

1 **Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**  
2 **Meeting Minutes**  
3 **March 17, 2021**  
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

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11 **Commissioners Present:** Keith Allen, Etienne Djevi, Richard James, Grace Lee, and  
12 Kathryn Macomber.

13  
14 **Youth Commissioners:** Beverly Yiling Xie

15  
16 **Commissioners Absent:** Monica Bolinger, Grace Lee, and Lauren Peterson (excused)

17  
18 **Staff Present:** Rebecca Olson, Assistant City Manager  
19

20 **Call to Order/Roll Call**  
21

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

25 **Staff Comments**  
26

27 Assistant City Manager Olson indicated the Zoom meeting now has closed captioning. The City  
28 has been working with NineNorth to provide additional inclusive ways for people to participate  
29 in the meetings and this is one way the City heard as a way to help people participate.  
30

31 **Approve Agenda**  
32

33 **Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda**  
34

35 **Commission Response to Community Issues**  
36

37 Youth Commissioner Xie indicated she heard on the news there were eight Asian American  
38 women in Atlanta who were shot and killed in a mass shooting. She made the statement about  
39 violence against Asian Americans three weeks back and she thought as a Country, America can  
40 do better in protecting all of its citizens.  
41

42 Chair Djevi asked for a moment of silence for the people who died in an act of violence.  
43 Something like this will test people's belief in humanity and can actually make them doubt  
44 whether there is some hope for tomorrow. He would like everyone to remember that as a human  
45 race people are resilient and will always overcome hard and dark times. In times like this he was  
46 personally reminded of why on an advisory Commission like the HRIEC they have the

47 opportunity to make things a little better. He wanted to thank the City leadership for the  
48 statement put out condemning the violence. He was grateful for the statement. He thought, as a  
49 Commission, they need to do their little part to create that community that they hope will be  
50 welcoming and making everyone feel safe.

51  
52 Youth Commission Xie explained lives should not be sacrificed to bring mainstream attention to  
53 an issue but that is clearly what is happening right now because some of her friends are posting  
54 about it and it is amazing to see that it is very out there.

55  
56 Commissioner James thought what the City stated regarding this has helped and it is the right  
57 thing to do. He thought it shows that they are having an effect on the City and he thought it  
58 helped them to know that the Commission is moving in the right direction and as angry it makes  
59 him and as depressing as it is, it makes him wonder what can be done.

60  
61 Commissioner Allen agreed and thought as long as the Commission is not silent and does what it  
62 can do. He thought everyone's sentiments were well stated.

63  
64 Ms. Olson thanked Youth Commissioner Xie for her statement at the last meeting and bringing  
65 awareness to it and for speaking up again. It is appreciated and she wanted to let Youth  
66 Commissioner Xie, as well as all of the other community members that identify with Asian  
67 American and Pacific Islander communities have support at the City and if there are specific  
68 things the City can do that the communities need them to do, the City is listening.

69  
70 Youth Commissioner Xie indicated the Commission is here to support each other, no matter  
71 what race everyone is, they are always here. They should support each other, and she thanked  
72 Chair Djevi for reaching out to her and Commissioner Lee. It is much appreciated and hoped  
73 cross race alliances are built and people are not tearing each other down because of their race.

74  
75 **Approve Minutes**

76  
77 **a. February 24, 2021 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**

78  
79 Commissioner McComber moved and Commissioner Allen seconded a motion to approve the  
80 February 24, 2021 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission meeting minutes as  
81 presented. Motion passed unanimously.

82  
83 **Youth Commissioner Report**

84 Youth Commissioner Xie thanked the City for putting her statement out before the public and  
85 did not think it would make such a big impact. She thought it felt like the right thing to do and  
86 was amazing to see the impact and influence it had.

87  
88 **New Business**

89  
90 **a. Culture Brokers Update**

91 Ms. Lisa Tabor, CultureBrokers, indicated there was not an update but was glad to be  
92 present at the meeting. She noted she and Mr. Ross did sit in on the interviews for the  
93 Equity and Inclusion Manger. Mr. Earl Ross, CultureBrokers, was also at the  
94 meeting.

95  
96 Ms. Olson noted the Commission is tentatively scheduled to have a joint meeting with  
97 the City Council on April 19<sup>th</sup>. What is planned is to walk through the current work  
98 plan and where the Commission is at to date and at the same meeting the new Equity  
99 and Inclusion Manager will be introduced, as well as getting an update from  
100 CultureBrokers.

