

## Human Rights Committee

Minutes of the 09/15/2020 6:00 p.m. City of Pekin Council Chambers

Members in Attendance: Roy Beckham, Tonya DeGroot, Stephanie Rhodes, John Dossey, Sarah Newcomb and Guest, Sharon Collins

Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction of guest Sharon Collins serves the less fortunate women of Pekin through providing housing, meals and help to women recently released from prison. Chief Dossey is introduced to the whole committee and discusses his hopes for the committee and informs committee of his prior employment history and current state of the Pekin Police Department.

Approval of 8/5/2020 minutes on motion by Dossey and second from Newcomb. All present voted Aye.

OLD BUSINESS: Discuss progress of fundraising for the HRC. Beckham also asks if we should fundraise for a specific event or for the Committee as a whole. Chief Dossey mentions the Night Out Against Crime would have been a good event to share information as well as discussing the Police Foundation that has had some successful fund raising in the past such as a raffle and due to COVID it could be done online. DeGroot mentioned that a restaurant could host an evening with the proceeds going to the HRC. Papa Johns has worked with the Police Foundation in the past. Beckham asks if the committee is OK with a letter going out to the businesses. The committee agrees that Beckham may draft that document. Sharon Collins suggest an outdoor movie theater, for which she has the screen. Discussion proceed and the Dome, the RiverFront, or the Park District are suggested as potential locations. DeGroot suggests we will have to be concerned about COVID19 and suggestions for selling tickets to limit to the 50 people per the Phase 3.

Esker sent a report that she has received some positive feedback about putting up murals along Court Street.

Follow up discussion from last month's meeting about Discussion Circles/Town Hall discussions/Table Talks and tying that into the Big Table project. Chief Dossey suggests a podcast or YouTube channel with open dialogue about how to change the culture. We can link the podcasts with the other social media the City uses. Discussion of diversity, equality and kindness should be the first podcast. We will further discuss the podcast and set a target for the first podcast in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2020.

Human Race/Festivals celebrating humankind and adjusting the language used around diversity. Learning about other cultures and DeGroot suggests early fall festival in late September or early October with a focus on season of change. Dossey suggests the Cops with Kids would be a good source for outreach to the children in the summer months.

Beckham asks Chief Dossey if there is any support he needs from the HRC for Community Policing. Chief states he is in discussions with his Command Staff to increase interest from the community at those meetings. Chief is looking for resources to help people get back on their feet after drug interventions, the mental health issues, and sees a real difficulty from the lack of social services. He would like to develop partnerships with more social services. Chief wants to adjust the messages at the community meetings. Beckham asks how we can change the message and the impression the citizens have with the police, so there isn't fear when you are pulled over or a police officer knocks on your door. Collins says

the difficult part is where to find the social services and getting that information to the people who need it most. Where do you start when there are so many issues to deal with? Collins offers to help with the social services for mental health, homeless and helpless in getting messages out and sharing information. Dossey discusses the changes that have occurred with Drug Court and the Safe Passages program as well as programs for dealing with the Courts. Chief will be working on the Community Policing in the fall for a spring roll out. Collins offers her help as well.

DeGroot suggests that Pekin is so insular, and we need to reach other communities and get everyone more involved. Beckham says the relationship with the Police Department is going to be foundational to the success and messaging for the HRC. DeGroot also suggest a drive for gloves, hats, sleeping bags etc. for homeless outreach.

Beckham reiterates the dates and plans discussed and the first community table talk will be planned for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2021 when hopefully some of the COVID regulations have decreased.

Beckham states that Nicholas Hall has been added as a Community advisory member and has had discussions with the City Manager and Chief Dossey regarding the Black Lives Matter movement. The City wants to make sure they have action items behind any statement the City makes.

Discussion ensues regarding officers for the HRC. Newcomb volunteers to be the secretary Motion by Dossey and 2<sup>nd</sup> by DeGroot all present voted in favor. DeGroot volunteers to be the Chairperson Newcomb makes the Motion and Dossey seconds. Dossey volunteers to be the Vice-Chair with a motion by Newcomb and second by Collins, all present voting aye.

Newcomb motions with a 2<sup>nd</sup> from Beckham to nominate Collins as the Committee Advisory member.

The next meeting will be October 13, 2020 at 6:00 at City Hall.

Beckham made a motion to adjourn, second by Dossey at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by Sarah Newcomb, Secretary Human Rights Committee