



## WEST DES MOINES HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING Thursday, April 9, 2015

<b>Commissioners Present:</b>	Ila Plasencia, Bernell Edwards, Sanjita Pradhan, Frank Harty, Justine Morton
<b>Commissioners Absent:</b>	none
<b>Staff Representative:</b>	Althea Holcomb
<b>Guests:</b>	Cheyenne Hensley, student from Valley High School
<b>Call to order:</b>	Meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

### 1. Roll Call

### 2. Approval of February Minutes

- Not conducted as the February meeting was brief due to lack of attendance, and consisted of informal discussion only

### 3. Opportunity for Public to Address the Commission

- No requests

### 3. Chair Report

- Justine confirmed that Commissioners were receiving communications from Mindy regarding upcoming events (e.g., League of Iowa Human & Civil Rights Agencies, Iowa Civil Rights Commission) and asked that they contact Mindy if they are interested in registering for an event.

### 5. Staff Report

- Current finance report was reviewed. Justine entertained a motion to accept the report; Ila motioned to approve and Bernell seconded. The motion carried.

### 6. Report on Human Rights Phone Line

- No calls to report

### 7. Report from Commissioners on recent activities

- Ila attended the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Civil and Human Rights in March. Topics included racial profiling, mental health, children's rights and immigration law as well as other topics. She said it was informative and well worth attending. Ila also attended an open house for the Drake University Latino Group "La Juerza Latina" as well as a Des Moines University Celebration, "Cesar Chavez Day". Ila reminded everyone about the "Cinco de Mayo" event taking place in Valley Junction on Saturday, May 2nd.
- Bernell received a community service award from MADD in March. Bernell will also be partaking in a forum at the Evelyn K. Davis Center to reach out to teens in the community.

- Justine has been active as the HR liaison at Wells Fargo for Latinos.
- Sanjita has been engaged in the following activities:
  - Partnering with the “White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders” to conduct several listening sessions on bullying within the Asian Pacific Islander youth groups in Iowa. One session will take place in the Des Moines School District, one will be with WDM School District and one will be outside of the central DM area where there is a high concentration of API population (Marshalltown, Waterloo are options).
  - Conducting an informational session for small businesses on healthcare options with the new Affordable Care Act. Presenters from Center for Medicaid Services (CMS) regional office in Kansas City will be coming to talk to small business owners about SHOP - Small Business Health Option Program. The event will be organized somewhere in West Des Moines, and Sanjita is looking for a space to host approximately 40 people in late June.
  - Partnering with WDM Schools Community Education to better understand the needs, concerns and priorities of immigrant and refugee populations in the WDM School District to help them become proactive in serving these populations better.

#### **8. Old Business**

- Justine reiterated her idea of bringing in a speaker on the subject of human trafficking. Bernell has a contact in his department who he will approach.

#### **9. New Business**

- Sanjita asked if the WDM Commission’s budget could be used for rental fees for some of the events she’s working on (described above). Justine said the event would have to be relevant to the Commission’s mission (education) and the Commission would need to have a presence at the event. She suggested the request be in writing for Commissioners to review and vote on. Justine asked that the charter be forwarded to all Commissioners; Althea said she would do this. Justine also suggested that Sanjita approach businesses in the area for meeting space use.
- Justine suggested we contact Valley High School to let them know the Commission is available as a resource for education. Althea said she would compose a letter and forward it to Justine for her review.
- The WDM Police Department will be presenting their annual report at the June meeting.

#### **10. Next Meeting Date**

- The next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 11, 2015.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 4:38 pm.

**Notetaker:** Mindy Hotovec