

MINUTES
CHASKA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CHASKA CITY HALL
THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018
6:30 P.M.

1) Roll Call

Chairperson Welvaert called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Present: Chairperson Jen Welvaert, Barbara Colhapp, Robert Kim, Donzel Leggett, Celi Haga, Lisa White

Absent: Vice Chairperson Judy Dunbar, Jeff Filipek, Sarah Carlson (Alt)

Staff Liaison: Nate Kabat

2) Adopt the Agenda

Motion: Leggett

Second: Haga

Motion Passed.

3) Resignation of Jeff Filipek and Appointment of Alternate to the Opening

Commissioner Filipek is moving to Carver and has resigned his position. Commission members expressed appreciation for the work he's done during his service, especially noting his leadership behind the MLK breakfast. It was noted that he is interested in continuing to work on that project as SW Metro Chamber president.

The appointment of alternate position was moved to new business.

4) Open Forum/Guest Presentation – Corey Magstadt, Bob Roepke, Dean Seal

Corey Magstady/Dean Seal – talk with us about housing projects.

Magstad gave an overview of the status of their housing project. Much progress has been made since the city council vote on proposal. Magstad leads a shelter team that's identified a gap in services for single adults in need of shelter/emergency housing. Last January/February had a donor step up to contribute couple million dollars to develop housing but ultimately the council decided site was not well-suited for the project.

The group has now identified another site, an existing building in another community in the county, and have a purchase agreement in place. The original concept is now two projects, and this property will focus on the shelter piece. Building would work as 12 bed shelter, possibility of expanding to 19 beds.

They are currently working through a proposal process to see what agency will operate the shelter. With building purchase comes an adjacent piece of property zoned for multi-family dwellings, and there is a possibility of that becoming the apartment complex in the future. Excited, but there are a lot of hurdles ahead.

Leggett asked how the HRC can help.

Magstad said the property is not in Chaska so that's limited somewhat, but a letter of support would be great. When they get to the point of community meetings there'll be opportunities for members as citizens or as HRC to come out and support the project. Assuming everything moves forward as planned, there'll be great opportunities to work with that new provider. Of the agencies submitting letters of interest for operating the new facility, one has experience in Carver County, others do not.

Leggett asked where it is located and Magstad indicated another city in the county.

Leggett asked when they would be able to start providing services.

Magstad said there is a possibility of being up and running by the fall but more realistically they are hoping to have it open before it snows.

Colhapp asked if the building was move-in ready.

Magstad said it's close. It has a commercial kitchen, beautiful lobby waiting area in good condition, but they haven't done a final inspection and floors probably need some work. That's really the only major maintenance issue.

Kim asked if there might be any issues related to planning/licensing/permits.

Magstad noted the building is already zoned properly. Licensing should be straightforward and they are not expecting any issues but cannot move further on that until a provider of services is identified.

Colhapp asked if they were looking for support from agencies involved in this work or if they were already on board.

Magstad replied that all of these groups – housing coordinators, religious groups, etc. - have been part of the planning.

Leggett asked how once it is running it will benefit the clients of Launch Ministries.

Magstad said that one of the more heartbreaking experiences they have is having to tell a young person when they close in the evening good luck when they don't know where they're going to sleep. Just to be able to have locally a place that the young people from the community can go to have a safe place to sleep, get an evening meal and breakfast, have support – that's huge for someone in crisis. A place they can stay for up to 90 days to get grounded and get their head cleared – it's not a lot of time but it at least starts the process, can get them on a waiting list for other programs and lay the groundwork for a more positive future.

White asked how many young adults they see at Launch on a weekly basis.

Magstad said they saw 101 people in the first quarter, split down the middle in terms of gender, and half of those people are definitionally homeless. Those other 50 are still coming for programs, food, support, many are former homeless youth who need support in other ways. All are at risk of becoming homeless.

White asked if those numbers represented just Chaska.

Magstad said 60% are from Carver County, 35% are from Scott County, 5% are from nearby Hennepin County.

Colhapp congratulated him on the element of hope his organization is giving to the community.

Welvaert asked if residents just need to be 18 or if there will be an upper age limit.

Magstad said the Launch Ministry is focused on young adults, but there's a need for support for older members of the community too and this will help the whole range.

Dean Seal stated his organization supports the work Magstad is doing. His organization is generalists and primarily focus is families moving forward. They are part of a program that supports families sleeping in churches, four families at a time. The families are fed and provided training, so they have a better handle on financials and have assistance in finding housing. Seal stressed there is a significant need for housing for seniors, affordable housing, housing for the groups served by Magstad's organization.

Seal highlighted Fast Track, which is managed by Carver County and provides a damage deposits, so families can move into apartments. They had funding for 10 Fast Track grants and used eight in the first three months of the program. They are seeking additional funding.

Leggett asked when Seal might need a letter of support for that additional funding.

Seal said the Request for Proposals goes out in May and is due in December.

Leggett asked Magstad if there was a strategic plan that would say what the proposed site next door might look like.

Dave Pokorny spoke to the commission and said they're still working through the process. He reiterated what Magstad said earlier about their work to date in pursuing this site and laying the groundwork for future expansion. The shelter which is their first priority is different than what they presented last year. There is currently no shelter facility in Carver or Scott County and on any given night there are 15-20 people looking for a place to sleep. In January, Carver County had 95 individuals on their certified homeless list.

