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**CITY OF MESA  
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)  
October 28, 2015 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on October 28, 2015, at 6:00pm in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E. First Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Denise Heap, Chair  
Cheryl Anderson, Vice-Chair  
Frank Johnson  
Nadia Khalighi  
Robert Martinez  
Cliff Moon  
LuAnn Schmidt  
Mark Tompert

MEMBERS ABSENT

Collen Byron  
Talmage Pearce

STAFF PRESENT

Bethany Freeland  
Kelly Gregan  
Ray Villa  
Amanda Stamps  
Cmmndr Burlingame

GUESTS

Frank O'Halloran  
Jamie Pothast

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Ms. Heap called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

- Introduction of new board member, Martin Rios.

Mr. Rios introduced himself to the Board and the Board introduced themselves in return.

2. Items from Citizens Present.\*

There were no citizens present to speak to the Board.

3. Approval of minutes from the September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 HRAB meeting.

Ms. Schmidt motioned to approve the minutes from the September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 meeting. Mr. Tompert seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Discuss and take action on Mesa Police Department Report.

- Report on police related incidents and activities.

Commander Burlingame addressed the Board. She is the Commander of the Red Mountain Patrol District. Crime is currently down 9%. That includes all violent crimes and property crimes. She let the Board know that one of the main focuses of her patrol district is looking for long term solutions to improve resident quality of life. They are using something called "The Community Oriented Policing Strategy." The goal is to marry the community with the

Police Department and other City services such as the Fire Department, Solid Waste, etc. There has been an observation that while arrest rates are dropping, crime is actually on the rise. Clearly there is a disconnect between the police and patrolling of the neighborhood. A meeting was held in the neighborhood of Coco Palms to discuss what the residents would like to see happen in terms of police presence. They were excited to partner with the MPD (Mesa Police Department) in order to fix some of their specific issues. Surveys were release to the residents and the schools specifically. There was 37% response rate which showed the area of most concern being the neighborhood blight. A clean-up project was done and around 9 tons of trash and debris was removed from the neighborhood. On Make a Difference Day, the department went in and did several projects, such as: curb painting, landscaping, took down old sheds, and painted a mural at the high school.

Commander Burlingame also informed the Board that they are working on youth engagement projects. They have currently identified five kids in the Coco Palms neighborhood that are labeled as “at risk.” The parents have issues their support and the kids seem excited to participate, as well. The department is also partnering with Big Bother Big Sisters to provide training to officers that are identified as Youth Mentors. The clean-up and involvement projects are going to continue on for six months and then a six month maintenance and observation phase will begin.

Mr. Villa updated the Board on the PACT program progress. There was a meeting with a few community pastors to help start facilitating the forum meetings. Also, on October 14, 2015 Mr. Villa attended a Healing Racism Forum at Glendale Community College. It was part of series that ASU is doing and Mr. Villa did a presentation on a topic entitled “From School to Prisons.” It outlines the theory of prison systems and how they base their future inmate population on students who do poorly in school in certain areas. He informed that Board that in 1998 there were 10,000 officers working in the school system compared to today, in which there are around 17,000. The next Mesa class started the prior week with thirty six students in attendance. Officer Amanda Stamps in in charge of the current program. Mr. Villa informed the Board that they are trying to procure community grant funding in order to open up the program to an additional school. Mr. Moon asked Mr. Villa if the additional school would be another Jr. High School or if they might open it up to High Schools. Mr. Villa stated that they are currently only looking at Jr. High Schools. He explained that it is easier to intervene in Jr. High than it is to High School students. Mr. Moon explained that he thought it might be a good idea to add a continuing program from Kino Jr. High (where the current program is) onto the High Schools, that it may help carry the lessons forward. Mr. Villa informed the Board that the department does do after care once the kids complete the program. He also said that it might be a good idea to shift the continuing education over to the High School’s Resource Officer’s. Mr. Villa also stated that he taught juniors from the various high schools of Mesa who are involved in the Achieving a College Education Program (ACE). He had two groups of forty five students each on the topic of Diversity. He will be doing the same exercise with the senior students next semester.

