

1 **Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**
2 **Special Meeting Minutes**
3 **DRAFT – June 9, 2021 - DRAFT**
4

5 *Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13.D.021,*
6 *Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission members, City Staff, and*
7 *members of the public participated in this meeting electronically*
8 *due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*
9

10
11 **Commissioners Present:** Keith Allen, Amanda Becker, Etienne Djevi, Paul Haas, Richard
12 James, Grace Lee, Kathryn Macomber, Laura Palmquist and
13 Adepeju Solarin.
14

15 **Youth Commissioners:** Beverly Yiling Xie
16

17 **Commissioners Absent:** None
18

19 **Staff Present:** Thomas Brooks, Equity, and Inclusion Manager
20

21 **Call to Order/Roll Call**
22

23 The Human Rights, Inclusion, and Engagement Commission (HRIEC) meeting was called to
24 order at 6:30 p.m.
25

26 **Approve Agenda**
27

28 Commissioner McComber moved and Commissioner Solarin seconded a motion to approve the
29 Agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.
30

31 **New Business**
32

33 **a. Discussion on Current and Future Work Plan Direction**

34 Chair Djevi provided a recap on the reason for a special meeting. He discussed the
35 possibility of the Commission getting new work items with the Equity Diversity
36 Manager being hired.
37

38 Mr. Brooks indicated the special meeting is an opportunity for the Commission to get
39 together and express any thought the Commissioners had, both on the existing work
40 plan as well as the future work plan.
41

42 Vice Chair Lee indicated she hoped the new Commissioners will bring new ideas and
43 fresh energy. While the new Commissioners are coming in middle of the current
44 work plan, she thought there was still opportunity to utilize the Commissioners
45 passion and experience in a way that will benefit the City and residents. She noted it
46 can be discouraging if the Commission proposes something to the Council and the

47 Council is really not onboard, but she thought that was a part of the Commission's
48 responsibility for the City and its residents to promote different ideas or work for the
49 City and, if necessary, try to bring the City Council onboard.

50
51 Mr. Brooks showed the Commission questions on current and future work plans.

52
53 Commissioner Allen indicated what came to mind for him was that he personally did
54 not have any interest in changing the current work plan. His interest is after a work
55 item is completed; he really wants the Commission to evaluate if it should go onto the
56 next years work plan. There will obviously be things that come up during the year
57 that the Commission might want to pivot or add on, just for the fact of responding to
58 community need.

59
60 Commissioner Becker explained she appreciated the special meeting and some of the
61 context she has received prior to the meeting has been really helpful. She thought in
62 thinking about the work Plan, from her perspective as a new person coming in, there
63 are just a few items on there. She was curious about the process and how the
64 Commission came to creating the work plan and being able to see that in the past,
65 some of the plans have been done by consensus workshops, or facilitation is really
66 helpful for her and feels like a really equitable process. When she thinks about a
67 consensus or facilitated workshop and being a part of one of those, personally for her,
68 for the next work plan, she thought it was really helpful to understand both a vision
69 and a mission for this Commission specifically. She understood that, looking at the
70 strategic plan, the City has CultureBrokers, staff and she thought it was pretty clear
71 what their vision is for the next few years, some sort of mission behind that followed
72 by some action steps. She thought it would be interesting to try to model that same
73 process for the Commission, understanding the Commission only meets once a month
74 and it might be a more micro-mission statement, but she thought her only
75 recommendation would be if the Commission could figure out what that mission
76 statement is and have that be a part of and physically listed on the agenda every
77 month to help guide conversations and steer conversation in the right direction. She
78 also agreed with Commission Allen that the current work plan does not necessarily
79 need to go away but she was curious about the items that have been completed there,
80 if there is a debrief on those, is there a decision then on how it went and how it should
81 move forward, sort of the process of what that looks like when a work plan item is
82 completed.