101  
102 Commissioner Allen asked Ms. Tabor as CultureBrokers is pulling things together  
103 and reporting back to the Commission, it sometimes will seem weird that the  
104 Commission is just listening to the information and felt that there are probably things  
105 the Commission can learn and maybe respond to and take action on. He indicated  
106 CultureBrokers should think about ways the Commission can be more engaged with  
107 the findings and throw the questions back to the Commission to think about as a  
108 group and how the Commission can continue to move things forward.

109  
110 Ms. Tabor agreed and thanked Commissioner Allen for the feedback.

111  
112 Ms. Olson explained that is the intention down the line. There will be areas that staff  
113 is going to need some input from the Commission and even the broader community,  
114 at some point but it has not gotten to that point yet.

115  
116 Chair Djevi thought it would also be an opportunity for the Commission to propose  
117 things as well.

118  
119 **b. Youth Commissioner Application**

120 Ms. Olson indicated the City Council has asked that the Commission take a look at  
121 some of the changes staff has proposed to the Youth Commissioner application and  
122 provide some feedback. She reviewed the request the Commission made to the City  
123 Council regarding Youth Commissioners having voting rights as well as the City  
124 Council discussion and response. She noted the City Council made the decision that  
125 they would like to provide Youth Commissioners with the ability to either opt in or  
126 opt out of voting. The Council would like Commissioner feedback on the application  
127 as well as some of the questions listed as draft questions. She reviewed the sample  
128 application with the Commission and asked for feedback.

129  
130 Youth Commissioner Xie explained thinking about where she was in freshman year  
131 and looking at the application she was given. She suggested for the first question  
132 there should be an explanation as to what the Commission is before the question is  
133 given because freshman really do not know what Commission exactly means. She  
134 did take a look at the sample question and it seemed contradictory how it is worded.

135

136 Commissioner Allen asked if the Commission could give feedback and email it to  
137 Ms. Olson as well.

138  
139 Ms. Olson indicated that was fine.

140  
141 Commissioner James thought the sample question should have more to do with  
142 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement. He thought if the question is worded  
143 properly, it could remain the standard question for at least the HRIEC. He wondered  
144 if the sample question needed to be general so any Youth Commission apply for any  
145 of the Commissions could respond to.

146  
147 Ms. Olson indicated that was correct. She did not know if it was feasible to have a  
148 separate application for each Commission.

149  
150 Commissioner James thought the sample question could indicate that the applicant  
151 would not be judged on their opinion rather than saying their personal opinion on this  
152 topic does not matter.

153  
154 Ms. Olson asked Youth Commissioner Xie if the sample topic of voting rights a good  
155 topic or is there a different topic that would be more appropriate to ask students to  
156 provide input on that might be more interesting or relevant to them.

157  
158 Youth Commissioner Xie thought the topic is fine because she honestly had not heard  
159 about this common issue before. She felt like when she was a freshman that she  
160 could answer this question fine.

161  
162 Chair Djevi suggested the Commission review this application and email Ms. Olson  
163 with suggestions or possible changes by Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

164  
165 **c. Work Plan Updates**

166 Ms. Olson updated the Commission on updates to the Work Plan to date. She asked  
167 each Lead Commissioner to review their Work Plan item with the Commission. She  
168 noted to date the City has received a total of three entries, two are essays and one was  
169 art. She thought that can help the Commission refine how to showcase these  
170 submissions.

171  
172 Commissioner James indicated he was a little disheartened and disappointed that  
173 there are only three applications, but this is an unusual year and also helps him to see  
174 where the role of the teachers is really important for students to respond to this. He  
175 indicated he had a nice conversation with Mr. Tim Domke at NineNorth. He was  
176 going to be sending a proposal to do something more than just having the students  
177 recognized at the City Council meeting. Because there are only three participants, he  
178 asked the Commission how the students should be recognized. He thought there  
179 should be some recognition of them and because there are only three a financial  
180 award could probably be done like has been done in the past.

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Ms. Olson cautioned on the financial award because the City did receive questions about the financial, if there was going to be any sort of prize and staff indicated that there were not any so people may not have participated because of that.

Commissioner James indicated he forgot about that and withdrew that recommendation. He thought NineNorth could still interview the students who sent in submissions. He thought there should be a certificate. He also wondered if it is possible to include these submissions in future newsletters, since there are only three.

Ms. Olson indicated it is possible but the only problem with that is timing. She noted the newsletter is every two months and are usually a couple of months out.

Commissioner James thought the submissions could be published in future newsletters. He thought that would be a good way to recognize those students that did participate, if it is feasible.

Ms. Olson indicated she could check with the City's Communications Department. She thought one way that the City could easily recognize the submissions is having this on the HRIEC webpage and doing a new article that the City sends out. She thought that would be the minimum the Commission would want to do.

