



MINUTES

COMMISSION ON DIVERSE CULTURES 5850 W. GLENDALE AVE. GLENDALE, ARIZONA 85301

APRIL 13, 2022
6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Brittany Leslie, Staff Liaison.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Nellie Andrade, Commissioner
Ashor Chamoun, Commissioner
Martha Dennis, Commissioner
James Smith, Commissioner
Reka Vicsacsan, Commissioner

Also Present: Brittany Leslie, Staff Liaison

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Commission on Diverse Cultures Minutes of March 9, 2022.

A motion was made by Commissioner James Smith, seconded by Commissioner Martha Dennis to approve the March 9, 2022 Commission on Diverse Cultures meeting minutes.

AYE: Commissioner Nellie Andrade
Commissioner Ashor Chamoun
Commissioner Martha Dennis
Commissioner James Smith
Commissioner Reka Vicsacsan

Passed

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION: Commission Recommendation and Submission Process

Ms. Leslie indicated this agenda item would provide clarity on submitting the Commission's recommendations to Council. She said the Commission was initially told that every recommendation must go to the Government Services Committee (GSC), who would discuss and approve the recommendation and then it would go to Council. The Commission requested the reason for the process and if all other Commissions were following the same process. She indicated the Commission felt the process was time constraining and not in the favor of the Commission when proposing recommendations.

Ms. Leslie said, yesterday, the City Attorney took the bylaws to Council workshop to discuss how the Council wants to move forward with Commissions when there are subcommittees in the Commission. She said the GSC process was also discussed. She noted this item will be kept on the agenda moving forward pending Council's direction on the recommendation process.

Chair Andrade stressed the need to clarity on the process and appreciated the efforts of Ms. Leslie.

2. DISCUSSION: Follow up on Commissions at different surrounding cities.

Ms. Leslie shared findings from her research on surrounding cities, which included the following information:

- There are no Human Relations Commissions or a Commission on Diverse Cultures with that specific title.
- She has found a lot of Arts Commissions, which Glendale has as well.
- She is trying to determine what each commission in surrounding cities does and will give a presentation to this Commission. She will also research events that other cities have done.

Chair Andrade suggested collaborating with the Glendale Arts Commission, to possibly join forces on an event which meets the needs of both Commissions.

Ms. Leslie said a representative from the Inclusion Network was invited to speak to this Commission, but the presentation was canceled. She will re-invite the representative back to a Commission meeting. She will also reach out to the Arts Commission staff liaison and invite her to a Commission meeting.

6. STAFF REPORTS

Ms. Leslie announced she sent an email to the Commissioners regarding an upcoming storm water plan management workshop hosted by the Water Services Department. She encouraged Commissioners to take the survey and to share the information with other community members. She relayed the details for the Council workshop and encouraged the Commissions to attend or watch the workshop live.

7. COMMISSION COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Chair Andrade recommended a Glendale Founder's Day. She said other valley cities have a Founder's Day. She said many years ago, Glendale had a Watermelon Festival, because Glendale was known for growing watermelon. She said bring an event of this nature to Glendale could instill pride and belonging to the citizens of Glendale. She said a subcommittee could be established to research this idea.

Chair Andrade said that Commissioner Vicsacsan had previously mentioned a multi-cultural festival, which she would like to research. She suggested it be held at Murphy Park and she recommended the use of a subcommittee for this item as well.

Chair Andrade suggested FAFSA (Federal Application for Student Aid) event, noting that FAFSA benefits marginalized students and other students. She said the event would focus on assisting marginalized students, who may not have internet access or not understand the language. She knows a group who provides volunteers to assist students with the FAFSA process. She recommended setting up a subcommittee now as an event would need to be held before the end of the year.

Chair Andrade asked if the Commission was allowed to use GoogleDocs for sharing information on projects the Commission was working on. Ms. Leslie believed it was not allowed in order to avoid any violations with Open Meeting Law, however, she will reconfirm.

Commissioner Vicsacsan liked the idea of the Founder's event and the FAFSA event ideas. She works for Grand Canyon University and knows the students do experience issues with the FAFSA. She volunteered to assist with the subcommittee.

Commissioner Dennis commented on the Watermelon Festival. She said she is a native of Glendale and she lived next to the man who grew the watermelons. She commented on the various cultural festivals that used to be held in the park downtown. She relayed she is a Board member of the Glendale Historical Society, which was hosting an upcoming celebration. She indicated the Historical Society would be interested in any type of Founder's Day event.

Ms. Leslie said the Watermelon Festival is important to Glendale as it was held for so long. She commented that bringing it back would be wonderful, especially for the natives.

Commissioner Smith asked for additional information on the Historical Society celebration. Commissioner Dennis believed it was a fifty-year celebration, however, will have to confirm the details. She stated the Historical Society also tried to revive an event from the past called the Town Picnic, held at Manastee Ranch, however, the event was not well attended.

Commissioner Smith asked Commissioner Dennis to see if she could obtain a list of all of the events Glendale used to have in the past. Commissioner Dennis will follow up.

Commissioner Smith commented on a world tour theme for a multi-cultural event. He suggested hosting the event at Heroes Park, since it is one of the newer parks in the City. He suggested hosting festivals at different locations around the City.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Commission on Diverse Cultures will be held on May 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.,

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner James Smith, seconded by Commissioner Reka Vicsacsan to adjourn the meeting.

AYE: Commissioner Nellie Andrade
Commissioner Ashor Chamoun
Commissioner Martha Dennis
Commissioner James Smith
Commissioner Reka Vicsacsan

Passed

The Commission on Diverse Cultures meeting minutes of April 13, 2022 were submitted and approved this ___ day of _____, 2024.

Recording Secretary