83
84 Commissioner Haas explained for him being a new member as well, it feels like he
85 would rather stick with the current plan rather than develop anything new. He
86 indicated he was more passionate about the engagement piece with the community
87 and trying to get, not only input from the Commission, but even with regard to the
88 next item, the commitment statement, etc., it is helpful to talk to other people in the
89 community. If he were going to push in one direction, it would be towards the
90 engagement piece and seeking to connect more for the work plan. He was in favor of
91 continuing the current work plan.

92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136

Youth Commissioner Xie agreed with Commission Haas regarding community engagement and thought COVID has been hard on that piece. She thought the Commission could implement more community engagement into the work plan since the Commission serves the community and all of the Commissioners are community members.

Commissioner James thought there are some things that will be continuing items on the work plan. The City Council is very interested in the Essay Contest, and he thought that is something the Council will still want to continue. The Commission started but have not finished the proclamations which is also going to be an ongoing thing because they want to be able to tie in the activities and action to go along with the proclamations. This can also involve community outreach. One the work plan everyone has, including the one Mr. Brooks presented to the Commission, there are two items that are not on the work plan that had been on there before. One is the community involvement and outreach and the other one is the proclamations. Those two things need to be added in so on the spreadsheet all of those things are listed on there. The community outreach part is something the Commission started working on a little bit but has fallen by the wayside and no one has been reporting back about that. Even though they are restrictive on COVID, it does not mean the Commission could not be thinking about and generating ideas and plans for the future. He thought these are things that will be ongoing because the community is changing and will not always be the same from year to year and work plan to work plan.

Commissioner McComber explained she worked through each of the questions and ended up with more questions instead of answers. For the first question regarding the new tasks to come from City Administration on equity work, what modifications should be made to the current Council approved work plan. She thought that was hard for the Commission to know at this point because the Commission does not know the importance, the priority of a task that might come from the City Administration and they really have not prioritized the tasks in the current work plan to see which could be removed or delayed if another task came up because they do need to be aware of how much the Commission can accomplish with the time given. The question about which part of the work plan she was most passionate about; the engagement piece and proclamations were important to her. She thought it was powerful to take what could be just a piece of paper with no teeth and add action items, pick out specific proclamations.

Commissioner McComber explained on the third question about what community outreach by the HRIEC look like to be effective, mostly it would be is if the community is aware of the Commission, are the communities the HRIEC trying to reach aware. She thought that was kind of hard to measure. Thoughts about a current timeline for developing the next workplan, she thought it would be nice to be jotting down ideas about that now as they begin to see the new priorities come from Mr. Brooks and CultureBrokers. She thought it was so hard to know how current and

137 future equity initiatives impact. They have to be imbedded in the work the
138 Commission is doing but she did not know what they are right now. When
139 Commissioner Becker talked about a Mission Statement, she always goes back to
140 their duties and functions of evaluating City outreach efforts, advising the City
141 Council on recommendations and strategies an engaging residents and business
142 through City Council programs. That is kind of the lens in which she used to look at
143 things, but she thought there will be some major changes as a result of the
144 CultureBrokers reports and Mr. Brooks’s work and observations. Much of it will be
145 internal to the City but much of it involving the Commission and community and she
146 did not think there was sufficient information yet. She would be happy if the
147 Commission could pick out three or four high priority items and drill down into them
148 the strategies and tactics and develop those outcome measures moving forward.
149

150 Commissioner Peju thought most of her comments were going to be emphasis. In
151 line with what Commissioners Allen and Haas have shared she agrees with. She also
152 agreed with what Commissioner McComber has talked about. Specifically, since the
153 new Commissioners have come on, her role is to evaluate everything mentioned but
154 what she has observed so far as when it is either CultureBrokers or staff or the City
155 still figuring out stuff, the Commission would need enough time to support the work
156 itself. As Commissioner McComber mentioned that is still in flux for the City
157 leadership and all of that together.
158

159 Commissioner Palmquist echoed the new Commissioners and indicated she was
160 happy with where the work plan is currently at and she thought it was really helpful
161 being new, coming in and seeing what the Commission is currently working on. She
162 wanted to specifically echo Commissioner Haas on sticking with what the
163 Commission has got and then the emphasis on engagement. It sounds like everyone
164 is pretty passionate about that so finding a way on how to put a lead on it. She
165 thought it is something they will all be focusing on in their own way, so engagement
166 is a tough one, specifically looking at it as a specific work plan topic. She thought the
167 current equity plan is really good coming from what the City Council wants. She
168 indicated she was really happy with where the Commission is at right now and she
169 thought the subgroups help to with the engagement and driving them forward as a
170 Commission.
171

