

**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM 2B – 420 NORTH POKEGAMA AVE.
DATE: OCTOBER 26, 2011
TIME: 4:00 P.M.**

ACTION

Est. Times

4:00 CALL TO ORDER:

CALL OF ROLL:

| | Present | Absent |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Commissioner Wartchow, Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Dowell | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Freeman, Vice Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Hain | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Hall | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Learmont | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Mundt, Sec'y. /Treasurer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commissioner Sanderson | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

MEETING PROTOCOL POLICY:

Please be aware that the Council has adopted a Meeting Protocol Policy which informs attendees of the Council's desire to conduct meetings in an orderly manner which welcomes all civil input from citizens and interested parties. If you are unaware of the policy, copies (orange color) are available in the wall file by the Council entrance.

SETTING OF REGULAR AGENDA:

This is an opportunity to approve the regular agenda as presented or add/delete an Agenda item by a majority vote of the Commission members present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 20, 2011 regular meeting

FINANCIALS:

CORRESPONDENCE:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

OLD BUSINESS:

- Accessibility Project Grant Monies
- Hate/Bias Media Update

NEW BUSINESS:

- Lobbying against the 2012 Constitutional Amendment

REPORTS ON CALLS AND INQUIRIES:

PENDING COMPLAINTS:

OTHER:

ADJOURNMENT:

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CONFERENCE ROOM 2B – 420 NORTH POKEGAMA AVENUE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2011 – 4:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof a regular meeting of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission was held in Conference Room 2B of City Hall, 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota, on Wednesday, September 28, 2011, at 4:00 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL: On a Call of Roll, the following members were present: Commission Chair Wartchow, Commissioners: Dowell, Freeman, Hain, Learmont and Mundt. Commissioners Sanderson and Hall arrived at 4:03 p.m. Absent: None.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. **SETTING OF REGULAR AGENDA:**

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER WARTCHOW, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HAIN TO ADD A LETTER SUE LEHTO RECEIVED FROM NATIONAL INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ASSOCIATION TO THE AGENDA UNDER NEW BUSINESS. The following voted in favor thereof: Wartchow, Hain, Dowell, Freeman, Learmont and Mundt. Opposed: None, motion passed.

3. **APPROVE MINUTES:** August 31, 2011 regular meeting

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MUNDT, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DOWELL, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 31, 2011 AS PRESENTED. The following voted in favor thereof: Mundt, Dowell, Wartchow, Freeman, Hain, Hall, Learmont and Sanderson. Opposed: None, motion passed.

3. **APPROVAL OF EXPENSES:**

a. Rapids Read Expense Follow Up - \$37.89 over approval rate.

Commission Chair Wartchow explained the expenses for the Rapids Read project were over the pre-approved rate. Mileage and hotel expenses have already been paid but the reimbursement for meals has not because the preapproved amount fell short by \$37.89.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HALL, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER SANDERSON TO APPROVE THE INCREASE IN REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT OF \$37.89 TO JEFF WARTCHOW FOR A TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT OF \$308.00. The following voted in favor thereof: Hall, Sanderson, Dowell, Freeman, Hain, Learmont, Mundt and Wartchow. Opposed: None, motion passed.

b. Brochures (Accessibility Project) - \$68.11 over approval rate.

Commission Chair Wartchow explained the extra expense was incurred because of the

need to rush the order of brochures in order to meet the second mailing deadline. Therefore, the following motion was made:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER SANDERSON, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HALL TO INCREASE PAYMENT TO RAPIDS PRINTING BY \$68.11 FOR A TOTAL PAYMENT OF \$1,068.11. The following voted in favor thereof: Sanderson, Hall, Dowell, Freeman, Hain, Learmont, Mundt and Wartchow. Opposed: None, motion passed.

5. FINANCIALS:

The Commission reviewed the financial statement ending September 12, 2011 and accepted the financial statement as presented.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

Commission Chair Wartchow distributed information from the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commission on the Benefits of League Membership. The Commissioners discussed the membership fee which is based on population; their fee is the minimum fee required, usually \$55.00.

Commissioners also discussed the three essays received from the middle school from past competition. They came to the consensus that in order to make the response more successful, they would need an educational piece coupled with the essay contest.

Commissioners were made aware of the League's desire for Commissioners to provide any requests or suggestions on how the League could assist their Commission in 2012. One suggestion was in regard to the League's website: facilitate communication among other HRC members; what are other Commissions doing? Commissioner Sanderson volunteered to email any suggestions to the Recorder.

The closest Human Rights Commissions around us are Hibbing, Virginia and Duluth. Bemidji does not have a commission

The Age Discrimination DVD from the League of Minnesota Human Rights was passed around to Commission members. Commissioner Wartchow will view the DVD and possibly refer to ICTV.

Commissioner Sanderson stated the Commission's website has now been updated to include the sites recommended.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Accessibility Project Grant Monies.

