

**CITY OF MESA**  
**HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)**  
**Youth Diversity Education Team (YDET)**  
October 20, 2015 Minutes

The Youth Diversity Education Team of the City of Mesa met on October 20, 2015  
at 5:00pm at the Mesa City Plaza, 20 E. Main St. Ste. 170.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Denise Heap, Chair  
Cliff Moon, Vice-Chair  
Nadia Khalighi  
Talmage Pearce

MEMBERS ABSENT

Frank Johnson  
Robert Martinez

STAFF PRESENT

Bethany Freeland  
Ruth Giese

GUESTS

Erica Reyes  
Zalman Stern

1. Call to Order.

Ms. Heap called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

- Appoint position of Chair.

Ms. Heap appointed Ms. Khalighi as Chair of this subcommittee.

2. Items from citizens present.\*

There were no citizens who requested to speak to YDET.

3. Approval of minutes from the September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 YDET meeting.

Mr. Moon made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 YDET meeting. Mr. Pearce seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Hear, discuss, and take action on organizing youth community service projects, such as through school or church organizations.

Ms. Heap suggested to the committee that agenda items number four and number five be combined since they are such similar objectives. Ms. Khalighi informed the committee that Ms. Erica Reyes and Mr. Zalman Stern of the Baha'i Community were going to join them in the discussion of this agenda item.

Ms. Giese explained to Ms. Reyes and Mr. Stern that the Mr. Pearce has been interested in starting a youth service project including the topic of Diversity. Mr. Pearce explained that due to most of the schools already engaging in "service learning" that this would be a good place to draft students who are interested in volunteering for a Diversity related service project. Mr. Moon informed the committee that one of the schools he works with has already given him a list of names of students who may be interested in participating. He also gathered that it would be the job of the committee to come up with the project objectives, materials, dates, and times and that the school would only provide the students. There are currently twenty students from Westwood High School who are interested in being involved. Mr. Pearce stated that he has not yet narrowed down the project to any specific group or area yet, but that he believed that the upcoming holiday season would be a good opportunity for service. Ms. Heap queried as to whether there are any opportunities for volunteering at the upcoming MLK festivities in January. Ms. Khalighi believes that the committee can pull together a project for the upcoming holiday if they are motivated to do so. Mr. Pearce suggested a food drive for Thanksgiving or Christmas dinners. Mr. Moon cautioned that high school students and the service learning coaches like advanced notice so that the students and parents alike have plenty of time to prepare for the project. Ms. Khalighi also wondered if focusing on an area that is in need of man power may be an option. She suggested a clean-up project or a fire or police department that may need hands for some sort of activity. Mr. Moon suggested to Mr. Pearce that he contact some of the local non-profit groups and get involved in projects that they already have set up for the holiday season. This way the partnership can be mutually beneficial. Mr. Moon also stated that he would like to see the students recognized by receiving

either a certificate or some kind of local publicity. Ms. Giese questioned whether Mr. Moon could provide Mr. Pearce with more specific information as to when the students are allowed to participate in these projects, such as after school or on the weekends. Mr. Moon stated that he would gather that information.

Ms. Khalighi asked Ms. Reyes whether this seemed like something that the youth of her organization would be interested in or able to assist with. Ms. Reyes informed the subcommittee that there are currently five Baha'i Youth groups in the Mesa area. She also stated that the groups have partnered with A New Leaf on past projects and that it worked out well. Within these groups, the Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Program, are individuals who are also able to consult on certain service projects. Ms. Reyes let the committee know that if they wanted to have one of the groups come to a future committee meeting that they could consult together to figure out a particular project that could be completed. Ms. Giese reminded Mr. Pearce that a component on Diversity Education should be included in the project as to uphold the purpose of the Youth Diversity Education Team. Mr. Pearce suggested that the learning is inherent through the service itself. Ms. Heap stated that it would be a good thing to at least mention the topic of Diversity since that is the main reason for the existence of the committee. Mr. Moon explained that they could do an anticipatory set which includes talking on a topic, experiencing examples of that topic first hand, and then doing some reflection or report piece on the experience. He also stated that it should be something that moves beyond an experience that looks good on a college transcript. It should reach them in a way that inspires them to continue giving and accepting Diversity throughout their lives.

