



**MINUTES**  
**HUTCHINSON HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday, December 21, 2016 – Council Conference Rm**

1. **Call to Order** – Present: David Dove, Jerome Kahn, J.W. Martin, Jr., Olivia Martinez, Natasha Russell-Iverson, Mike Sullivan (V. Chair), Sue Wray and Mery! Dye (staff liaison).
2. **Community Policing Program** – Officer Darrell Tossie attended the meeting to give an overview of the renewed Community Policing Program within the Hutchinson Police Department. The program was in effect about 20 years ago under a federal grant. When grant funds expired, so did the program. The program was renewed this January after the City Council authorized the hiring of additional police officers which allowed 3 existing officers to be reassigned to the Community Policing effort. Off. Tossie is one of those officers along with Officers Anna Ruzhanovska and Stephen Schaffer. One officer is assigned to the Lincoln School neighborhood and one assigned to the SW Bricktown neighborhood, based on the number and types of police responses to those areas. Officer Tossie floats to areas within the community where he might be needed. The officers are learning about resources in the community so they can better interact with neighbors within the assigned areas. He believes by building strong ties with people, taking a proactive approach and spending more time on problem-solving, that challenges can be better addressed. While the Community Policing Program involves the permanent assignment of officers to certain segments in our community, it is really a philosophy that is being incorporated throughout the police department.
3. **Introduction of Applicant for HHRC Vacancy** – Joe Allen was in the audience and introduced as a candidate for appointment to the HHRC. Joe has been in Hutchinson for about 2 years, and has served on the ADA Advisory Board until it was dissolved a few months ago. He is employed as a clinical manager at Health-E-Quip, and is supported by his employer in getting involved in the community. He believes the HHRC is a good fit for his personal interest in promoting equality based on culture and orientation. Jerome Kahn made a motion to recommend Joe Allen for appointment to the HHRC. Dove seconded the motion and the motion passed.
4. **Minutes** – Dove made a motion to approve the minutes of December 21, 2017. Wray seconded the motion and the motion passed.
5. **Reports** – Dye reviewed the purpose of the Attendance Record and Informal Complaint Report. She discussed the one informal complaint received in December, but there were no complaints in January.
6. **Unfinished Business** – Dye discussed the Wichita Business Journal annual event to recognize a long list of “Leaders of Diversity” from the Wichita business community. In December, the HHRC briefly discussed doing the same in our community and inviting diversity leaders to tell their story in a community forum to describe obstacles they had to overcome and be an inspiration to others. Dye also shared information about a new program in Wichita involving a series of community conversations about race. The program called “Candid Conversations” is held at various public locations, and includes talks by historians, police experts and Wichita Police Chief

Gordon Ramsay. The series is sponsored by several groups including humanities groups, schools, police, and community organizations. Dye suggested having a similar program in Hutchinson, and using a group facilitator to help decide topics, to lead discussion and to have questions as conversation starters. Dye also suggested inviting particular people to participate at each session, but also urging the public to be a part of the conversations. Russell-Iverson suggested holding the conversations at the public library auditorium because it would serve as neutral territory, and light refreshments would be permitted. HHRC members were interested in such a project. Dye suggested doing detailed planning at the next meeting.

Dye asked members if they wish to participate in HCC's Cultural Appreciation Day in April and the Women's Show on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Several members expressed interest. Dye will register for a booth at both events.

Sue Wray suggested having discussion about the Charter for Compassion, an international program aimed at building a compassionate world which provides a community tool box for building a Compassionate Community. Dye will send a web link to HHRC members to learn more, and add this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

7. **Adjournment** – Wray made a motion to adjourn, and Martin seconded the motion for adjournment.

Minutes Prepared by Meryl Dye, Assistant City Manager (Staff Liaison)

**Next Meeting – March 15, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Conf. Room**