

1 **Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**
2 **Meeting Minutes**
3 **February 28, 2024**
4
5

6 **Commissioners Present:** Richard James, Amanda Becker, Namit Bhalla, Elliot Francke,
7 Jeena Gurung Vomhof, Kathryn Macomber, David Tidball, and
8 Lori-Anne Williams
9

10 **Youth Commissioners:** None
11

12 **Commissioners Absent:** None
13

14 **Staff Present:** Rebecca Olson, Assistant City Manager
15

16 **Call to Order/Roll Call**
17

18 The Human Rights, Inclusion, and Engagement Commission (HRIEC) meeting was called to
19 order at 6:30 p.m.
20

21 **Receive Public Comment**

22 The Commission received an email from Justin Page, US Department of Justice who indicated
23 he would be interested in coming to the HRIEC to talk with the Commission about what the DOJ
24 is doing with the human rights and how the department might be able to assist the HRIEC.
25

26 Chair James thought the HRIEC is not the type of Commission that Mr. Page perceives it to be.
27 He indicated he did not have a problem emailing Mr. Page back regarding his email and
28 explaining the Commission's role in Roseville. He also thought, depending on what happens
29 with how the Commission is going to be setup and organized, he thought it might be a good idea
30 for the Commission to try to arrange for Mr. Page to come for a public meeting.
31

32 Commissioner Macomber was not sure if that is something the Commission could do or if it
33 would need to come from the City or the City Manager. If the Commission were able to do that,
34 it would be terrific to partner with the library. The library often posts things like this and have
35 the ability to live stream them and market it in their newsletter.
36

37 Chair James thought that Do-Good Roseville could be involved as well. He asked Ms. Olson if
38 the Commission would be permitted to do this.
39

40 Ms. Olson suggested staff reach out to Mr. Page and find out if he would be open to this and then
41 staff could get more information and bring it back to the Commission.
42
43

44 **Approve Minutes**
45

- 46 **a. January 17, 2024 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**

47
48 Commissioner Francke moved and Commissioner Williams seconded a motion to approve the
49 January 17, 2024 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission meeting minutes as
50 presented. Motion passed unanimously.

51
52 **New Business**

53
54 **a. Update from February 12, 2024 Council Meeting Discussion**
55 Chair James provided a recap of the February 12th Council meeting.

56
57 Commissioner Becker arrived at 6:42 p.m.

58
59 Commissioner Gurung Vomhof asked Chair James if he has heard from any of the
60 Councilmembers since he talked at their meeting.

61
62 Chair James indicated he has not heard from anybody ever.

63
64 Commissioner Gurung Vomhof explained she has also debated about what to do
65 because she loves the Commission and is very hopeful and she wants to continue and
66 does not want it to collapse. She thought there is a reason why this started, and she
67 did not think the Commission should give up. She noted she talked to Commissioner
68 Becker and a couple of people in the City, and she personally heard that the City has
69 hired somebody, and she is kind of excited.

70
71 Chair James explained the Commission functions under the City Council and the
72 Council makes the rules. The Council sets the City Code 205 and have the authority
73 to change it and put words in that. The Commission does not but did make a
74 recommendation to the Council based on discussion and lots of work that went into it
75 and the Council expressed they did not think that is the way the Council thinks about
76 it, or this is the way the Council wants it to be.

77
78 Commissioner Gurung Vomhof asked what the Council thought or if someone from
79 the Council could come and talk to the Commission.

80
81 Chair James explained March 11th the Commission was supposed to have a joint
82 meeting with the City Council and that is not happening. The Council is talking at
83 that meeting about what they think should happen with the HRIEC. He indicated, in
84 his opinion, the Commission is in limbo and do not have a real function other than
85 what the Commission is functioning under now and the Commission does not know
86 what the Council is going to say or what the Council is going to come to. He thought
87 it is hard to imagine that the Council is going to come to a resolution on March 11th
88 and will probably be months before a decision is made.

89

90 Chair James noted that the Commissioners coming up for reappointment will not be
91 reappointed until this is decided by the City Council unless the individual
92 commissioners have heard from the City regarding the reappointment.
93

94 Ms. Olson indicated the reappointments are on the agenda for March 4th City Council
95 meeting and Commissioner Gurung Vomhof's name is on there for reappointment.
96 She noted she did not know what the City Council's plan is though.
97

98 Chair James noted he is going to be at the March 11th City Council meeting, along
99 with Commissioner Tidball. He explained if anyone else would like to go to the
100 meeting please do. He believes it would be important to send all of the Council and
101 the Mayor all of the Commission's questions. He wants to know what the
102 Commission will do after March 31st. He thought that is one of the things that needs
103 to be presented to them before the Council starts talking about how they see the
104 Commission evolving and going on. The other thing is that in talking to one of the
105 Councilmembers about what the Commission is planning on doing with a functioning
106 calendar and monthly work to be done the Councilmember said they never heard that
107 before. There is a big gap between what the Commission does and what the Council
108 knows, and he did not think the Council actually knows what the HRIEC is doing.
109 He thought the Council has perception, but he did not believe the Council knew and
110 that is one of the things on his list for goal number one is to look for a way of
111 improving communication between the Council and the Commission. He asked if
112 Ms. Olson or before her, Mr. Brooks, ever reported to the Council on what the
113 HRIEC is doing.
114