Ms. Reyes addressed the committee regarding education in relation to service projects. She stated that with the middle school aged children that she works with, they find success educating themselves through the education of others. She said that a group presented a power point regarding domestic abuse to their prior elementary school staff because many of them had been victims themselves. It was easier for the youth to open up about the sensitive subject together as group through conversation and mutual experience. She suggested that following this example, the committee could task the youth group with questions such as: how can we educate our community about Diversity? What are some issues regarding Diversity within our community? Once the group settles on a topic, the YDET committee could help the youth find an audience to deliver their findings to.

Mr. Moon explained that though the committee is small, a project such as this is not out of its purview as long as the youth that are involved are driven and committed. He also stated that each member of the committee has to be committed doing a piece of the project to pull everything together into something worthwhile. He suggested that they move forward with the plan to gather information from the local non-profits and find a project and then involve the Baha'i youth groups with the education portion.

Ms. Khalighi also inquired as to Ms. Reyes' group's involvement with the local police department. Ms. Reyes explained that the group has been involved in this program since 2008, but that it really picked up speed around 2012. She stated that she Ray Villa attended one of their one day camps and participated in a question and answer session with the youth there. The focus of the discussion was to explain to the kids how they view their jobs in the spirit of service and community. Ms. Heap reiterated that even though Diversity wasn't a topic of discussion on that particular occasion that it would need to be the highlight of the service project that is presented by the committee. Ms. Reyes agreed that that is a central theme of the training guide that the kids use in their program. She then read a short excerpt from the guide detailing that point. The committee thanked Ms. Reyes and Mr. Stern for attending the meeting and sharing their thoughts and input.

Mr. Moon questioned whether or not the contacted non-profit agency should be Mesa based or not. Ms. Giese said that it isn't necessary, but that there are a multitude of non-profits in Mesa and that they should be contacted first. Ms. Heap suggested the Care Partnership headed by Bev Tittlebaker. Ms. Giese informed Mr. Pearce that she would send Ms. Tittlebaker's contact information to him so he may contact her. Ms. Giese also urged the committee to consider things like time commitment and distance of travel as factors in the project that they choose. The group agreed that they would try to compile information in order to facilitate a smaller holiday related project before the Christmas holiday. Ms. Giese also suggested that the committee gather some information and make recommendations to the board by the meeting the following week on

October 28, 2015. This way things can move more quickly. Mr. Pearce stated that it would be a good idea to just focus on Westwood High School for the time being and expand to other schools in the future. Ms. Giese informed the committee that gave the dates of the November 17, 2015 YDET meeting to Ms. Reyes and Mr. Stern so that they may attend as well.

5. Hear update, discuss, and take action on planning a 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.

It was agreed upon by the committee that this item and item four would be combined into one agenda item for meeting going forward.

6. Hear, discuss, and take action on the MLK Committee's Youth Leadership Development Conference.

Mr. Moon stated that this item is unlikely to reach fruition this year. He suggested removing the item for the time being. The committee agreed.

7. Hear, discuss, and take action on expanding the high school portion of the Indie Lens Pop-Up Series to more than Dobson High School.

Ms. Freeland informed the board that there were no films in this year's lineup that deal directly with youth related topics. Mr. Moon suggested that this item also be removed from the agenda for the current year. The committee agreed.

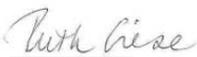
8. Discuss future agenda items, meeting dates, announcements, and other general information.

- Next YDET meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 5:00pm.

9. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.

Submitted By:



Ruth Giese,  
Diversity Program Administrator