Ms. Anderson questioned Mr. Villa about holding Behavioral Health forums. She mentioned that the police departments in Surprise and Chandler hold similar meeting and that are very well attended by the community. She said that they partnered with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and had booths and information for the citizens. Officer Stamps informed the Board that she was recently speaking to the City of Chandler to help Mesa set up a similar event. Ms. Anderson also asked Mr. Villa if there was any internal training regarding Trauma Informed Care. Officer stamps stated that the only once currently trained are the departments Peer Support Officers, but that it will soon become a standard training for the Crisis Intervention Team officers, as well.

- Updates and scheduling of upcoming Police Advisory Board meetings.

The next African American Advisory Board meeting will be held on November 4, 2015 at 6pm in the Central Community Room. The Asian Advisory Board meeting will be held on December 2, 2015 at 6pm, also at the Central Community Room. Ms. Heap requested that Mr. Villa email the Board once they have more advisory board meetings scheduled.

5. Hear a presentation from Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care regarding the new inpatient services at Community Bridges.

Ms. Anderson gave a brief overview of the Diversity and Inclusion Report that was completed by the Morrison Institute. The creation of the report led the Board to decide that a Psychiatric Recovery Center was an important component of the City that was missing.

Mr. O'Halloran explained that there are currently two evaluation agencies with an east side center opening very soon. The Community Psychiatric Emergency Center (CPEC), which is on Mesa Dr. and Baseline, has been open since March as a voluntary center. This center does not turn away and takes referrals from all types of agencies including fire and PD. It provides mental health and substance abuse services as well as transporting individuals that require a higher level of care. Very shortly, this center will also include involuntary services for court ordered evaluation. Ms. Pothast explained that it will consist of between forty and fifty chairs. This means that family members can also bring in individuals that they feel are a danger to themselves or a danger to others, fill out the necessary paperwork, have it notarized on site, and have a psychiatric practitioner evaluate the individual for admittance. During this time they will be evaluated for a total of twenty three hours and fifty nine minutes. The in-patient side is usually a three to five day stabilization period. The Bridge Script program is voluntary and allows a patient to see a provider and obtain a medication that will carry them through until their next appointment with their regular provider. There is also physical care provided, typical to what an urgent care would be able to treat.

Ms. Anderson asked whether or not the Family Support Program enrolled the family members or just informed them. Ms. Pothast responded that the program just informs the family of the care of the patient. Mr. Moon asked if the services were available to adolescents. Ms. Pothast clarified that it is an eighteen and over facility. Mr. Moon informed the Board that there are not many

centers available for youth suffering from mental illness. Mr. O'Halloran let Mr. Moon know that he should make available his contact information to the parents of the children seeking care to connect them to the appropriate institution. Mr. Tompert questioned: how long the center has been in operation, how many beds there are, are they typically full, is there a waiting list, are there plans for expansion in the future, and have they had either support or opposition from the surrounding community? Mr. O'Halloran is unaware of any opposition at this time. The crisis system intake has already doubled and also connected with the hospitals in order to offer beds to patients there. Mr. Tompert stresses that even with all of this, it is only the tip of the iceberg and that together, the Board and CPEC, should continue to push for even further expansion. He also stated that the money is better spent making these patients better than to send them to prison. Ms. Pothast tells the Board that CPEC has been around since 1982 and that there are several locations statewide. These also include two detox facilities in Mesa at Broadway and Belleview with a total of thirty two beds. And currently they have never gone on diversion. Community Bridges calls every four hours to hospitals to see how many beds are available in order to avoid turning anyone away. Ms. Anderson stressed that sixteen beds for the East Valley is severely inadequate. Ms. Heap added that there are 1.4 million people in Mesa and wanted to know how the Board could help Community Bridges support this issue. Mr. O'Halloran queried whether the Board was interested in expanding bed availability or availability of services and it was agreed that expanding both would be ideal. Ms. Heap added that the data the Board has collected over the past year from Fire and PD in regards to mental health calls more than illustrates how great the need is for better care.

