Archbold, Ohio. However, his best friends were Mexican. He attended Goshen College, majoring in accounting. He spent his Study-Service Term in Costa Rica. On graduation, Darin worked at Everence in Goshen before moving to Oregon. After two years there, he and his wife returned to Goshen and Darin launched Intersights, providing intercultural consulting, training, coaching and dialogue facilitation.

Via a photograph, Darin introduced Commissioners to his diverse family.

ACTION: *David Araujo will offer a Reflection during the CRC's March, 2017 meeting.*

3. Review of Minutes for CRC Meeting of January 10, 2017 (7:14 - 7:16)

Angie asked that Commissioners review and comment on distributed minutes.

Judy noted that the amount referenced as "missing" is actually \$1,050 rather than the \$50 recorded.

ACTION: *Ed moved that, with the amount change noted immediately above, the minutes of the meeting of January 10, 2017 be approved. The motion was seconded by Evan and was unanimously passed by Commissioners.*

4. "Baby" Proposal – Ed Ahlersmeyer and Rob Roeder (7:16 – 7:41)

Ed introduced Rob, who had made a presentation recently to the City Council. Rob is very concerned with the current level of discord in our nation and suggested that we find those things on which we all agree, using these as a basis for continued positive dialogue. Rob suggested that "the baby" may be an element of our shared humanity around which all persons can agree. Everyone agrees in the innocence, the goodness and the dignity of babies.

Ed asked if Commissioners might work to draft a resolution, using "the baby" as a starting place for fostering improved community conversation and relationships.

Sreekala asked as to the relevance of this issue to the CRC's mission. She questioned whether the CRC is the proper place for this discussion.

Nate offered a concept with which we might start with "the baby" and the unifying aspects contained therein, and then develop conversation around community issues more directly appropriate to the CRC. Nate added that the City Council has never adopted the CRC principles.

Evan also questioned the relevance of this concept to the mission of the CRC, adding that time spent in developing this concept and its associated resolution might distract from more relevant activity.

Angie expressed concern that there may be various issues arise surrounding the use of “the baby” (i.e. abortion, loss of a child, etc.).

ACTION: Angie, Ed, Nate and Sreekala agreed to meet, discuss the matter further, and report to the full CRC.

5. Treasurer’s Report – Judy (7:41 - 7:49)

Judy commented that the only expenditure for the month was payment to Darin.

Commissioners discussed an apparent discrepancy over the 2017 CRC budget. Various Commissioners do not believe that the number contained on the Financial Report is accurate.

ACTION: Judy will follow-up with the Clerk’s office to secure the accurate 2017 budget amount.

6. Reports and Statistics – Darin (7:49 - 7:57)

Darin reported receiving a call from an individual, claiming that he was stopped by police. This individual believes that he was racially profiled and that this was the reason he was stopped rather than having broken any laws. Darin is investigating further.

Sreekala reported on a couple of recent episodes – one at school and the other in a local restaurant. In both, Sreekala reported that offensive comments were directed at individuals because of their race.

7. Taste of Goshen – Nate and Angie (7:57 – 8:15)

Angie reported that the CRC will sponsor Taste of Goshen at the First Friday event in May (May 5, 2017). CRC and Taste will not receive top billing at this event, as Downtown Goshen, Inc. (DGI) is having a health fair and race. CRC and our food vendors will be located west of Main Street on Washington Street. Since CRC is not the lead sponsor for the evening, our cost to participate will be reduced by \$1,200. We will also not have specified seating for Taste patrons as we have in the past.

Angie also reported that DGI does not encourage a flash dance as the CRC has discussed. Ed suggested that CRC allow Goshen High School students to be fully responsible for any such dance – if they choose to conduct the activity. Commissioners suggested that students consider the “propriety” of specific actions, style of music, etc. should they opt to proceed.

Ed reiterated that the flash dance be left entirely to the students to pursue and plan – or not.

Evan suggested that if the students pursue the activity, they should present a plan to CRC.

ACTION: Sreekala will contact Jacob Biller, student representative to the City Council and will discuss the CRC position. If students opt to stage the flash dance at the May First Friday, they will be asked to attend the March meeting of the CRC to present a plan for the activity.