172 Vice Chair Lee explained she was fine with the current plan and made sense. She
173 agreed with sticking with that and finishing out and as they go evaluate things and
174 when the Commission starts to work on next year’s work plan to evaluate and
175 consider if the Commission wanted to continue to do that. For her, personally, the
176 City Council are elected officials that are supposed to serve the resident and the City,
177 and she did not really care what they want to do every year. She thought it was the
178 Commission’s responsibility to engage with the community and find out what is
179 helpful and useful and what the residents would like to see happen. Also, the
180 Commission can use their own thought and judgement to determine what they think is
181 best for the residents. She thought the proclamations are good as well to bring to

182 light different educational topics. She wanted to add that while the Commission does
183 have this work plan that is being worked on, when things come up, she thought the
184 Commission does have the flexibility to work on other items as well.

185
186 Chair Djevi explained by going back to the past a little bit, one thing he has to pause
187 over, over the last several years has been to take a two-handed approach. When the
188 City and different City departments have specific activities or programs that need
189 engagement of the community, the Commission could be a liaison and help do the
190 community engagement. For example, Just Deed, staff did most of the work and the
191 Commission took a look at it to see if they agreed that it was something they could
192 encourage the City Council to take on and to be able to do that they were also
193 supposed to reach out to the community as well as to the commitment on the
194 CultureBrokers. Specific programs that the City has and need engagement on, the
195 Commissioners could be helpful in doing part of the engagement. That would mean
196 that the Commission knows who to engage and who are the stakeholders so there is a
197 plan in place to help. This is where, once the Strategic Action Plan comes out and
198 finalized, the Commission will need to know the specific things that the
199 Commissioners need to do.

200
201 Chair Djevi indicated that is one approach, the second approach is, when he
202 interviewed, one thing the Council was pretty particular about was the desire to reach
203 out to people who traditionally do not get involved in city government and this is
204 where, in thinking about different ways of engaging people in minority communities,
205 particularly in other marginalized groups, using the proclamations could be a way of
206 inviting people to participate in something that is of interest for them. Something that
207 they could see themselves in and that is how having activities linked to proclamations
208 came about. This is also getting a diversity group, for example, in the parade, became
209 something. The question always is going to be “from where we are, where do we
210 go”. He believed that some of the activities that the Commission has proposed
211 around proclamations, around the parade are specific methods of reaching out to the
212 community and getting people engaged. If they get to a point where CultureBrokers
213 and Mr. Brooks have different ways of doing things better than he thought they can
214 get involved. He thought the only strategy here is to better their engagement
215 processes so that they actually do the engagement as opposed to talking a lot about it.

216
217 Chair Djevi explained what he was hearing from everyone is that they want to do
218 engagement and are flexible about adding things from CultureBrokers and Mr.
219 Brooks that they may have for the Commission to work on. Hopefully, the City
220 Department, as they need engagement from the community, will involve the
221 Commission and the Commission will get more tasks. He thought the Commission
222 should continue with the current work plan and as things come up the Commission
223 will modify what can be modified and maybe combine what need to be combined so
224 the Commission is effective reaching out to the community.

225

226 Commissioner James agreed with the focus being on community involvement. He
227 thought they needed a subgroup or a new subgroup to come back with some basic
228 plans and ideas or have a specific agenda item each month to talk about community
229 involvement for new ideas.