Chair Djevi explained traditionally when there were a number of entries which were graded, the winners would go in front of the City Council to be recognized and he wondered if that were still something that could be done.

Ms. Olson thought that is something that can be done.

Commissioner James summarized the next steps he will take for the Essay Contest.

Commissioner Xie indicated she was also disheartened by the number of submissions but as a student during this time people think the students have more time to do things but in reality, there are a lot of things going on and to deal with. She thought might be the mentality for other students as well.

Ms. Olson reviewed the Rosefest Parade Engagement activity since the February meeting.

Commissioner Allen indicated he did contact KOM, and they were going to bring the information he presented to their staff meeting.

Chair Djevi indicated he reached out to the Native American Community that he knows and they like the idea and want to be in the parade. He also reached out to other Native American communities in the area, hoping to get a non-political group in the parade.

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Youth Commissioner Xie thought after the Commission hears back from KOM and how many people they want to bring, she could then potentially gather some Chinese Americans.

Chair Djevi thought that the group would have both KOM, and Chinese Americans involved.

Commissioner Allen agreed. He thought the number of people in a group could be twenty, so he did ask KOM to provide ten members to walk in the parade and then having Youth Commissioner Xie gather ten others to walk.

Youth Commissioner Xie thought KOM could have more than ten people because she was not sure of her ability to gather a group of people. She thought fifteen would be good and she could try to gather five.

Ms. Olson explained twenty people is the maximum, but the group does not have to have twenty in it.

Ms. Olson indicated she did not have any updates regarding the parade, and she did not know what it is going to look like. Staff is still working on that. She reviewed with the Commission the work to date on the Commission spot in the Rosefest Parade. She thought the Commission should discuss how to find out what other Commission would want to participate in the parade.

Chair Djevi offered to reach out to the other Commissions to let them know what the date is for the parade and what the Commission is hoping to accomplish.

Ms. Olson indicated an update for the Community Feedback Response Work Plan will be done in April. Regarding the Commission Recruitment Work Plan, if there is anything the Commission wanted to identify either this month or in April to work on regarding Youth Commissioner Recruitment should would encourage ideas.

Youth Commissioner Xie asked when the City sends out announcements for Youth Commission applications.

Ms. Olson indicated staff tries to get the information out to the school in May so that the students will have it in May and June and then start pushing it hard for applications in early August.

Youth Commissioner Xie thought maybe the information needs to be pushed out to late May or early July because in May and June's students are busy with testing and other concerns.

270 Ms. Olson indicated the City just went through Commission interviews and received  
271 some feedback. She explained staff is hoping to dive deeper into this process and not  
272 just focus on the interviews but looking at the Commissions as a whole. One of the  
273 pieces in the City's Strategic Racial Equity Action Plan talks about having the  
274 Commission members be reflective of the community demographics. One of the  
275 things the City has started doing is asking people voluntarily on the application if they  
276 choose to identify what their race or ethnicity of their community is, and staff will be  
277 tracking that. Staff is hoping to have a bigger and broader understanding from the  
278 strategy team. She thought some of that will be coming to the Commission at a later  
279 date.

280  
281 Commissioner James reviewed the Commission Onboarding draft with the rest of the  
282 Commission.

283  
284 Chair Djevi thanked Commissioner James for the update and indicated he did not see  
285 anything he would change but added in the document to have a buddy person for the  
286 new Commissioner to reach out to. He thought that would be helpful for the first few  
287 months on a new Commission.

288  
289 Ms. Olson suggested as one of the buddy topics is how to respond to emails.

290  
291 Youth Commissioner Xie thought under the second page, practice HRIEC public  
292 relations, note that there may be a law regarding what the Commission can and  
293 cannot do regarding public relations. She thought that needs to be made clear. Also,  
294 what exactly "appropriate" means. She thought the document was lovely otherwise.

295  
296 Chair Djevi indicated when the Commission gets new Commissioners in April, he  
297 would like the Commission to know how the buddy part will be done. He asked for  
298 suggestions.

299  
300 Commissioner Allen suggested Chair Djevi assign the new Commissioners to who he  
301 thought would be a good buddy for each one.

302  
303 Ms. Olson suggested that she would reach out the various people appointed to this  
304 Commission and then she would set up a time for the Chair and herself to meet with  
305 them on some upcoming things that will happen before their first official meeting and  
306 then the orientation can be figured out and everything from there.

307  
308 The Commission concurred.

309  
310 Commissioner James asked if there was anything Ms. Olson wanted the Commission  
311 to do before the next meeting regarding these onboarding issues.