There is roughly \$1,000 grant monies left. The following suggestions were brought up:

- Recognize businesses that are in compliance with a poster on the door.
- Publicize success story (ies) of business or non-profit; Write an article in a month or two.
- Educational program, bring ideas back. If no ideas, give money back.
- Educate students – educating them in accessibility awareness for the future.

Commissioner Wartchow asked everyone to bring back ideas for the next regular meeting.

B. Hate/Bias Update.

Commissioners Hall, Sanderson and Wartchow met earlier to go over the Red Wing policy and noticed a few things that needed clarification. They will create a draft for Grand Rapids based on the Red Wing policy. Commissioners Hall, Learmont, Sanderson and Wartchow will meet again October 26 at 2:00 p.m. to review draft and bring back to the Commission. In addition, they read and discussed Chief Denny's information and will speak to him again when they have a policy. The Commissioners requested hate/bias and media be put on the next agenda to allow Human Resources Director to report back on her meeting with Lisa Rosemore from the Grand Rapids Herald-Review.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A letter Sue Lehto received from National Indian Child Welfare Association:

Commissioner Sanderson received a letter from Sue Lehto after a conversation about a quality Cass Lake School system presentation on unresolved grief. The correspondence was from NICWA the National Indian Child Welfare Association, August 2, 2007 presentation: "Making Sense of Historical Trauma and Unresolved Grief in Tribal Communities". Commissioner Freeman has also been involved with this topic and has presented. It was noted the Blandin Foundation is also very interested.

Commissioner Freeman stated research within the community regarding trauma and grief over education and taking of lands, etc. has never been healed. She noted Canada has apologized to the Indian people. A conference in Bemidji at the university was held which expected 200 people but 500 attended. She stated many who attended the conference want healing, as well as the Indian community. Commissioner Dowell would like to see a presentation in the Grand Rapids community and not just the reservation.

It was the consensus of the Commission to give the Blandin Foundation our support. Commissioner Sanderson will give the information from Sue Lehto to Blandin Foundation and advise them of the Commission's support.

10. Reports on calls and inquiries:

Commissioner Sanderson received an email from a student looking for an internship – an opportunity for her to assist the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission. The Commission felt they are not large enough to support an intern. Commissioner Sanderson will follow up with student.

Commissioner Wartchow reminded Commissioners of the ACLU event planned for October 6, 2011 at 3:00 – 6:30 p.m. at KAXE.

ADJOURN:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MUNDT, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER LEARMONT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 4:57 P.M. The following voted in favor thereof: Mundt, Learmont, Wartchow, Dowell, Freeman, Hain, Hall, and Sanderson. Opposed: None, motion passed.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be October 26, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Schaefer, Recorder

THE LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS

4100 Lakeview Avenue North, Robbinsdale, MN 55422 Telephone (763) 535-1051



TO: All members of the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions
FROM: The League Board of Directors Awareness and Outreach Team
RE: Lobbying against the 2012 Constitutional Amendment
DATE: September 26, 2011

Board of Directors:

Cameron Cegelske, Pres., St. Paul
Ade Alden, Vice Pres., Plymouth
Dave Gallus, Treasurer, Mille Lacs
Beth Burrows, Co., Sec., New Ulm
Virginia Klevorn, Co-Sec., Plymouth

Sam Abdullai, Shoreview
Carol Bannister, Lake Elmo
Arnold Bigbee, Edina
Elizabeth Emerson, St. Paul
Libby Fairchild, Chaska
Peg Flaherty, New Hope
Georgetta Gray, Robbinsdale
Louisa Hext, Minneapolis
Molly Koivumaki, Chaska
Theima McKenzie, Roseville
Sonja Peterson, Minneapolis
Evelyn Staus, Brooklyn Park
Scott Yeazle, Duluth
Nancy Haugdahl, Financial Coord.
Larry Clark, Honorary, Red Wing

Member Commissions:

Albert Lea
Anoka
Arden Hills
Austin
Bemidji
Brooklyn Park
Chaska
Crystal
Duluth
Eden Prairie
Edina
Fairmont
Falcon Heights
Fergus Falls
Forest Lake
Golden Valley
Grand Rapids
Hibbing
Hopkins
Isanti County
Lake Elmo
Marshall
Mille Lacs Area
Minneapolis
Moorhead
Morris
New Brighton
New Hope
New Ulm
Northfield
Olmsted County
Owatonna
Paynesville
Plymouth
Red Wing
Richfield
Robbinsdale
Roseville
St Cloud
St Louis Park
St Paul
St Peter
Shakopee
Shoreview
Stillwater
Virginia
Waseca
Willmar
Winona
and others in formation

As you are probably aware, in May of 2011, the Minnesota legislature approved putting a state constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage to Minnesota voters in November 2012. League members have contacted us recently, asking us if we had any information on lobbying against the proposed amendment.

Since 1993, Minnesota has prohibited discrimination in public services against people because of their sexual orientation. The League's mission is to assist its members – local human rights commissions like you – to enhance the rights of all groups of people protected under the Minnesota Human Rights Act. So, we felt it was necessary to update you on lobbying against the amendment.