115 Ms. Olson indicated staff does not do a formal report.
116

117 Chair James assumed that staff had a regular discussion with the City Council on the
118 work being done at the HRIEC. He believed that the Commission set up a plan that
119 could work and if followed through, the City could see a list of things the HRIEC has
120 done in the next year. He noted he can accept things changing and maybe there is a
121 better way.
122

123 Ms. Olson explained the City Council has heard what the HRIEC has wanted for
124 changes and the Council has not had a chance to discuss these proposed changes and
125 March 11th is the Councils' opportunity to discuss the proposed changes made by the
126 HRIEC. Whatever comes from that may bring some opportunities for the
127 Commission to come forward with more discussion.
128

129 Commissioner Becker explained she only has a few meetings left and maybe some of
130 her comments at the initial joint meeting is what ruffled the Council's feathers. She
131 would like to hear more about Council's concerns because she did not think the
132 Council articulated those, the Council just showed some questions about the
133 Commissions proposed changes to scope or confusion. She also thought what was
134 owed to the Commission is that it bubbled up because the Commission was asked to

135 look at a scope document and she felt a little offended if the task was really just to
136 add some periods and cross some sentences off. It was a perfect opportunity for the
137 HRIEC, which has floundered and has struggled, to figure out what it is really doing
138 and to take a look at a document that helps establish the civic element of this group,
139 which she does think is important. She continues to beat this drum because she thinks
140 she is a living, breathing American citizen in 2024 and the City really needs to focus
141 on participation in government and it is not clear right now what that is. The
142 Commission may not know what it is doing on a monthly basis and there have been
143 plenty of times where she has been a little confused or wondering what their direction
144 is but that is the process of government and what they do while sitting around the
145 table, try to figure out what their purpose is and how that connects to government.
146 That is the work she does not want to fall off. She thought that the Commission needs
147 to stand up and continue to push and advocate for a commission because she thought
148 the inclusion and engagement of the community with government is vital.

149
150 Commissioner Williams thought it is great the Council is going to take some time on
151 March 11th to talk about this because she thought part of what happened was that the
152 Council saw the scope the Commission put forward and thought they never talked
153 about what was expected of the Commission. She thought this is a good next step.

154
155 Commissioner Franke thought what Commissioner Becker stated is what the
156 Commission has been working on the last couple of meetings and he thought the
157 Commission defined the scope, purpose and the why of the HRIEC and have
158 established a structure for doing that. He noted what makes him angry is the
159 Commission is doing all of this work and the Council is not even aware of it and so
160 the Council feels like the Commission is floundering but that is not the case. He
161 thought the Commission should continue working on what it has been doing and
162 work on the scopes on the agenda in order to demonstrate to the City Council the
163 Commission's value.

164
165 Commissioner Bhalla explained one thing he has known through experience is that
166 change is not easy and if change occurs without any friction taking place or any
167 tension there, it is probably not a good change. He appreciates everyone's passion
168 and he wanted to encourage the Commission to keep going with what it can and
169 really put their best foot forward and he was sure there would be good results.

170
171 Commissioner Tidball arrived at the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

172
173 **b. Work Plan Discussion**

174 Commissioner Becker updated the Commission on the subgroup she is on that met
175 after the last meeting.

176
177 Commissioner Gurung Vomhof explained she really enjoyed the subcommittee
178 meeting. She picked seniors to reach out to. She updated the Commission on what the
179 City could do to build a relationship with senior living areas in the community.

180
181 Commissioner Francke indicated he decided to try to build a relationship with the
182 youth in the community and how the Commission can fit into the schools.
183

184 Commissioner Bhalla explained he is an ordained minister, and he will be connecting
185 with churches and congregations.
186

187 Commissioner Gurung Vomhof made suggestions on how the Commission can
188 connect to the different organizations.
189

190 Chair James thought because Commissioner Gurung Vomhof has already established
191 a certain pattern and procedure, it is not starting from scratch. The number one focus
192 would be connecting with senior groups. That way the subgroup will not be stretched
193 thin. He thought the other two groups should be kept moving along so they do not
194 become stagnant. He thought the subgroup could work on more than one issue.
195

196 Ms. Olson thought it would be important to bring staff in on these conversations
197 because staff has had long-standing connections in these communities.
198

199 **c. Review 2023 Accomplishments**

200
201 The Commission reviewed the 2023 accomplishments.
202

203 **Other New Business or Reports**

204 **a. Staff Updates**

205 Assistant City Manager Olson reported on the following:

- 206 • Equity and Inclusion Manager Hiring
207 Ms. Olson indicated the City has hired a new Equity and Inclusion Manager
208 and will start at the end of March
- 209 • Updated Community Aspirations and next steps
210

211 **Announcements**

212
213 **Future Agenda Items**

214
215 **Adjournment**

216
217 Chair James adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.
218

219 Respectfully submitted,
220

221 Sue Osbeck

222 *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*