

City of Grand Haven Human Relations Commission
Thursday, September 28, 2023, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall | 519 Washington Grand Haven

NOTES

The regular meetings of the Grand Haven Human Relations Commission was called to order by Annie Baker at 530pm in the council chamber of City Hall, 519 Washington Ave.

Present: Commission Members Annie Baker, Emmet Brown, Andrew Villanueva, Jessica Cole Robinson, Sydney Kroll, Wes McGee, Amber Mendiola-Suarez, Keith Colson joining at 6pm

Absent: Greta Fuller

Others Present: Assistant City Manager Tim Price

Welcome Guests/Call to Audience

Baker moved this item to the top to accommodate the schedule of guest Barbara VanHorssen of the Momentum Center. She reports that the Momentum Center is now in their new building (the old Rendezvous) and have just completed their second Across the Bridge Cultural Immersion Program with success. Community engagement with the mental illness task force is yielding positive results. At the recent Community Mental Health (CMH) Board Meeting, pulling the mental health millage funding from the Momentum Center was considered and is currently being re-evaluated with their funding only secure until the end of 2023. The Momentum Center invites the public to show support for their mission by writing letters or speaking during the public comment of the CMH meetings (held on the 4th Monday of each month) and Ottawa County Commissioner meetings (held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month). We discussed as a group the impacts of this information and how it impacts the HRC, potentially supporting the momentum center in coming up with ideas for their Inspire! Community Conversations.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda & Motion to Approve

Colson presented the agenda. McGee motioned to approve, Baker seconded, all approved.

Approval of Minutes of meeting: August 2023

Colson presented, Villanova motion to approve, McGee seconds, all approve.

Liaison Report

Baker updated the group on the Tri-Cities Puentes Initiative. Also a Banned Booked event at the library during the month of October, Baker will forward the flyer.

Old Business

Kroll reported about the Hispanic Heritage Fiesta Drive - 25 backpacks + many snacks to the GHHS LAUP program to support Latin American students. Reported setbacks were that we started planning late and had trouble connecting with leaders at the school, so we only had a few days of advertising. A successful drive considering! Baker reported that the booth was successful and we staffed it all day - thank you to those who volunteered to connect with our community.

Price attended Across the Bridge, intended to integrate the communities of Ottawa and Muskegon counties. His group explored Muskegon, visited the transit system, met with law enforcement agencies, went to a ReethsPuffer football game, went to the Museum of African American History, spent time in the Heights, and had lunch with the interim City Manager. He learned that there is essentially no tax base to pull from to manage and maintain their city, they brainstormed ideas. Final debrief is Tuesday.

Baker reported that they're now connected + the drive is shared. Baker + Villanueva will meet this month to move forward with a plan.

New Business

As a group we discussed ideas for Black History Month. Going to connect with the library, the museum, churches, and other groups to see if we can promote what is already happening. Other ideas included films or speakers that we could bring in. Annie will email Liaisons to inquire about what is already planned in our city. We will draft a formal recognition for Black History Month in February.

Price + Colson discussed building networks + our scope within our community. We added some names to our liaison list and discussed becoming an information hub. HRC is welcome to have a booth at the City's Trick or Treat at Central Park Place.

Second Call to Audience - No one here.

Meeting adjourned at 702pm, motioned by Annie, second by McGee adjourned at 702pm. The next meeting will take place on October 26, 2023.