But the first question we must ask as local government commissions is: Can we lobby on constitutional amendments? There are some legal restrictions on local government units from advocating for or against the passage of constitutional amendments. First and foremost, and thanks to the First Amendment, the Minnesota Attorney General's Office has concluded that:

Public officials are generally free, individually and collectively to announce their views on matters of public interest. Furthermore, it is not likely that local governments or associations can be precluded from taking and publicizing positions on such matters, even in those circumstances where the matters are not within the jurisdiction of the governing bodies.

Op. Att'y Gen., 6/30/06, p. 6. Thus, as individuals and as a commission, you can take a position against the proposed constitutional amendment and encourage others in your community to do likewise.

However, courts have held that public funds belong equally to the proponents and opponents of a proposition. Minnesota law prohibits local government entities from spending public funds on campaigns to promote the rejection or adoption of amendments to the Minnesota Constitution. Op. Att'y Gen. *Statement of Position, Expenditure of Public Funds on Ballot Issue Advocacy* (July 2008). Therefore, local commissions cannot lawfully spend public money on opposing the constitutional amendment. For example, a local commission probably should not spend money in its budget on publishing an ad in the local paper on opposing the constitutional amendment.

Notwithstanding this restriction, there is still a lot a local commission can do to help defeat this amendment. Many of our local human rights ordinances define human rights commissioners as "persons known to favor the principles of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination" – like supporting the MN Human Rights Act prohibition against discrimination based on someone's sexual orientation. As advocates for human rights, you can take a stand against this discrimination.

[OVER]

United we stand, but divided we fall: Our country is based on this principle -- and so is the institution of marriage. Marriage is a public expression of a couple's commitment, love, and responsibility for each other and their family. Minnesota has an interest in promoting family units to achieve social stability, economic interdependence, and a healthy environment where children and adults may prosper. The dimensions of 'family' have expanded considerably in recent years, and the 2010 U.S. Census indicates that families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples reside in every county in Minnesota. By withholding from some families important legal rights and obligations, a constitutional amendment banning the legal recognition of same-sex relationships would frustrate the State's goal of promoting families. In addition, the amendment does not fulfill the intent of Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, i.e., the right to freely choose a spouse.

Constitutions historically have been designed to protect minorities from the arbitrary imposition of unjust barriers by the majority. In fact, Article 1 of the Minnesota Constitution is the Bill of Rights, securing the rights, privileges and liberty of the residents of Minnesota. The amendment would have a direct, negative impact on Minnesota's GLBT community, by denying equal protection of the law and relegating families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples to a permanent second-class citizenship status. The amendment would deny spousal benefits to a specific class because of their sexual orientation. Don't turn Minnesota's Bill of Rights into a Bill of Anti-Rights!

Here is what the League is recommending of its members who want to take action against this discrimination: An organization called *Minnesotans United for All Families* is a coalition made up of faith organizations, small businesses, labor unions, arts groups, community leaders, elected officials, Republicans, DFL'ers, Greens, Independents, etc. This coalition is sponsoring more than a dozen trainings all over the state to provide people with the skills, tools and confidence to talk to their family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors about the amendment. We encourage our members to attend the trainings, speak to others, and team together to defeat the amendment. Enclosed is a flyer about the trainings, and here is a site for the events: <http://mnunited.org/event.cfm?eventid=18>

You may also contact Minnesotans United for All Families at 651-330-6852 or VOLUNTEER@MNUNITED.ORG and ask them for training in your community or for other information on how you may work to defeat the constitutional amendment.

In addition, the League recommends that you contact OutFront Minnesota at <http://www.outfront.org/takeaction/volunteer>, or Project 515, at <http://project515.org/volunteer/> for more information on how you and your commission can volunteer to defeat the amendment.

Finally, volunteer with the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions, by contacting Outreach@leagueofmnhumanrights.org.

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL IN MINNESOTA!

MINNESOTANS UNITED

for ALL FAMILIES

COMMUNITY ACTION TRAININGS

Date and Time: Sep 13, 2011- Oct 16, 2011
10:00 AM- 8:30:00 PM

Contact info: volunteer@mnunited.org or 651-330-6852

Minnesota can be the first state in the country to defeat an anti-marriage amendment!

We're going to do it the Minnesota way: the largest grassroots campaign this state has ever seen. That's why OutFront Minnesota and Minnesotans United for all Families are teaming up to put on more than a dozen trainings in every corner of the state more than a year before the first votes are cast!

That's where you come in! Whether this is the first time you've ever cared about politics or you're a seasoned organizer we're ready to help you get to work. You can expect to come out of the training with the:

- skills
- tools
- confidence

to talk to your family, friends coworkers and neighbors about the anti-marriage amendment.

