

HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

The Human Relations Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in a Regular Human Relations Advisory Board Meeting in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E. First Street, August 26, 2009, 6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Terry Benelli, Chair
James May, Vice Chair
Rory Gilbert
Craig Cuillard
Denise Heap
Lisa Hudson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ana Cadillo
Renee Coelho
Jared Leadingham
Everette Woods

STAFF PRESENT

Mary Berumen
Denise Traves
Jennifer Hedges

GUESTS

1. Welcome and Introductions.
Ms. Benelli welcomed guests.
2. Approval of minutes from the May 27, 2009.
A motion was made by board member, Mr. Cuillard to approve the minutes. Mr. May seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
3. Items from Citizens Present.
Citizens present wished to speak regarding item 4.a. on the Human Relations Advisory Board agenda.

SUPPORT

Erica Keppler
Michele deLa Freniere
Darrel Johnson
Alberto Olivas
Sofia Tesch
Cynthia Leigh Lewis
Pamela Anders
Glen Roster
Meta Goforth-Zinn
Barbara McCullough-Jones

OPPOSE

Heather Sandstrom
Carol Souberg
Rob Hudelson
Gabriel Hudelson

4. Discussion Items/Action Items:
 - a. Hear an update, discuss, and provide direction on items presented by the:

Ad Hoc Community of Education Project Team

August 17, 2009 Project Team Meeting.

Ms. Gilbert gave a brief overview of the August 17, 2009 Project Team Meeting.

Presentation given by Human Rights Campaign.

Ms. Gilbert gave a brief overview of the presentation by Ms. Cynthia Leigh Lewis from the Human Rights Campaign Office. Assistance to the City of Mesa was offered by the Human Rights Campaign Office to gather research and data regarding Domestic Partner Registry.

Presentation given by Equality Arizona.

Ms. Gilbert gave a brief overview of the presentation by Ms. Meta Goforth-Zinn from Equality Arizona. Equality Arizona offered support in establishing a Domestic Partner Registry in the City of Mesa, including gathering research and data regarding Domestic Partner Registry.

Research on the Domestic Partner Registry.

Ms. Gilbert updated the board on the willingness from the Human Rights Campaign and Equality Arizona to assist in educating the City of Mesa Human Relations Advisory Board and Mesa residents on Domestic Partner Registry issues.

Ms. Gilbert also reported that data was gathered from different cities/towns who have adopted a Domestic Partner Registry.

Presentations from community groups and/or organizations opposed to a Domestic Partner Registry will be invited to a future subcommittee meeting.

Educating Mesa residents about the emerging communities within the City of Mesa.

Ms. Gilbert advised that the Ad Hoc Community and Education Project Team and Ad Hoc Marketing Team are joining together to educate Mesa on changing demographics and new communities.

Ad Hoc Marketing Strategies Project Team

Marketing strategies for the Human Relations Advisory Board.

Ms. Benelli updated the board that progress still needs to be made on designing or updating a new Human Relations Advisory Board Web page.

Ad Hoc Committee on Disabilities

August 17, 2009 Project Team Meeting.

Mr. Cuillard gave a brief overview of the August 17, 2009 Project Team Meeting.

1st Annual Arizona ADA Coordinator Conference on October 1, 2009.

Ms. Berumen informed the board that Project Team member's Mr. Woods and Mr. Cuillard will be attending the conference and will provide findings at the next Human Relations Advisory Board meeting.

Presentation on the City of Mesa, Parks and Recreations Department adaptive leisure programs.

Mr. Cuillard highlighted the presentation by Recreation Coordinator, Mr. Mark Grant from City of Mesa's Parks and Recreation Department, Adaptive Leisure Program. Mr. Cuillard informed the board of the request made by Mr. Grant, to inform council how budget cuts have affected his department's ability to reach Mesa's disabled community.

- b. Hear an update, discuss, and provide direction on:

August 24, 2009 Regional Human Relations Advisory Boards and Commissions meeting

Ms. Heap gave a brief overview of the August 24, 2009 meeting.

- The Regional Commission discussed the "Statement of Tolerance"; more discussion will take place at the next Regional Commission meeting.
- The Regional Commission discussed the growing hate groups in the Phoenix Metro area. No action was taken by the commission.
- Regional Commission members updated the commission on cuts in many cities Diversity Offices and Human Relations Advisory Boards and Commissions.
- The Regional Commission took action on setting the next meeting place; time and date to be determined by the Scottsdale Human Relations Commission.

5. Mesa Police Department Report – Community Partnership Coordinator, Ms. Denise Traves.

- a. Hear an update on hate and bias crimes in Mesa.

No hate or bias crimes have been reported as of June 30, 2009.

- b. Hear an update from the Chief's Community Forums.

Ms. Traves updated the board on the next forum meeting to be held on September 22, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at the Central Police Station Community Room, 120 N. Robson. More information regarding forums can be found at: <http://www.mesaaz.gov/police/>.

Ms. Heap congratulated the Police Department on the decreasing crime rate in Mesa and stated her concern regarding the negative impact of Sheriff Joe Arpaio, Ms. Heap expressed that she is glad to see that these forums will continue with Interim Chief, Vicki Myers.

Ms. Berumen cautioned Ms. Heap to adhere to open meeting laws and to discuss and comment on items listed on the agenda.

- c. Hear an update on presentations and conferences.

Ms. Traves gave a brief overview of the upcoming Chief's Community Forums events including Holiday School Drives and Holiday Senior Projects.

Ms. Traves informed the board of the collaboration between Mesa United Way and Mesa Police Department's "Service in Action" program.

6. Diversity Officer's Report:

- a. Hear an update on the Diversity Office and Neighborhood Outreach Office activities.

Ms. Berumen updated the board on the 140 emails received to date by the Diversity Office in opposition of a Domestic Partner Registry.

Updates were given concerning the Building Strong Neighborhoods Initiatives and events planned for Districts 1, 2, 3, and 6. More information regarding district neighborhood outreach events can be found at: <http://www.mesaaz.gov/neighbor/>.

Ms. Berumen gave a brief update on the Martin Luther King Jr. Planning committee and informed the board that they are looking for volunteer assistance.

Ms. Berumen also informed the board that the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizen's October 24, 2009 Latino Town Hall has been cancelled.

7. Report on conferences and/or meetings attended.

Ms. Heap reported on an upcoming Open House on September 4, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. at the One Voice Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Community Center. More information about the One Voice LGBT Community Center can be found at: <http://www.1vcc.org/>.

Ms. Gilbert reported on an upcoming Diversity Leadership Alliance monthly workshop on August 27, 2009. More information about the Diversity Leadership Alliance can be found at: <http://www.diversityleadershipalliance.org/>.

Ms. Gilbert reported on upcoming Healing Racism Series forum in October. More information will be reported at the next Human Relations Advisory Board meeting.

8. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

Ms. Benelli asked that the Sister Cities presentation be placed on the September 23, 2009 Human Relations Advisory Board agenda.

Mr. May thanked the audience and speakers for being in attendance and becoming involved in Mesa. Mr. May encouraged everyone to become involved in the issues that Mesa is facing; not just a singular issue but all issues.

9. Adjourn

Ms. Benelli adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:20 p.m.

***The next regular meeting is on September 23, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers Lower Level***

Submitted By:



Mary Berumen,
Diversity Office Director