

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION
Wednesday, August 16, 2023
Village Hall Rm 201 @ 7:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Comms. Puentes, Sakiyama, Terreta, Bencola, Quinn-Pasin, Peart,

ABSENT: Comms. Griffin, Chairperson Rodriguez

STAFF: Cassandra Adediran, Dr. Danielle Walker

CALL TO ORDER: 7:36 p.m. Meeting was held in room 201 as scheduled. Comm. Quinn-Pasin served as Chairperson in the absence of Comm. Rodriguez

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Comm Sakiyama; seconded by Comm Bencola

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Update on mini-grant applications

At the time of this meeting, there were two complete min grant applications and four inquiries about the program. Due to the low number of applications, the CRC members agreed that come September 1, the current deadline for application submission, a decision can be made to extend the deadline at that time. The CRC Chairperson may make that decision in between CRC meetings while checking in with the Chief DEI Officer, Dr. Danielle Walker. Acting Chairperson Comm. Quinn asked if the mini-grants applicants will be voted on during the next CRC meeting on September 20, 2023. If so, then all CRC members will need to have the score sheets completed and returned to Comm. Quinn for tallying.

2. Check in on 2023.

Staff Cassandra Adediran reminded the CRC that there were still outstanding reports from the 2022-2023 grantees. Comm. Quinn will send out a reminder notice to last year's grantees, requesting their end-of-program reports. The deadline for submission of the final reports will be September 30, 2023.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion on Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 goals and planning including brainstorming opportunities to connect previous grantees.

This item about connecting to previous grantees was tabled with the mention that a thorough explanation of the idea needs to be presented. The Quarter 3 goal for the CRC is the grant program and the work plan for 2024. The Quarter 4 goal was the involvement of the CRC with the Racial Equity Assessment and the expenditure of the \$500-line item for annual engagement/workshop training to the community. Comm. Terretta suggested that now is the time for planning an event which is to occur by the end of the year. Comm. Puentes suggested having a Dinner & Dialogue session. Comm. Puentes will review old notes and make plans for the event. Possible locations for the event include the library, the New American House, Unity Temple, Dominican University, and the Park District's Community Recreation Center. There was a question of regulating the recruitment such as to be aware of the political climate, racial overtones, and sexual blurts. On the question of CRC members doing its own Dinner & Dialogue, it was noted that the questions can center around the motivation for engaging or not engaging in the VOP community; the concern about the verbal filters that people do not seem to have; a pre-questionnaire which can be used; and the opportunity for participants to leave on their own accord if uncomfortable. Comm. Terretta suggested that the Dinner & Dialogue activity be set as a goal/objective tied to the work plan.

2. Discussion of collaboration opportunities with other commissions.

Dr. Walker referred to Aging in Place as one commission who could connect to the CRC. The CRC was reminded to beware of the rules for meeting per the Open Meetings Act (OMA) as it pertains to who attends such meetings. Dr. Walker will continue to work with Chairperson Rodriguez.

3. Office of DEI Updates from Dr. Walker.

Dr. Walker related that the UIC Team has been collecting information as part of the Racial Equity Assessment. Racial equity includes everyone as we are all racialized. If there are organizations that the CRC members feel the UIC Team needs to speak with, let Dr. Walker know. The ideal candidate should be organizations or people who have been doing the work. Youth are encouraged as well. The UIC team will start interviewing in the middle of September 2023. Staff Adediran announced the upcoming Tenant's Rights Workshop and encouraged participation from CRC members who are tenant residents of Oak Park.

4. Hispanic Heritage Month brainstorming.

Comm. Puentes has met with Dr. Walker about several activities which include:

- Round-table/panel discussions about the live experiences of Latinos in Oak Park (old and new residents)
- Movie night – a family friendly event which will be held on 10/13/2023 at nightfall (6:00-6:30pm) on the VOP lawn. There will be food and beverages.
- Trying to get the author of a best-selling book by a Latina author
- Convivencia 2023 – which is no longer being pursued. However, Ofrendas de Dia de Muerto is happening at the end of September. Last year, different food establishments were presented at Ofrendas in an effort to showcase the Latino heritage through food. There will be food and fun again this year. Comm. Puentes solicited the CRC members to participate and assist with the activities. Comm. Quinn also suggested using volunteers from Helping Hands. Comm. Puentes will distribute the list of Hispanic Heritage Month activities as Viva Oak Park!. There will be t-shirts and flags from the DEI office to commemorate the month.

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 20, 2023.

Motion to adjourn was made by Comm. Puentes and seconded by Comm. Sakiyama. Meeting adjourned at 8:37p.m.