RSVP on Facebook or by filling out the form located at
<http://www.mnunited.org/event.cfm?eventid=18>

Minneapolis

Tuesday, September 13th from 6-8pm

Location: Sabathani Community Center Auditorium, 310 East 38th Street #200

Moorhead

Saturday, September 17 from 10am-12pm

Location: First Congregational UCC, 406 South 8th Street

North Metro Suburbs

Tuesday, September 20 from 6-8pm

Location: TBD

Duluth

Saturday, September 24 from 10am-12pm

Location: Pilgrim UCC, 2310 East 4th Street

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

Saint Paul

Wednesday, October 12 from 6–8pm
Location: Hamline University

Rochester

Thursday, September 29 from 6–8pm
Location: TBD

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

Mankato

Saturday, October 1 from 10am–12pm
Location: TBD

South Metro Suburbs

Tuesday, October 4 from 6–8pm
Location: TBD

Alexandria

Thursday, October 6 from 6–8pm
Location: TBD

Bemidji

Saturday, October 8 from 10am–12pm
Location: TBD

Saint Cloud

Tuesday, October 11 from 6–8pm
Location: SCSU

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

Marshall

Saturday, October 15 from 10am–12pm
Location: TBD

Minneapolis

Sunday, October 16 from 10am–12pm
Location: TBD

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

RESOLUTION OF THE
LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS

May 22, 2011

Be It Resolved That...

Whereas, states have an interest in promoting family units as a means toward achieving social stability, private economic interdependence, and healthier environments in which both children and adults may prosper, and

Whereas, the U.S. Census for 2010 indicated that families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples reside in every county in Minnesota, and

Whereas, the United States Supreme Court and others have noted that the dimensions of "family" have expanded considerably in recent years, and

Whereas, an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution has been proposed that would ban the legal recognition of same-sex relationships within the state of Minnesota, and

Whereas, such an amendment would frustrate the State's goal of promoting families, by withholding from some families important legal rights and obligations, and

Whereas, constitutions historically have been designed to protect minorities from the arbitrary imposition of unjust barriers by the majority, and

Whereas, this legislation, if approved, would have a direct, negative impact on Minnesota's GLBT community in particular, by denying equal protection of the law and relegating families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples to a permanent second-class citizenship status, and

Whereas, the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions recognizes that our society benefits in proportion to its efforts to ensure cultural diversity and maintain an environment in which all feel welcome and safe, and


Whereas, such discriminatory legislation effectively devalues cultural diversity and promotes an environment in which discrimination against GLBT citizens is not only encouraged but mandated, resulting in a community that is neither welcome nor safe,

Therefore be it resolved that the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions hereby states publicly its opposition to changing the Minnesota constitution in order to ban the legal recognition of same-sex relationships and unions, and

Be it furthermore resolved that this document will be presented to members of the press, in addition to our membership.

Certification

This resolution was approved by a vote of the Board of Directors of the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions on May 22, 2011, with a total vote of 13 Board Members, 13 of whom voted in the affirmative, 0 of whom voted in the negative, and 0 of whom abstained.


Beth Bennett Co-Secretary
League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions
By the Board of Director's Secretary

ROSEVILLE

HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION

HOSTS

project

515

There is a significant gap between the fairness Minnesotans value and what actually occurs under Minnesota law. That's why Minnesota volunteers formed Project 515 and commissioned its report. At a time when Minnesotans are discussing many other issues that determine what kind of state we'd like to live in, it's important to discuss another important quality-of-life

issue — fairness for all Minnesotans, including same-sex couples.

That's why it's critical to talk about the 515 laws that discriminate against Minnesota gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered families, hear the stories of real Minnesotans affected by these laws and take action!

Speaker

Ann Kaner-Roth was appointed executive director of Project 515 and Project 515 Education Campaign in January 2010. She holds a master's of social work focused in Public Policy from Boston University and a bachelor of arts in Political Science and Criminal Justice from the UW- Wisconsin-Madison.

LEARN MORE

www.project515.org

TUESDAY — OCTOBER 4th

6:30 — 8:00 PM

John Rose Oval — ROSE Room

Lexington and County Road C.

For more
information,
& to kindly
RSVP

Please contact :

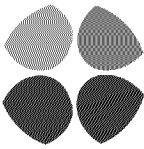
Carolyn Curti

carolyn.curti@ci.roseville.mn.us

PHONE: 651-792-7026

Light Refreshments

Many thanks to our Co-Sponsor:
Shoreview Human Rights Commissions



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
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| Commissioner Sanderson | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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CORRESPONDENCE:

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OLD BUSINESS:

- Accessibility Project Grant Monies
- Hate/Bias Media Update

NEW BUSINESS:

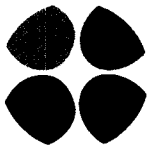
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1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.
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3. **APPROVE MINUTES:** August 31, 2011 regular meeting

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MUNDT, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DOWELL, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 31, 2011 AS PRESENTED. The following voted in favor thereof: Mundt, Dowell, Wartchow, Freeman, Hain, Hall, Learmont and Sanderson. Opposed: None, motion passed.

3. **APPROVAL OF EXPENSES:**

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5. FINANCIALS:

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Commissioner Sanderson stated the Commission's website has now been updated to include the sites recommended.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Accessibility Project Grant Monies.

There is roughly \$1,000 grant monies left. The following suggestions were brought up:

- Recognize businesses that are in compliance with a poster on the door.
- Publicize success story (ies) of business or non-profit; Write an article in a month or two.
- Educational program, bring ideas back. If no ideas, give money back.
- Educate students – educating them in accessibility awareness for the future.

Commissioner Wartchow asked everyone to bring back ideas for the next regular meeting.

B. Hate/Bias Update.

Commissioners Hall, Sanderson and Wartchow met earlier to go over the Red Wing policy and noticed a few things that needed clarification. They will create a draft for Grand Rapids based on the Red Wing policy. Commissioners Hall, Learmont, Sanderson and Wartchow will meet again October 26 at 2:00 p.m. to review draft and bring back to the Commission. In addition, they read and discussed Chief Denny's information and will speak to him again when they have a policy. The Commissioners requested hate/bias and media be put on the next agenda to allow Human Resources Director to report back on her meeting with Lisa Rosemore from the Grand Rapids Herald-Review.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A letter Sue Lehto received from National Indian Child Welfare Association:

Commissioner Sanderson received a letter from Sue Lehto after a conversation about a quality Cass Lake School system presentation on unresolved grief. The correspondence was from NICWA the National Indian Child Welfare Association, August 2, 2007 presentation: "Making Sense of Historical Trauma and Unresolved Grief in Tribal Communities". Commissioner Freeman has also been involved with this topic and has presented. It was noted the Blandin Foundation is also very interested.

Commissioner Freeman stated research within the community regarding trauma and grief over education and taking of lands, etc. has never been healed. She noted Canada has apologized to the Indian people. A conference in Bemidji at the university was held which expected 200 people but 500 attended. She stated many who attended the conference want healing, as well as the Indian community. Commissioner Dowell would like to see a presentation in the Grand Rapids community and not just the reservation.

It was the consensus of the Commission to give the Blandin Foundation our support. Commissioner Sanderson will give the information from Sue Lehto to Blandin Foundation and advise them of the Commission's support.

10. Reports on calls and inquiries:

Commissioner Sanderson received an email from a student looking for an internship – an opportunity for her to assist the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission. The Commission felt they are not large enough to support an intern. Commissioner Sanderson will follow up with student.

Commissioner Wartchow reminded Commissioners of the ACLU event planned for October 6, 2011 at 3:00 – 6:30 p.m. at KAXE.

ADJOURN:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MUNDT, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER LEARMONT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 4:57 P.M. The following voted in favor thereof: Mundt, Learmont Wartchow, Dowell, Freeman, Hain, Hall, and Sanderson. Opposed: None, motion passed.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be October 26, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Schaefer, Recorder

THE LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS

4100 Lakeview Avenue North, Robbinsdale, MN 55422 Telephone (763) 535-1051



TO: All members of the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions
FROM: The League Board of Directors Awareness and Outreach Team
RE: Lobbying against the 2012 Constitutional Amendment
DATE: September 26, 2011

Board of Directors:

Cameron Cepeliska, Pres., St. Paul
Ada Alden, Vice Pres., Plymouth
Dave Galus, Treasurer, Mille Lacs
Beth Burrows, Co.-Sec., New Ulm
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Georgette Gray, Robbinsdale
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Sonja Peterson, Minneapolis
Evelyn Staus, Brooklyn Park
Scott Yeazle, Duluth
Nancy Huggah, Financial Coord.
Larry Clark, Honorary, Red Wing

Member Commissions:

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Austin
Bemidji
Brooklyn Park
Chaska
Crystal
Duluth
Eden Prairie
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Hopkins
Isanti County
Lake Elmo
Marshall
Mille Lacs Area
Minneapolis
Moorhead
Morris
New Brighton
New Hope
New Ulm
Northfield
Olmsted County
Owatonna
Payneville
Plymouth
Red Wing
Richfield
Robbinsdale
Roseville
St. Cloud
St. Louis Park
St. Paul
St. Peter
Shakopee
Shoreview
Stillwater
Virginia
Waseca
Winona
and others in formation

As you are probably aware, in May of 2011, the Minnesota legislature approved putting a state constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage to Minnesota voters in November 2012. League members have contacted us recently, asking us if we had any information on lobbying against the proposed amendment.

Since 1993, Minnesota has prohibited discrimination in public services against people because of their sexual orientation. The League's mission is to assist its members – local human rights commissions like you – to enhance the rights of all groups of people protected under the Minnesota Human Rights Act. So, we felt it was necessary to update you on lobbying against the amendment.

