

Owatonna Human Rights Commission  
Minutes

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, in the Meeting Room of the Charles S. Crandall Center. Chairman Commissioner Cords called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Commissioner Vanoosbree took roll call with Commissioners Cords, Gunderson, Esquivel, Ismael and Vanoosbree; City Administrator Busse and Administrative Coordinator Clawson present. Commissioners Leon and Emanuelson were unable to attend.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Commissioner Cords welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested the agenda be accepted as presented. Commissioner Vanoosbree made a motion to approve Minutes of the last OHRC Meeting on January 9, 2024. Commissioner Gunderson seconded the motion, all members present voted aye for approval.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Cords commented that he and Commissioner Gunderson spoke at the Chamber's Business Leadership Meeting today. They provided information about the establishment of the Owatonna Human Rights Commission and the process of membership appointments. Rebecca Moore and Brian Coleman were present representing AGE and assisted in promoting the OHRC Commission.

Commissioner Vanoosbree commented that she attended the Family Fun and Games event hosted by Rainbowatonna on Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at the Middle School. Protesters from a church in Northfield were present trying to intimidate attendees when they arrived. They also made hateful comments over a loud portable audio system and left shortly after the event started. She suggested that prior to future events, review of the City's Code regarding the level of noise allowed when using a portable audio system be shared with the event organizers and notify law enforcement about the event planned. Administrative Coordinator Clawson commented that when an Event Permit is requested, all city departments are part of the review/approval process; there was no Event Permit applied for this event as it wasn't on city owned property and didn't require use of city items.

Commissioner Vanoosbree commented AGE is hosting a Puzzle Night for Black History Month on Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at the Middle School. Teams can consist of up to four members, there is a \$20 entry fee per team. Contestants will be asked trivia questions with winners receiving extra time to complete their puzzle. The first team to complete the 500-piece puzzle wins, there will be prizes awarded.

### **ITEMS of DISCUSSION**

#### **Recap of the 2024 MLK Jr. Day Event – January 15, 2024**

Commissioner Cords presented a summary of the survey responses received. Most comments about the food and speaker were favorable, there was a sufficient amount of food with a lot left over. Several asked the same speaker to participate at next year's event. Suggestions for improvement included holding the event at a larger venue with better audio quality. Riverland Community College co-sponsored the event and was disappointed the presentation was not

recorded; the speaker did not want a portion of her speech to be used out of context and doesn't allow recordings. Another suggestion was to play music or video while people were arriving and/or eating. Estimate 120 attended and received favorable publicity so anticipate the 2025 event will be larger, will want to begin planning early and use Eventbrite for preregistration. Suggested site options were: the Middle School, Trinity Lutheran Church, or the ISD #761 Foundation Room at the High School.

**OHRC Member Terms to end April 30, 2024**

Current terms of Commissioners Cords, Emanuelson and Vanoosbree expire at the end of April. This is the second consecutive full term for each, so they are not eligible for reappointment per City Code. The Application for new members will be posted on the City's website during the first week of March.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:15 p.m., Commissioner Gunderson made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Ismael seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Charles S. Crandall Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator