

Community Relations Commission

July 11, 2023 minutes

Present: Cathie Cripe, Sharon Beechy, Lori Copsey, Glenn Null, E-man Monge, Casey Kasper-Welles, Ana Zamora, Kyle Richards – Commissioners

Megan Eichorn – City Council Liaison

James Ballard – Behavioral Health Response Coordinator, Goshen Police Dept.

Gina Leichty – Goshen Mayor

Call to Order & Opening

Roll call

Review of CRC Mission and Principles

Review of agenda

New business

1. Presentation by **Officer James Ballard**.

Officer Ballard described his role in working with homeless people in Goshen. He listed the social services available at Faith Mission (faith-based and low barrier), the Window, local food banks, First Light Mission, etc. He has transported people to Fort Wayne, Elkhart, Warsaw—wherever they want to go. He emphasized using a “hand-up” rather than a “hand-out” approach. Currently, 496 people in Goshen state “homeless” as their address.

2. No Treasurer’s Report at this time.

3. No Director’s Report at this time.

4. Indigenous Peoples Day

Casey reported on the committee’s planning progress. A nice variety of people will be involved that evening, including a friend of hers who started a book club for kids about indigenous authors. She will do a story time for children at our event.

5. Council Liaison

Megan shared that City Council voted on a TIF for the new residential community, Cherry Creek, planned in the south part of Goshen.

6. Closing comments and announcements

E-man asked if there was a way for people to contact the CRC while we don't have a director in the office. Gina said that calls are currently forwarded to the switchboard operator. Emails are also forwarded.

Sharon noted that with Malik no longer on the CRC, we will need a new vice-president, as well as a new Commission member in order to keep our number at nine.

Gina will continue to work with CRC on plans for finding a new director.

Officer Ballard reported on a possible program to be coordinated with Goshen Community Schools called Handle With Care. This will be pursued with the new Goshen Schools superintendent. He is also enthusiastic about another voluntary program for keeping track of the needs of elderly and mentally ill people in the city.

How/when shall we evaluate the Juneteenth celebration from last month? Cathie invited us to email her with our thoughts; we can then take it up as a discussion item at a future date.

The meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be Aug. 8th at 6:00pm.