But the first question we must ask as local government commissions is: Can we lobby on constitutional amendments? There are some legal restrictions on local government units from advocating for or against the passage of constitutional amendments. First and foremost, and thanks to the First Amendment, the Minnesota Attorney General's Office has concluded that:

Public officials are generally free, individually and collectively to announce their views on matters of public interest. Furthermore, it is not likely that local governments or associations can be precluded from taking and publicizing positions on such matters, even in those circumstances where the matters are not within the jurisdiction of the governing bodies.

Op. Att'y Gen., 6/30/06, p. 6. Thus, as individuals and as a commission, you can take a position against the proposed constitutional amendment and encourage others in your community to do likewise.

However, courts have held that public funds belong equally to the proponents and opponents of a proposition. Minnesota law prohibits local government entities from spending public funds on campaigns to promote the rejection or adoption of amendments to the Minnesota Constitution. Op. Att'y Gen. *Statement of Position, Expenditure of Public Funds on Ballot Issue Advocacy* (July 2008). Therefore, local commissions cannot lawfully spend public money on opposing the constitutional amendment. For example, a local commission probably should not spend money in its budget on publishing an ad in the local paper on opposing the constitutional amendment.

Notwithstanding this restriction, there is still a lot a local commission can do to help defeat this amendment. Many of our local human rights ordinances define human rights commissioners as "persons known to favor the principles of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination" – like supporting the MN Human Rights Act prohibition against discrimination based on someone's sexual orientation. As advocates for human rights, you can take a stand against this discrimination.

[OVER]

United we stand, but divided we fall: Our country is based on this principle -- and so is the institution of marriage. Marriage is a public expression of a couple's commitment, love, and responsibility for each other and their family. Minnesota has an interest in promoting family units to achieve social stability, economic interdependence, and a healthy environment where children and adults may prosper. The dimensions of 'family' have expanded considerably in recent years, and the 2010 U.S. Census indicates that families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples reside in every county in Minnesota. By withholding from some families important legal rights and obligations, a constitutional amendment banning the legal recognition of same-sex relationships would frustrate the State's goal of promoting families. In addition, the amendment does not fulfill the intent of Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, i.e., the right to freely choose a spouse.

Constitutions historically have been designed to protect minorities from the arbitrary imposition of unjust barriers by the majority. In fact, Article 1 of the Minnesota Constitution is the Bill of Rights, securing the rights, privileges and liberty of the residents of Minnesota. The amendment would have a direct, negative impact on Minnesota's GLBT community, by denying equal protection of the law and relegating families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples to a permanent second-class citizenship status. The amendment would deny spousal benefits to a specific class because of their sexual orientation. Don't turn Minnesota's Bill of Rights into a Bill of Anti-Rights!

Here is what the League is recommending of its members who want to take action against this discrimination: An organization called *Minnesotans United for All Families* is a coalition made up of faith organizations, small businesses, labor unions, arts groups, community leaders, elected officials, Republicans, DFL'ers, Greens, Independents, etc. This coalition is sponsoring more than a dozen trainings all over the state to provide people with the skills, tools and confidence to talk to their family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors about the amendment. We encourage our members to attend the trainings, speak to others, and team together to defeat the amendment. Enclosed is a flyer about the trainings, and here is a site for the events: <http://mnunited.org/event.cfm?eventid=18>

You may also contact Minnesotans United for All Families at 651-330-6852 or VOLUNTEER@MNUNITED.ORG and ask them for training in your community or for other information on how you may work to defeat the constitutional amendment.

In addition, the League recommends that you contact OutFront Minnesota at <http://www.outfront.org/takeaction/volunteer>, or Project 515, at <http://project515.org/volunteer/> for more information on how you and your commission can volunteer to defeat the amendment.

Finally, volunteer with the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions, by contacting Outreach@leagueofmnhumanrights.org.

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL IN MINNESOTA!

MINNESOTANS UNITED

for ALL FAMILIES

COMMUNITY ACTION TRAININGS

**Date and Time: Sep 13, 2011- Oct 16, 2011
10:00 AM- 8:30:00 PM**

Contact info: volunteer@mnunited.org or 651-330-6852

Minnesota can be the first state in the country to defeat an anti-marriage amendment!

We're going to do it the Minnesota way: the largest grassroots campaign this state has ever seen. That's why OutFront Minnesota and Minnesotans United for all Families are teaming up to put on more than a dozen trainings in every corner of the state more than a year before the first votes are cast!

That's where you come in! Whether this is the first time you've ever cared about politics or you're a seasoned organizer we're ready to help you get to work. You can expect to come out of the training with the:

- skills
- tools
- confidence

to talk to your family, friends coworkers and neighbors about the anti-marriage amendment.

