

**HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

**October 3, 2012**

Present: Commissioners David Harburg, Esther Griffin, Mackenzie DeLong, Sheri Struk, Jamila Kisses, Rob Solomon, Karen Redington, Alternate Commissioner Juanita Villarreal, Dan Vi Nguyen, and City Staff Liaison Bob Crocker and City Council Liaison Cathy Stanton

Absent: Commissioner Mariam Ali and Alternate Commissioner Alicia Polk

The meeting was called to order at 6:31pm. Minutes of the September 5, 2012, meeting were reviewed and approved as amended. Commissioner Kisses moved to approve and Commissioner Redington seconded. Passed.

Communications from the City Staff Liaison: Mr. Crocker brought in the nominations that have been received so far for the Human Rights Award; there are currently two nominations. Mr. Crocker also reminded the Commissioners whose term expires this year to submit their application online. The Mayor's Office extended the deadline to give citizens more time to submit their applications. Mr. Crocker also brought in pricing and samples of promotional/giveaway items for the Commission to view; this discussion was tabled because of time constraints.

Communications from the City Council Liaison Cathy Stanton: Councilor Stanton briefly mentioned a space needs study for City employees and how this is an ongoing process. It was also mentioned that on October 11, 2012 starting at 6:30 the Voters Forum will be at City Hall; this event is open to the public. Councilor Stanton also mentioned the Literary Vines event on Friday, October 12 from 7:00-9:00 pm at the Beaverton City Library; all proceeds of this event will go to the Summer Reading Program.

Guests: Jamal Tarhuni and Mario Vilela Orozco

Jamal Tarhuni, who is part of the Libyan Community Association of Oregon, came in asking for support from the Beaverton Human Rights Commission to send letters to the FBI and/or Senator Wyden's Office in Washington DC to thank him for his support of Mr. Tarhuni. Mr. Tarhuni explained his background of how he volunteered and supported Libya with distributing medical supplies, medicine and food to citizens. On his way back to the United States he was stopped at the airport and was prevented from boarding the plane with no explanation. Mr. Tarhuni feels he is being treated unfairly and is not receiving any support or getting his questions answered from the federal government.

Commissioner Griffin moved to write letter to Senator Wyden and Congresswoman Bonamici thanking them for their support for Mr. Jamal Tarhuni and to encourage Mr. Wyden and Ms. Bonamici to continue to research and inquire about this manner. Commissioner Redington seconded. Passed unanimously. Commissioner Struk asked the commission if HRAC would also send letters to the editors of Beaverton Valley Times and the Oregonian. Commissioner Solomon will write two different letters; one addressed to Senator Wyden and Congresswoman Bonamici and the other to both papers. The letter to the editor will be reviewed by Commission at next meeting.

Mario Vilela Orozco came to get support from HRAC and asked if the commission would write a letter to the Beaverton School District supporting him. Mr. Vilela Orozco was a full time employee for the Beaverton School District and was recently fired because his H-1B work visa was not submitted by the BSD in a timely manner. Mr. Vilela Orozco, just recently, was able to show that he gave the school district plenty of time to send in the paperwork. The Beaverton School District recognized their mistake and reinstated him with a ½ time position with the district for this academic year; they also paid the fee to update the visa. After a long debate, the Commission reached a consensus that while Mr. Vilela Orozco

was put in an unfortunate spot, there was no observable human rights violation. The chair will send a supportive email response.

Commissioner Villarreal asked the Commission their thoughts on having agents from the Immigrant Customs Enforcement (ICE) Portland office come in as part of the January Cultural Conversation. The Commission was in full support of this and is on the January 2013 meeting agenda.

#### Project updates:

Commissioner Solomon announced that Caren Wilson from Citizens with Disabilities committee will be part of November's Cultural Conversation. She will be inviting two members of the Beaverton committee to discuss how each one copes with their physical or mental disability. It was also announced that members from ICE will take place in January 2013, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Southeast Asian communities Cultural Conversation will be scheduled for March 2013 and PFLAG will be on the agenda for May 2013.

Commissioner Nguyen had nothing new to report on the Human Rights Representative project. She stated she'd invest more time in the project starting the beginning of next year.

The Commission briefly discussed the Human Rights Award. Commissioner Solomon announced there are currently two nominations. Commissioner Griffin asked that all commissioners spread the word about the award and talk to local businesses about the award. Commissioner Griffin also said she put flyers in the Murray-Scholls Branch and Main Library.

#### Miscellaneous Business:

Commissioner Solomon reported that he has not heard back from the Mayor regarding the 'Freedom to Marry' petition. He'll continue to reach out to the Mayor.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Redington, seconded by Commissioner Griffin. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