312  
313 Ms. Olson indicated from a staff standpoint, if the Commission is ok with what is in  
314 the packet, she will take what is in the packet and lay it out into some sort of

315 document with her team. She indicated the last item in the Work Plan, Community  
316 Outreach did not have any updates.

317

318 **d. Appoint Chair, Vice Chair and Ethics Commission Representative**

319 Chair Djevi indicated this item is to appoint a Chair, Vice Chair and Ethics  
320 Commission Representative. He turned the item over to Ms. Olson.

321

322 Ms. Olson indicated every March the Commission appoints a Chair and Vice Chair  
323 and appoints someone to the Ethics Commission. She reviewed the role of the Ethics  
324 Commission.

325

326 Commissioner Allen nominated Chair Djevi to continue as Chair of the Commission.

327

328 Youth Commissioner Xie concurred.

329

330 Ms. Olson called for nominations for Chair three times. She asked Chair Djevi if he  
331 wished to continue as Chair of the Commission.

332

333 Chair Djevi accepted the nomination.

334

335 Commissioner Allen moved and Youth Commissioner Xie seconded a motion to  
336 appoint Commissioner Djevi as Chair of the HRIEC. Motion passed unanimously.

337

338 Chair Djevi thanked the Commission for the appointment and made a statement to the  
339 Commission. He asked if there were any nominations. He noted he would like to  
340 nominate Commissioner Lee as the Vice-Chair. He indicated he did speak to her  
341 today and she is open to accepting the position. He asked if there were any other  
342 nominations.

343

344 Youth Commissioner Xie nominated Commissioner Allen.

345

346 Chair Djevi asked if there was a third nomination. He indicated there are two  
347 nominations and Commissioner Lee told him she would be happy to serve as Vice-  
348 Chair. He asked Commissioner Allen if he was open to accepting the Vice-Chair.

349

350 Commissioner Allen indicated he was appreciative of the nominations but would be  
351 more open to be the representative of the Ethics Commission but would be happy to  
352 stand in if Commissioner Lee were not willing. He indicated out of respect he would  
353 withdraw his nomination.

354

355 Commissioner Djevi moved and Commissioner Macomber seconded a motion to  
356 appoint Commissioner Lee as Vice-Chair of the HRIEC. Motion passed  
357 unanimously.

358



359 Chair Djevi nominated Commissioner Allen for the Ethics Commission. He asked if  
360 there were any other nominations.

361  
362 Youth Commissioner Xie concurred.

363  
364 Chair Djevi asked for any other nominations two more times with no nominations.

365  
366 Commissioner Djevi moved and Commissioner Xie seconded a motion to appoint  
367 Commissioner Allen as Representative of the Ethics Commission. Motion passed  
368 unanimously.

369  
370 **Other New Business or Reports**

371 **a. Proclamations 2021**

372 Ms. Olson reviewed the 2021 Proclamations with the Commission. She suggested the  
373 Commission review the May Proclamation “Asian American and Pacific Island  
374 Heritage Month” in April for some language to include the specifics regarding some  
375 of the things currently being done as well as some of the violence that has happened  
376 and maybe acknowledge it in the proclamation.

377  
378 Commissioner James indicated Commissioner Macomber agreed to talk to him about  
379 ideas for the next couple of proclamations and he indicated he would be in touch with  
380 her to come up with ideas for the next several months.

381  
382 Chair Djevi proposed if the Commission had ideas to reach out to Commissioners  
383 James and Macomber before bringing to the entire Commission.

384  
385 The Commission discussed possible activities for upcoming proclamations.

386  
387 Ms. Olson asked if anyone on the Commission wanted to take the lead for the May  
388 proclamation on Asian American and Pacific Island Heritage Month.

389  
390 Commissioner Macomber indicated she would be willing to review this and bring it  
391 back to the April meeting for discussion.

392  
393 Chair Djevi appreciated Commissioner Macomber taking the lead but would also like  
394 to have Commissioner Lee and Youth Commissioner Xie be involved in it.

395  
396 Youth Commissioner Xie indicated she would like to take a look at this as well and  
397 she would bring any changes forward to Commissioner Macomber.

398  
399 **b. Staff Updates**

400 Assistant City Manager Olson reported on the following:

- 401
- Equity & Inclusion Manager
  - Joint Meeting with the City Council on April 19, 2021
  - Budget requests for 2022
- 402  
403

404

405 **Announcements**

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407 **Future Agenda Items**

408

409 **Adjournment**

410

411 Chair Djevi adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

412

413 Respectfully submitted,

414

415 Sue Osbeck

416 *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*