**RSVP on Facebook or by filling out the form located at
<http://www.mnunited.org/event.cfm?eventid=18>**

Minneapolis

Tuesday, September 13th from 6-8pm

Location: Sabathani Community Center Auditorium, 310 East 38th Street #200

Moorhead

Saturday, September 17 from 10am-12pm

Location: First Congregational UCC, 406 South 8th Street

North Metro Suburbs

Tuesday, September 20 from 6-8pm

Location: TBD

Duluth

Saturday, September 24 from 10am-12pm

Location: Pilgrim UCC, 2310 East 4th Street

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mcl.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

Saint Paul

Wednesday, October 12 from 6-8pm

Location: Hamline University

Rochester

Thursday, September 29 from 6-8pm

Location: TBD

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

Mankato

Saturday, October 1 from 10am-12pm

Location: TBD

South Metro Suburbs

Tuesday, October 4 from 6-8pm

Location: TBD

Alexandria

Thursday, October 6 from 6-8pm

Location: TBD

Bemidji

Saturday, October 8 from 10am-12pm

Location: TBD

Saint Cloud

Tuesday, October 11 from 6-8pm

Location: SCSU

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

Marshall

Saturday, October 15 from 10am-12pm

Location: TBD

Minneapolis

Sunday, October 16 from 10am-12pm

Location: TBD

Childcare is available for this event. To take advantage of this service, register your own RSVP before contacting Mel Rexroad (mel.rexroad@familyequality.org or 612-516-4404).

RESOLUTION OF THE
LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS

May 22, 2011

Be It Resolved That...

Whereas, states have an interest in promoting family units as a means toward achieving social stability, private economic interdependence, and healthier environments in which both children and adults may prosper, and

Whereas, the U.S. Census for 2010 indicated that families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples reside in every county in Minnesota, and

Whereas, the United States Supreme Court and others have noted that the dimensions of "family" have expanded considerably in recent years, and

Whereas, an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution has been proposed that would ban the legal recognition of same-sex relationships within the state of Minnesota, and

Whereas, such an amendment would frustrate the State's goal of promoting families, by withholding from some families important legal rights and obligations, and

Whereas, constitutions historically have been designed to protect minorities from the arbitrary imposition of unjust barriers by the majority, and

Whereas, this legislation, if approved, would have a direct, negative impact on Minnesota's GLBT community in particular, by denying equal protection of the law and relegating families headed by or consisting of same-sex couples to a permanent second-class citizenship status, and

Whereas, the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions recognizes that our society benefits in proportion to its efforts to ensure cultural diversity and maintain an environment in which all feel welcome and safe, and


Whereas, such discriminatory legislation effectively devalues cultural diversity and promotes an environment in which discrimination against GLEBT citizens is not only encouraged but mandated, resulting in a community that is neither welcome nor safe,

Therefore be it resolved that the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions hereby states publicly its opposition to changing the Minnesota constitution in order to ban the legal recognition of same-sex relationships and unions, and

Be it furthermore resolved that this document will be presented to members of the press, in addition to our membership.

Certification

This resolution was approved by a vote of the Board of Directors of the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions on May 22, 2011, with a total vote of 13 Board Members, 13 of whom voted in the affirmative, 0 of whom voted in the negative, and 0 of whom abstained.


Beth Burrows Co-Secretary
League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions
By the Board of Director's Secretary

ROSEVILLE

HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION

HOSTS

project

515

Speaker

Ann Kaner-Roth was appointed executive director of Project 515 and Project 515 Education Campaign in January 2010. She holds a master's of social work focused in Public Policy from Boston University and a bachelor of arts in Political Science and Criminal Justice from the UW- Wisconsin-Madison.

There is a significant gap between the fairness Minnesotans value and what actually occurs under Minnesota law. That's why Minnesota volunteers formed Project 515 and commissioned its report. At a time when Minnesotans are discussing many other issues that determine what kind of state we'd like to live in, it's important to discuss another important quality-of-life

issue — fairness for all Minnesotans, including same-sex couples.

That's why it's critical to talk about the 515 laws that discriminate against Minnesota gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered families; hear the stories of real Minnesotans affected by these laws and take action!

LEARN MORE

www.project515.org

TUESDAY — OCTOBER 4th

6:30 — 8:00 PM

John Rose Oval — ROSE Room

Lexington and County Road C.

For more
information,
& to kindly
RSVP

Please contact :

Carolyn Curti

carolyn.curti@ci.roseville.mn.us

PHONE: 651-792-7026

Light Refreshments

Many thanks to our Co-Sponsor:
Shoreview Human Rights Commissions

City of Grand Rapids **HATE and BIAS CRIME RESPONSE PLAN**

The Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission Belief Statement

Hate, violence, and prejudice are unacceptable in our community. We are a community open to persons of all races, colors, religions, genders, sexual orientations, ages, abilities, and national origins striving to understand and empower one another.

Purpose:

The purpose of this plan is to establish a local response showing strong community support for any victim of hate/bias crimes, and zero community tolerance for hate/bias crimes. It is not the role of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission (GRHRC) to investigate such crimes. The Commission's role is to provide or coordinate support to victims of such crimes and provide leadership in the community in the prevention of bias and hate crimes through education and collaborative community action against prejudice and bigotry.