230
231 Mr. Brooks explained he appreciated everyone's commitment to weigh in on this and
232 have a healthy discussion. This discussion is not unique to the Roseville HRIEC.
233 Many of the HRIEC's in other communities are having the same type of discussions
234 as well. The HRIEC's need to always evaluate where they are, what their role is in
235 all of this, and he did think that the one thing that is unique about this Commission is
236 that the Commission does have the added task of engagement. As a City, they are
237 still thinking through this and many of the Commissioners have eluded that so much
238 is still in flux and are still working through so many of the details that come with the
239 equity action plan and some of the other initiatives that are happening throughout the
240 City, but his group is getting to work on a communication plan that would include
241 how they want to communicate to staff and to the community, how they want to
242 educate the community and staff. He thought as he continued to work on that he will
243 certainly invite the Commission into that decision as they get some more progress on
244 it and learn about how this should all work out. He thought one of the things the
245 Commission can do and should do, individually and maybe as a collective group, is
246 solidify what each persons' network is.

247
248 Commissioner Peju indicated she would like more guidance, less from the
249 Commission and more from City leadership, especially with time sensitive items.

250
251 Mr. Brooks indicated guidance from staff is coming as they work through the
252 communication plan.

253
254 **b. Discussion on Support of 2021 Proclamations**

255 Chair Djevi indicated this item is to gain consensus on HRIEC support of 2021
256 Proclamations.

257
258 Commissioner Allen explained he and Commissioner McComber met and came up
259 with a list of recommendations for the Commission to look at to decide to move
260 forward but the list is not complete yet. He indicated he was thinking about this a lot
261 and from looking at this, his view is that they need a bunch of people to serve on this
262 Proclamations subgroup in order to look forward an determine what is going to be
263 done in each month for each proclamation. This is an ongoing project, and you do
264 not want to repeat things year after year, doing the same thing. Every year there
265 should be at least one different thing done in the month that the Commission is
266 looking at doing. He saw this as something the subgroup would meet regularly and
267 report back to the Commission for more input and ideas.

268
269 Chair Djevi hoped that when the Commission looks at all of the Proclamations, try to
270 find concrete activities, whether it is education or policy change, it should not be

271

272 viewed as the responsibility of two people. It is everyone's responsibility. In the past
273 he has proposed that each Commission should come up with educational
274 programming or policy changes and propose it to the whole group as opposed to two
275 people being in charge of having to find those things that have to be done. This is
276 also where he needs each Commissioner to tell him what they are passionate about
277 and what they want to work on so there is a concrete plan for the next six to twelve
278 months. He would like for everyone to come prepared to the next meeting indicating
279 what proclamation they want to work on.

280
281 Vice Chair Lee thought the report from Commissioners James and McComber was a
282 great report with really good ideas. She thought one of the suggestions was to
283 coordinate more with Nine North and she indicated once the Commission is able to
284 meet more in person maybe they could include Nine North in recognizing the
285 Proclamations and doing some sort of programming for some of them.

286
287 Chair Djevi agreed and thought the Commission needed to be proactive and reach out
288 to the communities.

289
290 Commissioner James indicated he was willing to continue as the lead person if the
291 Commission would like him to do that, but he needs structure to feel comfortable and
292 be able to work.

293
294 Commissioner Peju left the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

295
296 Commissioner Becker agreed with Commissioner James. She thought if the goal is to
297 get a process around the proclamations than starting with the list of suggestions is a
298 perfect entry point for these subgroups. She thought Commissioners James and
299 McComber already put a lot of work into this and felt this provides a good enough
300 framework to get the proclamation process going.

301
302 Chair Djevi concurred.

303
304 Mr. Brooks thought there may be a problem if all of the Commissioners gravitate
305 toward the same few proclamations there will still be more work to be done. He
306 thought the Commission could come up with a few suggestions for at least a few of
307 the proclamations so they can all get covered in the next meeting and not have
308 everyone gravitate to a few proclamations.

309
310 Chair Djevi noted if people do not come prepared to take a proclamation, then he will
311 assign them to the Commissioners.

312
313 **Adjournment**

314
315 Commissioner McComber moved and Commissioner Allen seconded a motion to adjourn.
316 Motion passed unanimously.

Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission Minutes

June 9, 2021, 2021 – *Draft Minutes*

Page 8 of 8

317

318 Chair Djevi adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

319

320 Respectfully submitted,

321

322 Sue Osbeck

323 *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*