Estimated project cost is \$5.5M-\$6M. \$2M is being provided by a donor, \$500K additional match from elsewhere – they anticipate seeking the remainder from the state. They are hoping to build in that investment into something more than a 28-unit apartment building and provide broader support to this community.

Welvaert asked about the timeline for the two projects and with the shelter as the top priority whether the transitional housing piece was still in development.

Pokorny confirmed their vision is to do both.

Welvaert asked the group to keep the HRC updated and let the commission know if there's a way to lend support.

5) Approve Minutes of March 22, 2018 HRC Meeting

Motion: Kim

Second: White

Motion passed

6) Treasurer's Report

Kabat reported a \$10 expenditure for business cards for Dunbar. The remaining balance for the year is \$1990.

7) Old Business

a) Dementia-friendly communities – Update by Celi Haga

Haga provided an update about conversations she had with representatives of the City of Chanhassen and Carver County about their experience with the Dementia-friendly community process. Sharmeen Al-Jaff, City of Chanhassen

Chanhassen started the process in December 2015 and wrapped up Phase 4 in December 2017. In total, the city and county spent approximately \$14,000 on work related to the process. Chanhassen staff stressed the importance of building a broad coalition of supporters including city/county government, business community, emergency responders, etc. They produced a county-wide resource directory as part of their process and there are copies available for the HRC to have/distribute.

Haga also talked with Lindsay Juricek with Carver County. She said the county does have funding available that could be used to support this, and also indicated she has staff capacity at this time to support the City of Chaska if they decide to move forward with developing a program. Juricek stressed that this work can be scalable depending on needs of the community, and that city council buy-in is critical for it to succeed.

Juricek suggested that HRC members interested in learning more about the process could attend a one-hour training at the Chanhassen Library to become a Dementia Friend. The training is Tuesday, 6/12 from 5:30-6:30. It's free, but attendees need to register by 6/5 – 952-227-1125.

Haga concluded by saying that her recommendation was that if HRC wants to move forward with a proposal for the City Council to consider a group should meet with Juricek to get a better sense of what kind of staff/resources would be needed.

Kabat said that if a meeting is scheduled it's important to include himself or someone else at the city so that there's a good understanding of staff capacity. It would be best to have a well-developed plan for the Council to consider before the HRC approaches them.

Welvaert said it sounded like a great program and wondered if there was anyone willing to spearhead the effort.

White suggested tabling it until the next meeting so that people could think about what was involved and whether to move forward.

b) 2018 HRC Initiatives: Homelessness - How to tie into all HRC events

Welvaert ran through the planned events for 2018/19 and asked if the commission had thoughts about how to work that theme into them and what the intention was for tying those together.

White suggested it was to increase awareness of the issue at every opportunity.

Welvaert asked how the HRC would do that if it was via handouts or a speaker or something else.

White said speakers have mentioned having literature that HRC could use in booth.

Welvaert noted the HRC should be intentional about including it in educational pieces offered.

Leggett agreed with White that the key is to raise awareness of homelessness issues and elevate it in the community. At this point, no HRC members are scheduled to attend the Pow Wow, but River City Days is a good opportunity given the booth to share information. The MLK breakfast is another opportunity to find someone who can speak to these issues.

Colhapp said that a lot of the information presented by the guest speakers was surprising and could be included in literature. It's likely not going to be hard to find local information.

Kabat said that Jen Romero, who works on this issue for the county, may have something put together already or have information that could be put into a shareable document.

Leggett suggested that the coordinator for each HRC event develop a plan that shows how the HRC is tying homeless into what is presented. Welvaert asked White to follow up on this.

Leggett provided an update on the May 2018 powwow. It will be May 19-20 and the school district is sponsoring. Kabat will post the flyer to the HRC website. General Mills will be providing some snacks.

Motion: to approve \$100 for beverages/additional snacks to be purchased via City for Wasippi Powwow.

Motion: Leggett

Second: Colhapp

Motion Approved.

c) River City Days, July 2018 – Update by Lisa White

White talked with American Solutions for Business to discuss options and asked the committee to determine whether members wanted something with a logo, or anything in terms of a giveaway.

Kabat noted the city had rubber bracelets that lasted for at least two River City Days and that 100 was likely a high enough order for an HRC giveaway.

There was some discussion about how many items should be ordered and what price range White should be using. Ultimately White was asked to come back to the May meeting with some specific options for a giveaway that could be related to homelessness issues. Welvaert will bring the sign the HRC uses for the booth to the next meeting, too.

d) 2nd Annual Cultural Heritage Day at Chaska River City Days – Update by Robert Kim

Kim informed the committee that there will not be another Cultural Heritage Day at River City Days.

e) MLK Breakfast, January 2019 - Update by Jeff Filipek

With Filipek's resignation, Colhapp volunteered to be the HRC point person. Given Filipek's continued interest in being involved in the event, she will reach out to him and report back.

Welvaert encouraged anyone with ideas for the Human Rights Award to bring them forward for discussion. She will bring the guidelines/nomination form to the next meeting.

Kabat encouraged the group to start thinking about a speaker for the 2019 breakfast because calendars fill up fast.

8) New Business

Kabat brought up need to appoint an alternate to fill the spot left vacant by Filipek's resignation. Because White and Carlson were appointed alternates at the same time either could serve in that capacity. Given Carlson's absence, the decision was tabled until the May meeting to determine interest, when a nomination/vote would be held.

9) Adjourn

Motion: White.

Second: Leggett.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:00.

Next Meeting: Thursday, 6:30 PM, May 24, 2018