The Commission seeks:

- A commitment from the Grand Rapids Police Department that the Commission will be notified as soon as possible after a confirmed hate/bias crime complaint. Contact is to be made through the Chief of Police to the Commission Chair or a Designee of the Chair;
- To raise awareness of hate/bias crime issues within the community;
- To coordinate with the local media in providing support for the victims of hate/bias crimes.

Hate/bias crime defined:

A hate crime, as defined by Minnesota Statute § 609.2231, Subd. 4, is a criminal act committed against a person, institution, or property of which the primary motivation is the victim's affiliation with a protected class. State law established the following protected classes: race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, and national origin.

A recent change to the law allows for the perception of either the victim or the police officer regarding the bias motivation of the crime to cause it to be categorized as a hate crime. Convictions resulting from hate crimes carry enhanced penalties.

Hate crimes are different from discrimination complaints. Although discrimination is against the law, it is not a crime, but rather a civil matter.

Partnership:

In order to provide timely, meaningful support to victims of hate/bias crimes, the GRHRC must partner with the citizens and organizations in the community. The key partners include the GRHRC, the Grand Rapids Police Department and the Grand Rapids area media.

Immediate Response – law enforcement

Grand Rapids Police Department commitment to report hate/bias crimes to the GRHRC is necessary for this plan to be viable. The rights and wishes of the victim of a hate/bias crime must be given the utmost consideration at each step of this plan.

If an officer becomes aware of an incident that may be defined as a “hate/bias crime” as part of the investigation, the officer will:

1. Explain the definition of a hate/bias crime and the option of making a referral to the GRHRC to the victim. The role of the Commission is to support the victim and, if appropriate, develop a community response to the hate crime. The GRHRC will not conduct a criminal investigation of the incident.
2. If the victim would like the support of the GRHRC, the officer will assist the victim in completing the Grand Rapids Police Department Hate/Bias Crime Referral Report and immediately forward the report to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will contact the GRHRC Chair or the Chair’s Designee.
3. If the victim does not feel the need for GRHRC support, the officer will give the victim the telephone number of the GRHRC staff liaison in the event support is needed at a future time.

Immediate response – referral other than through law enforcement

1. If the report of a hate/bias crime is made directly to a member of the GRHRC, the person receiving the report will encourage the victim to report the incident to the Grand Rapids Police Department or other appropriate law enforcement agency and will offer to go with the victim to report the incident to the Police Department.

2. The GRHRC member will obtain an address or telephone number from the victim for future contacts and explain the definition of a hate/bias crime.

3. After the initial meeting, the GRHRC member will consult with the GRHRC chairperson or designee and, if appropriate, a second meeting with the victim will be held to explain the option of developing a community response to the hate/bias crime. A community response plan will not be initiated unless the victim is supportive of the effort.

Human Rights Commission response to a hate/bias crime referral

1. The GRHRC chairperson or designee will organize the initial victim contact. A Commission member will be appointed from the membership to serve as the responder.

2. The responder will contact the victim by telephone and ask to visit the victim to discuss the incident and offer support and assistance. If the victim does not desire a visit, the responder will follow-up with a letter offering assistance at a later date if desired and include information on other services in the community that might be of benefit.

3. The responder will ask permission to report the information to the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions.

4. If contact by telephone is not an option, the responder will visit the victim for the initial victim contact.

5. The GRHRC chair will be the designated spokesperson to the media regarding the hate/bias crime response plan.

Personal visit and community response

1. With a team of two GRHRC members, visit the victim, either at his/her home or other location of the victim's choice. Identify the team as members of the GRHRC and explain the purpose for meeting. Explain the confidentiality of the conversation and ask if the victim wishes to be part of a community response plan to prevent the crime from happening again. Consider the victim's wishes as to confidentiality and level of publicity. Ask if they approve of their name being used. Ask if they are comfortable with the Commission contacting the media.

2. If the victim agrees to be part of a community response, the Commission member will contact the Mayor and Chief of Police and inform them of the incident and discuss and agree upon the appropriateness of a community response. At the earliest possible time a meeting of the GRHRC, the Mayor and the Chief of Police will be held to jointly develop a community response plan. The victim should be comfortable with the community response plan.

3. The community response plan may include a letter to the editor, contact with other media, a community meeting, a "quick response – not in our town" activity, or sending a letter or a representative to local churches and schools.

4. Whatever the response to the bias/hate crime, a follow-up contact should be made by the GRHRC responder with the victim within one week. Check on any recurrences, other problems, and offer continued support.

Follow-up to hate/bias crime

1. The GRHRC shall review the overall process; note the effectiveness of the response and suggestions for future responses. Invite the Mayor and Chief of Police to provide a review and suggestions.

2. The GRHRC will send letters of appreciation to supportive organizations and individuals.

3. The GRHRC shall provide the Mayor and Chief of Police with a summary report of all of its actions and activities in connection with the matter.