

July 26th Human Relations Council Meeting

Present: Heath Carter, Cicely Powell, Marisa Johnson, John Seibert, Mike Glorioso, Beth Wrobel, Mike Brickner, Roxanne Mendez-Johnson, Gene Tanner

Absent: Tatiana Cochran, Angelys Torres

New Member: Alex Clanton (VHS Student and Non-Voting Member)

Meeting started at 5:31pm

- Approve minutes of June 27th meeting
 - Thanks for service and congratulations to Marisa Johnson
- Introduction of new VHS non-voting member: Alex Clanton
 - Junior Class President
 - IASC President
- Valpo Reads a Book Presentation-Candace Shaw
 - Addresses the need for community members to come together and have meaningful discussion about the selected book.
 - Previous book selections include:
 - To Kill a Mockingbird 2002
 - The Giver 2003
 - Tuesdays with Morrie 2005
 - The Things They Carried 2005
 - Frankenstein 2006
 - Touching Spirit Bear 2007
 - Our Town 2008
 - A Long Way Gone 2009
 - Blue Zones 2010
 - YA Reader-Seedfolks 2010
 - The Book of the Unknown Americans 2017
 - YA Reader-Esperanza Rising 2017
 - **2018 The Nature Fix; Book announcement will be in October; Events start in January**
 - Looking to build community partnerships to let the community know about VRAB
 - Looking for sponsors
 - Events
 - Nature Walks
 - Exploring Parks
 - Discussions about environmental justice
 - Questions Asked
 - Heath: How much does this cost?
 - \$6,000 or more minimum but it depends on the events and activities.
 - Heath: Maybe we can consider the cultural arts grant funds in the future. Heath will explore finding support from the City of Valparaiso.
 - Marisa: Are there going to be copies made available at VCS Schools and public library?
 - Yes, numerous copies at school and public libraries will be made available.
 - Marisa: Suggested that Mrs. Shaw contact high school book club sponsor Melanie Barsic.
 - Community Member: Is it possible to purchase in bulk to decrease price?
 - Yes \$25 per book is expensive, we may consider paperback or kindle.
 - Beth: If public library could make E-Book available that would be great.

- Greg: Do you plan on engaging community members who may be reluctant to engage in conversations related to diversity, social justice issues, and inclusion?
 - Paul Schriener: Could we possibly buy the book in bulk from Author?
 - Yes, that is a possibility.
- Northwest Indiana African American Alliance Presentation- Presenter Greg Jones www.niaaa.org
 - History of Organization Established in 2012 after the murder of Trayvon Martin (pamphlet provided)
 - Developed survey to measure the level of discrimination that takes place in the Northwest Indiana Community through police misconduct.
 - Provides community support through training on best practices that will help to decrease discrimination.
 - Help provide support for community members who are impacted by discriminatory violence through education and advocacy.
 - Invited community to Unity Day to support NIAAA on August 6th, 2017 11am-5pm.
 - Booths available
 - Arts and Crafts Activities
 - Questions:
 - Community Member: WVLP Radio broadcasts Saturday mornings at 8am. Greg and Byron host show.
 - Marisa: Is there any education or information available on phone applications you could use to help provide support/education about law enforcement interactions?
 - Yes, that is something that we would like to explore but I am concerned about people who do not own a smart phone.
 - Alex: What organizations will participate in Unity Day event?
 - Social Justice Organizations
 - Drug and Rehabilitation Table/booth
 - Vendors
 - Churches
 - Ric: I believe I will be representing the HRC at Unity Day.
 - Bob Cotton: Is NIAAA staying in contact or having a working relationship with Law Enforcement agencies in the Northwest Indiana region?
 - Yes, but our main focus is advocating for those who are impacted by police misconduct.
 - Heath: There is a working group that has been having conversations with Valparaiso Police Chief.
 - Ric: Is there any information you (Heath) would like for me to distribute at the Unity Day Event?
- Appointing HRC representative to IRC
 - Roxanne Mendez-Johnson appointed as HRC representative to IRC
- Updates re: Proposed Director of Community Relations Position
 - Committee has been working on developing a framework for the duties and responsibilities for this position. John Albers is leading this committee. Updates provided by group. Members: John Albers, Roxanne Mendez-Johnson, and Elizabeth Lynn.
 - Questions
 - Greg: Are you going to be able to share information on minority participation in business transactions on the community?
 - Yes, this is something that we would like to be a part of the Community Relations position.
 - Bob Cotton: The job description needs to explain how the Community Relations Person works with the city.

- Ric: Do we have enough support to establish this position and then work out the responsibilities, duties, and other details later? Ric believes that this position could benefit the students in VCS and would be willing to build a partnership.
 - Heath: There is a good chance but there is more work to do and details to work out with the city of Valparaiso.
- Follow-up regarding HRC Powerpoint Presentation and Scheduling
 - Powerpoint has been revised.
 - Heath: We could also possibly get table at the World Cultural Festival
 - Questions:
 - Bob Cotton: Is the presentation available for public review?
 - Greg Jones: How will we use this for the community? What is the goal? What do we want the outcome to be?
 - Roxanne: That is evolving at this time.
 - Joe Frankus: Let's move forward and educate the community about the HRO.
 - Heath: Let's explore where we can give these presentations and please share ideas of where we could share the presentation. Is anyone available for Unity Day on Aug 6th and September 16th for World Cultural Festival?
- Updates re: Cultural Arts Grant Program
 - Hopefully this will launch January 2018.
- New Business
 - Gene Tanner: Turkey Palooza August 6th 1pm-6pm
 - Goal to raise 500 turkeys
 - Last year 1000 homes were served
 - Goal this year to serve 1500 homes
 - Marisa: Thanks for the opportunity to serve on this board, it helped me connect with Valparaiso.
 - Candace: The Caring Place is having a fundraiser to build a new building and Candace suggested that we invite Mary Beth Scholtz and Debbie Reynolds to present a HRC meeting.
- Adjourn 6:47pm

Next Meeting August 22nd, 2017 at City Hall

Other Meetings

September 26th, 2017

October 24th, 2017