ACTION: Nate suggested that Darin again assume the lead in planning of Taste. Darin agreed to do so.

8. Carrying the Vision Forward... Subcommittee Report – Darin (8:15 - 8:19)

Darin reported on recent Marketing Committee discussions regarding the translation of logos and tag lines into Español. David Araujo was asked to attend a recent meeting to offer his thoughts. After discussing several options, the Committee – and especially David – departed, feeling good about the translated version adopted.

R3 Design is currently providing Darin with various versions of the logo and tag line designs.

9. Kick-Off Event – Darin and Friends (8:19 – 8:44)

Darin presented several documents regarding the Event. Among these was a proposed budget. Sreekala reviewed the food cost portion of the budget, while Darin explained other line items contained therein.

Angie asked Commissioners if the proposed budget was affordable. Several Commissioners responded that yes, the budget is affordable. There was considerable discussion regarding estimated numbers of patrons and the impact that a larger than anticipated turn-out would have on food costs. Commissioners discussed the propriety of allowing patrons to make donations to underwrite Event costs. It was decided however, that this would not be appropriate.

ACTION: Evan proposed that the budget – less food costs – be approved and that the CRC finalize the food portion of the budget at its March meeting. The motion was seconded by Nate and was unanimously passed.

ACTION: The Marketing Committee will assume responsibility for marketing the event.

ACTION: The Kick-Off Planning Committee will ensure that RSVPs are returned prior to the next meeting of the Commission, providing Commissioners with an estimate of attendees and hence, impact on costs.

The Kick-Off will be held on March 23, 2017 from 5:00 until 7:00. Gilberto Perez and Allan Kauffman are scheduled to speak.

10. Ed's Proposal to the State – Ed (8:44 – 8:45)

Ed requested that this agenda item be stricken from the evening's CRC proceedings. He had intended to discuss an issue that was pending in the Indiana General Assembly, and perhaps, seek support from the CRC for the pending issue. Said issue has been removed from the legislature's consideration, however.

11. Retreat – Angie (8:45 – 9:02)

Following brief discussion, it was agreed that it would be useful to the CRC to convene a half-day planning meeting. Further, Commissioners agreed that having the planning meeting prior to the Kick-Off Event was important. Evan suggested that a second planning meeting would likely be needed and advisable.

ACTION: Commissioners agreed to convene a planning retreat on Saturday, March 11, 2017 beginning at 8:30 a.m. Angie will secure a location.

Darin will facilitate the CRC discussions, which will center on:

- a. Background/history of the CRC (brief conversation)
- b. Using the "Vision" to guide discussion, discuss CRC goals and objectives over the coming 5 years
- c. Measurements of success

12. Logistics – Angie (9:02 – 9:12)

Angie talked about herself and her operational style. She is very open to suggestions and comments and wants very open communication among Commissioners.

Angie also commented that she does not like "chain e-mails" and offered her reasons for feeling thusly.

Sreekala stated that regardless of the system and method used to communicate, it must be fully transparent.

Evan mentioned "Slack," a communications tool used effectively at his company. Further, Evan suggested that the CRC follow Angie's communications preference for a couple of months while Darin is exploring alternatives. There appeared to be agreement for this among Commissioners.

ACTION: Evan also suggested that the CRC allow for time at the end of each meeting for Commissioners to reflect on the evening's proceedings – the goods and bads, strengths and weaknesses, outcomes and plans, etc.

13. For the Good of the CRC – All (9:12 - 9:22)

Rob Roeder commented regarding the importance of Our Lady of Guadalupe in his life. He talked at length regarding Guadalupe's unifying influences, suggesting that the CRC consider using Guadalupe in some fashion as Commissioners pursue our mission of encouraging unity and acceptance.

14. Announcements – All (9:22 – 9:23)

Angie reported that an ordinance safeguarding rights of LGBTQ persons just was adopted in St. Joseph County.

15. Adjournment (9:23)

The next meeting of the Goshen CRC is scheduled for March 14, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at Goshen's City Hall.

Action: Nate moved to adjourn the CRC meeting of February 15, 2017. The motion was seconded by Ed and was unanimously passed.