

HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
March 28, 2012 MINUTES

The Human Relations Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular Human Relations Advisory Board Meeting March 28, 2012, 6:00 p.m. at the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E. First Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rory Gilbert, Chair
Denise Heap, Vice Chair
Frank Johnson
Wayne Manske
James May
Lela Hinds-Peterson
Orchidia Peterson
Dean Tun Lin Moe

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terry Benelli
Ana Cadillo
Hong Chartrand

STAFF PRESENT

Ruth Giese
Lyn Buzuleciu

GUESTS

Thomas Winkel
Ryan Russell
Ray Villa

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Ms. Gilbert welcomed the board and guests and called the meeting to order.

2. Items from citizens present.

There were no citizens who requested to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the February 22, 2012 board meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Heap to approve the January 25, 2012 the Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) minutes. Ms. Peterson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Peterson asked that her last name spelling be corrected on the minutes.

4. Hear a presentation and discuss on Post-Traumatic Stress Illness from a representative of Arizona Department of Health Services; Sergeant Ryan A. Russell, President of Mesa Police Association; and Detective Nathan Schlitz (Ret.).

Dr. Thomas Winkel provides mental health services for Arizona National Guard. He provided a summary of the various therapies made available to assist individuals with PTSD. One in six military personnel returning from deployment will meet the criteria for having PTSD. 48% of individuals with the National Guard and reserve units are experiencing PTSD symptoms.

One common system experienced is fear of crowds. A therapy known as "The Wal-Mart therapy" having an individual waits in a high volume crowd until symptoms of anxiety and fear cease. Another effective therapy is performing yoga and other stress relieving techniques. Cognitive behavior therapy is one of the most standard treatments. Cognitive processing is a mix of Wal-Mart therapy and Cognitive behavior therapy.

Sergeant Ryan A. Russell, president of the Mesa Police Association, discussed PTSD and how it affects the police department. 15% to 18% of officers will experience symptoms of PTSD. Police officers are five to six times more likely to take their own lives than have their lives taken by a criminal. Sergeant Russell read a letter from Detective Nathan Schlitz (Ret.) on his personal experience with PTSD. Also discussed is that services to address PTSD have been reduced in recent years because of budget reductions. It may be that the officer retires due to a disability.

5. Mesa Police Department Report.

Ray Villa provided reported that several PD Advisory board meetings will take place in April. In addition, the Asian-American Advisory board has been recently created, and will also be meeting. Mr. Villa introduced Deanna Cantrell who provided a summary of police diversity training. The training covers multi-culturalism, the culture of poverty, EEOC, and workplace stability training for a total of 4 hours.

6. Hear an update, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Issue Research and Project Team.

Provide an update on planning of the April 28th anti-bullying community conversation. The agenda will include panel discussion on cyber bullying, workplace bullying, and bullying in school. The goal of the event is to create a call to action, and to discuss what can be done in Mesa to prevent bullying. Cliff Moon, Chair Mesa MLK Jr. Committee, and a member of the planning committee, provided input on activities for the event, including a discussion of hate crimes and victims' rights.

Ms. Heap made a motion to move forward with the proposed agenda. Mr. May seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Discuss, revise and approve Human Relations Advisory Board brochure.

The HRAB reviewed and provided input on the draft brochure. The board made a change to read "Promotes harmony among mesa racial ethnic gender, religious and other communities" along with some spelling grammar and graphics updates. Ms. Heap motioned that we move forward on the brochure and Ms. Peterson seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Discuss potential agenda items and /or presentations for Regional Human Relations meeting on May 16, 2012.

The board discussed agenda items to discuss at the regional meeting to be held on May 16, 2012. The meeting will be held at Mesa Arts Center, beginning at 5:30 p.m. A presentation should include a summary of April 28th community dialogue. Ms. Heap also suggested the topic of PTSI as an item of discussion. Ms. Gilbert suggested that a topic may be the process that human relations boards in the other cities take as new issues emerge. The board will finalize its agenda at the next board meeting.

9. Discuss and take action on Mayor Smith's request that the Human Relations Advisory Board create a Veterans Task Force to focus on Veterans issues.

The board discussed Mayor's Smith's request that the HRAB create a Veterans Task force. Mr. May motioned that Chair Gilbert and Vice Chair Heap meet with Mayor Smith further information and direction regarding the Veterans Task Force. Ms. Heap seconded that motion. The motion carried unanimously.

10. Discuss participation in Phoenix Pride parade and festival to be held on April 21-22.

The board discussed attendance at the Phoenix Pride parade and festival. Mr. May, Mr. Johnson and Ms. Heap plan to participate.

11. Discuss and appoint a HRAB representative for participation on City of Mesa's General Plan Committee.

Ms. Giese advised the Planning Department has requested that a member on the advisory committee for Mesa's General Plan. Mr. Johnson and Ms. Hinds-Peterson both volunteered to be on the committee. Ms. Giese advised she would report back to the planning director that we have a member and an alternate for the committee.

12. Diversity Administrator's Report:

Ms. Giese provided information that the board requested last month. The first is a report on BSN statistics and the second is a copy of the City Workplace Harassment policy. Ms. Gilbert asked that these topics be placed on an upcoming agenda for discussion. Ms. Giese also reported about the upcoming Community Cinema Series, which is held each month from November to May at the Mesa Arts Center.

13. Adjourn.

Ms. Gilbert thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Submitted By:

Ruth Giese,
Diversity Program Administrator