

MINUTES
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
July 19, 2022, 6:00 p.m.
First Floor Conference Room, City Hall

CITY CLERK
2022 AUG 11 PM 3:33

| | <u>Name</u> | <u>Members' Term Attendance</u> (mtgs attended-mtgs absent) | <u>End of Current Term of Office</u> |
|-------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Derek Evans | (06-01) | 10/08/24 |
| | David Mason | (11-02) | 10/08/24 |
| | Daniel McGaughy | (07-07) | 10/08/23 |
| | Terri Lowdon | (26-07) | 10/08/23 |
| | Joyce Starr | (08-00) | 10/08/24 |
| MEMBERS ABSENT: | Juniper Brown | (09-01) | 10/08/22 |
| | Sean Connors | (14-01) | 10/08/23 |
| | Leslie Stone | (00-01) | 10/08/24 |
| STAFF PRESENT: | Lisa Robertson, City Attorney Ben Williams, Recording Secretary Chris Connally, Police Chief | | |

Item #1 Call to Order

Evans called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Item #2 ROLL CALL: McGaughy – Present, Brown – Absent, Connors – Absent, Evans – Present, Lowdon – Present, Mason – Present, Starr – Present, Stone – Absent. Quorum Present.

Item #3 Approval of Minutes

Mason moved to approve the May minutes. Lowdon seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Item #4 Introduction of Human Rights Commission Members

Members of the Commission and others present were invited to introduce themselves.

Item #5 Old Business

Item #5a. Update on Translation Services – Chris Connally

Connally explained the process of getting Nixle in Spanish, explaining the first thing the Police Department discovered was that Nixle uses Google translate and that Google would not assume responsibility for incorrect translation. Connally said it has taken two months to get an updated price from Nixle, and the price has increased. Connally

explained that the Systems Administrator at the Police Department discovered a way to get messages sent out in Spanish at no additional cost – all anyone needs to do is to sign up for Nixle in Spanish and messages will be received in Spanish. Connally explained that ESL (English as a second language) classes, as well as citizenship classes, will be starting back up in September at the Keatley Center.

Connally provided an overview of the Police Department’s online reporting process, explaining that the City Council has agreed to upgrade the online reporting system. If someone calls the Police Department on their cell phone, they will be referred to a dispatcher who will connect the cell number into the online reporting system. The caller would then receive a text with a link to online reporting. Connally stated that the report can be completed in English or Spanish.

Robertson asked if the Interfaith Immigration Alliance was through Interserve. Connally stated that Interserve organizes the meetings and that the meetings are usually held at Interserve. Connally explained that Donna Salcido provides legal advice and helps people apply for their citizenship. Starr asked when the Interfaith Immigration Alliance meetings took place. Connally responded that Bridget Supple (Interserv) would have this information.

Item #5b. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce – Ray Blancharte

Evans asked if Ray had any additional info to share. Blancharte stated that he had called the Hispanic Chamber in Kansas City and asked them how they deal with assisting immigrants. The response was that the Hispanic Chamber does not perform this function – they only deal with Hispanic businesses. Blancharte stated that that Hispanic Chamber serves eight counties, so it has a broad reach.

Item #5c. Overview of services currently being provided by Interserve

Evans asked Starr to relay the information she received from Donna Salcido. Starr stated that she spoke with Bridget Supple and then read the information she received from Donna Salcido: “I am a board of immigration appeals representative. The department of homeland security came up with this position because not everyone can afford an immigration lawyer. I had to take classes to learn about family immigration to become a BIA rep. I have to continue to take classes and training to be able to renew my accreditation every three years. I file immigration applications on behalf of my clients and can also represent them at the local USCIS office in Kansas City. I help immigrants to file petitions for their families abroad, maintain their current immigration status and apply for naturalization to become a US citizen. I am also the translator for municipal court on the third Friday of every month for Spanish speakers who do not speak English. I do a lot of translations for bills, letters, phone calls. I try to help with anything they need when they come into my office. Interserve has a food pantry they can come to once a month, they have daycare, youth programs for school ages, home health meals and rent and utility assistance. My main concern with immigrants here in town is that there are people in town who do many of the same things I do in my program. They charge immigrants money for

every little thing they need help with. I would like the word to be spread that there is a place in town where they can come to, and get the help they need, without being charged money. I envision one day that we can have a welcome center that immigrants can go to get information on places to go to for help so that they aren't taken advantage of."