Mr. O'Halloran agreed to go back and have some discussion with the individuals at Community Bridges and compile the data that they have. After that has been done, the Board will meet with them again to discuss plans to move forward with spreading awareness with the intention of expanding care.

6. Hear an update, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Youth Diversity Education Team.
  - Hear an update on organizing youth community service and diversity education project (including the topic of bullying) with the Baha'i Community, Anti-Defamation League, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Gay Lesbian Education Network.

Ms. Khalighi informed the Board that Mr. Moon and Mr. Pearce and she discussed a service project that could be done in the near future. There were also members of the Baha'i youth community present to bring their ideas and offer help. She explained that it was discussed that a project would be organized before the end of the year. Mr. Pearce was to contact local non-profit agencies to see where the committee could be of service. Ms. Freeland informed the Board that Mr. Pearce and the non-profits had some questions regard the projects and that he would bring those questions before the committee at their next meeting. Ms. Anderson asked whether or not there was a specific project in mind. Ms. Khalighi stated that the committee wanted it to be more service oriented. Mr. Moon added that if a project was going to happen before the end of the year involving youths, it would need to be organized as soon as possible. Parents would need to be notified so that they can see if the kid's

schedules permit. Mr. Martinez asked whether a neighborhood clean-up might be an idea that is entertained. Ms. Khalighi stated that ideas are still open, but that they were looking for a project that requires more human interaction than just cleaning up trash. It was also important to the committee that the project be Diversity related. Ms. Anderson was concerned that with a project involving children, that the planning portion may be more extensive since there may need to be parental consent forms or release of information forms. Mr. Moon stated that he doesn't really see that as being an issue.

7. Hear an update, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Disabilities Action Team.

- Hear an update on the ways to raise community awareness about issues impacting people with disabilities.
  - a) Hear an update about creating options for the best methods and topics to educate the business community on mental health and substance abuse issues for the second town hall meeting.

Ms. Anderson informed the Board that the committee has changed their strategy on what they plan to do for the second town hall meeting. Ms. Anderson and Ms. Heap have crafter an email to Sally at the Chamber, and if it is accepted then Ms. Anderson and Bill McCallister from Marc Community Resources will go and do a presentation about employing individuals with special needs and how they can be a benefit as employees. Ms. Anderson has not received a response as of yet.

- Hear an update on collecting information and recommendations about ways to support the services and programs available for people with disabilities and the implementation of the ADA.
  - a) Hear an update from the Mesa City Court about diverting defendants who have mental health issues, veterans, or are homeless.

Ms. Schmidt stated that the committee is waiting for updates from speakers on this item. It is currently on hold due to this.

- b) Hear an update about providing input about design standards for adapting housing for people with disabilities.

Ms. Schmidt stated that the committee is waiting for updates from speakers on this item. It is currently on hold due to this. Ms. Anderson asked if the Housing Director could attend the November meeting. Ms. Freeland informed that Board that the Housing Director asked to attend the December meeting instead.

8. Hear an update, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Diversity and Inclusion Report Action Team.

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- Hear an update on creating and evaluating options and recommendations for the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion and Diversity Report.

Ms. Heap informed the Board that the report requests to make Mesa an Alzheimer's and Dementia friendly city. This item will be addressed with the committee participating in the Alzheimer's Walk on November 14, 2015. After that, a half day of community education will be planned. Ms. Heap and Karen Stenega have been working to see how to accommodate a large education piece on a small budget.

- Hear an update on identifying and evaluating options for addressing the issues that impact the LGBT population as identified in the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion and Diversity Report.

