

HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
October 26, 2011 MINUTES

The Human Relations Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular Human Relations Advisory Board Meeting October 26, 2011, 6:00 p.m. at Mesa City Plaza, 20 E Main Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rory Gilbert, Chair
Denise Heap, Vice Chair
Terry Benelli
Hong Chartrand
Frank Johnson
Wayne Manske
James May
Orchidia Peterson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ana Cadillo
Lela Hinds-Peterson

STAFF PRESENT

Ruth Giese

GUESTS

Sharon Burlingame
Margarita Quihuiz
Ray Villa

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Ms. Gilbert welcomed the board and guests.

2. Items from citizens present.

Sharon Burlingame, a member of the Mesa Police Department, and on behalf of the Mesa Police Association, requested that the board consider including domestic partner benefits in its strategic plan. The Mesa Police Association would like to see the City add domestic partner benefits as part of benefits package. There are numerous members of the police department that would like to have this benefit available for the financial and medical security of their families.

Ms. Gilbert thanked Ms. Burlingame for her comments and asked that the Board be provided more information concerning the City's current benefits package.

3. Hear report on Police forums and on November 4, 2011 event from Ray Villa, Police Community Outreach Coordinator.

Ray Villa provided a summary of upcoming changes to Mesa Police forums. The November 14, 2011 event will bring together all the advisory boards to launch the new program. The Police Department has asked for PD personnel to lead each advisory board which will be made up of community members. The purpose of the advisory boards is to create more dialogue and to assist Mesa police to create better communication between police and residents. Mr. Villa invited the HRAB to participate in the November 4th event.

Ms. Heap discussed her concern that the advisory boards would not be public events. Mr. Villa advised that all board meetings will be public and the Chief Milstead's intent is to get as many involved on these boards and to strengthen the PD's engagement in the community. Mr. Villa also noted that the Mesa PD Diversity Team will also be working with the boards.

Ms. Gilbert stated that it appeared that the new structure will allow more focused communication and role of the boards. Ms. Gilbert also suggested to the HRAB that if time allows, they can attend one of police advisory boards and support their work.

4. Approval of minutes from the September 26, 2011 board meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. May to approve the September 26, 2011 Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) minutes, with a correction made to item number four. Ms. Peterson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Discuss, revise and approve 2011/2012 Strategic Plan.

Ms. Gilbert opened this discussion with an update and clarification received from the City Manager's Office. Mr. May and Ms. Gilbert were informed that Mayor and Council appreciated our work on the Mesa Compact and that our work is complete. After efforts at clarification, Mr. May and Ms. Gilbert were told the HRAB were not to proceed with community conversations and that the ordinance

indicated our responsibility was advisory only. The board represented the city and it was up to the community to take on the issue.

The board was concerned that this was not how the board has functioned in the past and it dismissed many aspects of our ongoing strategic plan which focused on civil conversations, community dialogue and education.

Ms. Gilbert also indicated that she and Mr. May were also told the board could not have a HRAB brochure but that board members could hand out Ruth Giese's business cards as needed.

The board discussed that they would visit with Council members and the Mayor to clarify this message. The HRAB tabled approval of the strategic plan until the November meeting.

6. Discuss, select and approve Ad Hoc Teams and Team Chairs and schedule meetings for 2011/12 year. The HRAB tabled this discussion given that the strategic plan was not approved.
7. Hear report on "A Community Conversation on Immigration" forum held on September 27th from those Board members who attended.
Ms. Gilbert, Ms. Heap and Ms. Orchidia Peterson attended the event. Ms. Peterson discussed that the event was well received and the board was well represented at the event.
8. Diversity Administrator's Report:
Ms. Giese provided information about the upcoming Community Cinema Series, which will be held each month from November to May at the Mesa Arts Center. Ms. Giese also reported on the success of Make a Difference Day, which had 3000 volunteers completing 70 projects citywide.
9. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.
The board discussed re-scheduling the November meeting to November 30, 2011 and cancelling the December meeting. The board also discussed the Diversity Leadership Alliance conference, which was attended by Ms. Chartrand, Ms. Peterson, and Ms. Gilbert.
10. Adjourn.
Ms. Gilbert thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting in honor of Robert Brinton at approximately 8:00 p.m.

***The next regular meeting is on November 30, 2011, at 6:00 p.m.
Lower Level, City Council Chambers.***

Submitted By:

Ruth Giese,
Diversity Program Administrator