Mason asked if people received any kind of a welcome package when they moved to St. Joseph. Lowdon stated the sewer bill from the City was something everyone received. Robertson stated that the chamber of commerce may send out letters. Lowdon stated that only notable people received something from the chamber of commerce.

Blancharte stated that he believed there was a credit union at a local catholic school called Holy Rosery Credit Union and he believes it caters to Hispanics. Mason stated that another thing that could be done was put information in a Hispanic restaurant or places where Hispanic people go. Blancharte stated that a pamphlet could be distributed to provide information to immigrants just arriving to the community. Evans asked what kind of mass correspondence goes out from the city besides a sewer bill. Robertson stated that there were newsletters, but they were mostly targeted. Pat Dillon stated that if people had kids, then the school district would be reaching out to them. Evans stated that he did not know whether the school board would be able to include a pamphlet outlining the services Interserve offers in registration packets. McGaughy informed the group that Mosaic has a wonderful printing program that could be used to produce the pamphlets affordably. Robertson stated she would check with Judy Hovey to see if there was a way to put the pamphlet in with the sewer bills. Robertson stated that, if not, the alternative would be to take them to the credit union Blancharte referenced or placing them at key locations.

Dillon asked if the Commission interacted with the HR departments of the businesses that did the most hiring in town. Dillon continued saying that those people would have direct contact with the immigrants and be able to pass information on to them.

Evans asked if Robertson would talk to Judy Hovey about the possibility of putting a leaflet inside the sewer billing detailing local immigration services. Robertson responded that she would, and that it would likely be the city manager's decision. Evans asked Starr if she would get information about the services Interserv provides to include in the leaflet.

Blancharte stated that it was good to get this information out there for people to know. But he stated that if you are new to town and have just come to St. Joe, most people will only go to places they feel comfortable. Robertson stated that they would need to target specific spots.

Evans stated that the group was working through many things and figuring out where to get info. Evans asked the group to come up with a list of places to drop off of post the information by the next meeting. Dillon stated that his son Patrick would be a good contact for the Triumph's HR department.

Item #6 New Business

Item #6a. Information to Include on the Human Rights Commission Facebook Page

Evans stated that all the information discussed at the meeting tonight should be put on the Facebook page. Evans stated that if they tag Maria Ramirez on certain Facebook posts, then she can share that information with those in the Hispanic community. Evans asked if there was anything more that should be included on the Facebook page. Starr stated that more should be included about the group so people would seek them out. Evans stated that if the other members were on Facebook, then they could go on and invite their friends.

Item #6b. Overview of Discussion with Mayor Josendale

Evans stated that he, Connors, and Starr all met with the mayor. Evans asked Starr to recount what happened in the meeting. Starr stated that she felt like the mayor was telling them to either put-up or shut-up -- they are needed and necessary, but what is the commission doing. Evans relayed that the mayor pointedly stated that the meetings should not just be a complaint-fest. Starr stated that Lowdon was right when she heard that they wanted to disband the commission. Evans stated that the mayor was right in saying the commission shouldn't be singling out different people but that it should exist to help everyone. Evans stated however, that not all groups of people are facing the same situations, which is why the commission exists in the first place.

Item #6c. Other

Dillon stated that he would talk to Natalie Redmond at the chamber about the HR group and that he would talk to his son, as well. Dillon stated that he met with Maria Ramirez and Sarah Juarez who oversees the personal inclusion group at Mosaic. Dillon stated that the hospital was looking into having in-person translators at the hospital and simplifying its billing and scheduling processes. Dillon stated that the hospital would work to develop multiple language brochures.

Robertson stated that it would be nice if the commission could present a quarterly report about things that they have accomplished. Starr stated that reporting to the council quarterly would be a good idea.

Evans stated that once the commission got together the necessary information for the welcome center then the commission could present these things to city council for funding.

Item #7 Public Comment

None.

Item #8 City Staff Update

None.

Item #9 Future Agenda Overview

None.

Item #10 Adjourn

Lowdon moved to adjourn the meeting. No member opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Ben Williams, Recording Secretary (Legal Assistant)