

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES

Approved: 9-15-20

The Human Rights Commission met on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

Members present were: Shelly Bormann, Vicki Davis, Shawn Mueske, Barbara Little, Jill Benson, Richard Engan, Nate Erickson, and Ben Larson via telephone.

Item No. 1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shelly Bormann at 5:00 p.m.

Item No. 2 Approve Minutes of Meeting

Chair Bormann presented the minutes of the February 25, 2020 meeting for discussion. Commission Member Erickson moved to approve the Human Rights Commission minutes of February 25, 2020 and Commission Member Engan seconded the motion, which carried.

Item No. 3 Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to comment.

Item No. 4 Annual Meeting – Appointment and Election of Officers

Chair Bormann informed the Commission the first order of business due to the delay in meeting is the annual review of bylaws and election of officers. The positions of Chair and Vice Chair are appointed by the Mayor. The three other officers are the Corresponding Secretary, Budget Chair and Member-at-Large. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to recommend to the Mayor that Shelly Bormann remain the Chair and Richard Engan the Vice Chair. The three officers are Corresponding Secretary Jill Benson, Member-at-Large Barbara Little and Budget Chair Shawn Mueske. All three agreed to remain in these positions for another year. There were no proposed changes to the bylaws. Terms of commission members and replacement of those who have left was briefly touched on.

A motion was made by Commission Member Benson and seconded by Commission Member Little that the Chair and Vice Chair remain as Shelly Bormann and Richard Engan that the current members, Jill Benson as Correspondence Secretary, Shawn Mueske as Budget Chair and Barbara Little as Member-at-Large continue in these positions as well as approve the bylaws as presented. The motion passed.

Item No. 5 Discussion Items

Commission Member Erickson requested meetings be held virtually in the future. The City's platform of "GoTo" will be explored as an option for future meetings.

Chair Bormann presented two requests she has recently received. She has been contacted by Wendy Foley representing Vision 2040. There is a subgroup working on a statement for diversity equity and inclusion for Willmar that requested input from Commission. Chair Bormann sent the statement from the GARE work pertaining to a healthy Willmar and also the City's Welcoming Resolution from 2018 and the Refugee Resettlement Resolution from December 2019.

She also received a call from the League of Woman Voters who are moderating candidate forums looking for question ideas for City Council and County Commission forums. They will circle around the theme of tolerance and working around people with different views. She also sent them the email from Chief Felt with the Use of Force Policy. Members were encouraged to submit any questions they may want included. One question is "how will the candidate work productively with people who don't share their views?" asking examples of how they have worked together with someone.

The other item relates to the meeting last week between the Police Department and downtown business owners. Chair Bormann asked for feedback from the Commission. Commission Member Davis stated she thought it went well. Talked about supposed drug interactions out in the open as being the main problem and what business owners should do and how the police are going to handle it.

Commission Member Mueske brought up a comic being distributed to younger people in our parks system causing fear and how they were being distributed. Commission Member Davis touched on an incident with an arrest that took place when their vehicle was being towed. Chief Felt met with this individual who was able to share their side of what happened.

There was discussion and a suggestion that the Commission read the book "How to be and Antiracist" by Ibram X. Kendi, if possible before our next meeting.

The next meeting date of the Commission will be Tuesday, September 15th at 5:00 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Engan and passed to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant