

Present: Emily Ackerman, Angela Amic (guest), Rich Cousins, Judy Foster, Ray Maier, Patrick RichardsFink (guest), Rachel Wexelbaum, Val Young

Meeting called to order 6:01 pm by Rachel, who facilitated the meeting in Eunice's absence

1. Welcome and introductions

Everyone introduced themselves, new people talked about where they worked, and everyone shared one word to describe their day.

2. Open forum

Patrick informed the commission that Element Mental Health was now part of Pine Haven Youth and Family Services. Element Mental Health will still provide counseling and support to the LGBT community.

Discussion about climate for LGBT people in central Minnesota. Rachel mentioned the five different transpeople who confided in her with information but would not come to the Human Rights Office for assistance. Discussion about fear of retaliation, and how it is easier to prove retaliation than discrimination. This was a call to action.

**Action items:**

- Patrick will send the commissioners a contact list for all of the resources and services in the area that help transpeople (support groups, medical groups, etc).
- Rachel and Val will meet to draft an email to these groups to encourage them to inform clients about the Human Rights Office. Rachel and Val will share this draft email with the group for feedback BEFORE the March meeting.
- Ray will send Patrick the updated HRC brochure and add him to the mailing list for the newsletter.

3. Approve January's minutes

Will take place at March meeting, with February minutes. Rachel will call Val from now on to remind her!

4. 2015 forums Dates: Housing/ Homelessness, Summer, Holiday gathering

Emily suggested a training session about harassment, workplace bullying, and bullying, which the commission thought was a good idea and added to the list of 2015 HRC activities. Schedule for activities are as follows:

May 20: Homelessness / housing forum

July 19: Summer barbecue

**Sept 16:** SCSU forum

Oct 21: Harassment / workplace bullying training session (needs a better name!)

Dec 16: Holiday gathering

**Action Items:**

- Email dates to Ray so he can put them in the newsletter
- Rachel and Rich will double check on date for Project Homelessness at SCSU. They will find out who the organizer is and contact them. If Project Homelessness falls on the same day, Rachel will ask the organizer if we could have some time or space at the event to hold our forum.

Discussion on how to inform homeless about the forum. The commission generated a list of organizations that work directly with the homeless: Place of Hope, Salvation Army, Tri-Cap, DREAM Center, Catholic Charities, HRA...there could be more.

**FOR MARCH:** Discussion of meeting locations for July and Dec events.

5. Report on Housing Issues/Event via your e-mail and update on SCSU meeting—Rachel

Rachel briefly talked about Tracy Ore's housing activity, which may be of interest to the commission. She will find out if Tracy would be willing to share the activity with the commission. If the commission likes the activity, we will ask Tracy if she would be interested in facilitating the session in 2016.

In the interest of time, Rachel said she would give her SCSU update at the March meeting.

6. Update from Human rights office

Rich is now the sole Human Rights Officer in the office. He has 2200 cases this year. The Mayor would like Rich to focus on cases and the commission to focus on training. The commission would like a definition of training, as we may already be doing it. Other human rights commissions are in the same condition—asked to do training and outreach but not given funds.

Ray still has not received reimbursement. Rich advised Ray to contact Mike Williams directly.

7. Other

Val shared a draft ADA report with the commission and guests from the ADA forum earlier in February. She also gave us Steve Lawrence's business card; he works in Public Works and has evaluated St. Cloud on ADA compliance issues. He definitely wants to hear what is working and what isn't!

Ray working on newsletter.

8. Adjourn