Ms. Heap stated that one of the recommendation was that the City adopt a Gender Identity policy for individual undergoing transition. This has not been addressed as of yet. The next recommendation was to model a Safe Spaces policy similar to the one that the University of Washington has adopted. This has also not yet been addressed.

- Hear an update on identifying and evaluation options for addressing the issues that impact Hispanic or Latino residents as identified in the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion and Diversity Report.

This issue was not discussed at the prior meeting.

9. Hear update, discuss, and take action on standing items outlined in the 2015-17 Strategic Plan.

- Hear an update, discuss, and take action from Dr. Byron regarding monitoring the Police Community Forums.

This update was postponed until Dr. Byron can be present.

- Hear an update, discuss, and take action from Dr. Byron regarding monitoring the statistics of police activity in the community.

This update was postponed until Dr. Byron can be present.

- Hear an update, discuss, and take action on increasing the number of speakers enrolled in the Speaker's Bureau and market the availability of the Speaker's Bureau as a community resource.

Ms. Freeland informed the Board that she sent the interest information and required forms to the individuals that Mr. Moon recommended. She stated that she is still awaiting a response. Ms. Freeland and Ms. Giese also discussed reaching out to some of the City speaker contacts to see if they might be interested in joining. Mr. Moon requested that Ms. Freeland contact his individuals one more time to see if a response is garnered.

- Hear an update, discuss, and take action on the need for and feasibility of creating a Psychiatric Recovery Center in the East Valley.

This was discussed during the presentation with Community Bridges earlier in the meeting.

10. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Diversity Administrator.

Ms. Freeland informed the Board that there twenty four attendees and that the audience was very engaged. The discussion generated at the event was very productive. Ms. Schmidt questioned whether or not there was an alternate way to view the film if you could not attend the screening. Ms. Freeland stated that a few weeks after the screenings, PBS shows the film. The specific times are listed on the Diversity website.

Ms. Freeland let the Board know that Mr. Ron Brooks gave a presentation regarding service animals at the Red Mountain Multigenerational Center. It was widely attended and that she would attempt to get the video to the Board as soon as possible.

Ms. Freeland will be bring a sign-up sheet to the December 2 Board meeting for the MLK Gala that is going to be held on January 16, 2015. The Board will have a table and can bring a guest with them if they would like.

Ms. Freeland also let the Board know that the 2015 Veteran's banner are currently at print and that there are 14 of them this year. They will be installed by November 6, 2011, the Friday before Veteran's Day. Ms. Anderson asked if the Board was going to be participating in the Veteran's Parade. Ms. Heap stated that there was not enough interested garnered this year.

11. Hear, discuss, and take action on conferences and/or meetings.

- Indie Lens Pop-Up: Autism in Love November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the Dobson Ranch Library located at 2425 S Dobson Rd.

Ms. Freeland stated that we are awaiting confirmation from the panel speaker for this film. She also let the Board know that she will be sending them a list of the screening line-up in soft copy to share with their contacts. Ms. Heap questioned if there was any more information regarding the material covered in the film. Ms. Freeland stated that she would send the Board of copy of the synopsis.

- Walk to End Alzheimer's: November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza located at 205 S 17<sup>th</sup> Ave.

12. Discuss and take action on scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

Ms. Anderson informed that Board that she sits on a committee that is dedicated to housing homeless Veteran's in Mesa. There will be a free concert after the Veteran's parade that Ms.

Anderson will supply a flyer for. She stated that at the concert donations will be taken to help furnish the new homes that are supplied to the homeless Veteran's.

Ms. Heap recognized Mr. Johnson, who was named the Fundraiser of the Year by the Mesa Fine Arts Center.

- Next meeting will be held on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.

13. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.

**\*Members of the audience may address the Board on any item. State Statute prohibits the Human Relations Advisory Board from discussing any item that is not on the agenda.**

**The City of Mesa is committed to making its public meetings accessible. For accommodations, translations, or additional information, please contact the Diversity Office at (480) 644-5033 or AzRelay 7-1-1 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.**