

Community Relations Commission

Meeting Notes

April 13, 2021

An unofficial meeting of the Community Relations Commission was held electronically on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Chairperson Susie Wexler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present were

Kathy Anderson
Gil Antokal
Veronica Boyajian
Judy Hoffman
Bill Lundquist
David Rauen
Zach Raimi
Susie Wexler, Chairperson

Absent were:

Also Present:

David Fitzgerald-Sullivan, Communications Specialist

Document Approval

Mr. Antokal moved to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2021, Community Relations Commission meeting. Ms. Hoffman seconded the motion. Mr. Antokal made a correction to the minutes. The motion passed, as amended, by the following vote:

AYES: Antokal, Boyajian, Lindquist, Rauen, Raimi (5)

NAYS: None (0)

Discussion

1. Discussion on Community Kindness Award Program

The Commission started a discussion on the Community Kindness Award program. Ch. Wexler explained there are different areas of community kindness including a student liaison portion. She asked how to begin the community kindness award program. Ch. Wexler asked about the type of acknowledgement of kindness the commissioners would like. She does not believe the recipient expects to receive anything. Ms. Boyajian believes most people would want acknowledgement but not hoopla. Mr. Antokal presented an option to ask for nominations in D-Tails and the schools on a quarterly basis. He agreed that the adults typically do not look for recognition, but recognizing the youth could encourage them to continue this path. The recipient could receive a

certificate of acknowledgement at the first Board of Trustees meeting each quarter. The recipient could also lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Antokal believes it would be easy to enact because all the component parts are available.

Ms. Hoffman asked about the parameters of the award. The commissioners questioned whether this is a kindness or service award. Ms. Boyajian asked if the Commission is determining parameters or putting the word out to the community to try to recognize kindness. The commissioners believe they should put the word out. Ms. Anderson noted the schools have programs with criteria where people can identify what is being sought after. She would rather the award recipient selflessly emulate kindness. Ms. Anderson believes this would allow more people to be recognized. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan noted the Commission is looking to recognize people quarterly and suggested having separate categories. Ch. Wexler suggested spending the first year or so creating the habit of acknowledging and celebrating patterns of kindness. Then, the Commission can bring in more definition. This will allow the Commission to see the patterns that are out there.

Mr. Rauen asked what the Commission is doing to promote the Commission's objectives. He asked if the Commission should promote this more like random acts of kindness or City of kindness. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan will send out links from other communities to the Commission. Mr. Antokal suggested starting in one direction but keeping the flexibility. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan noted the Commission does not have to build out the entire program at one time. It would be easier to start with one and see how it goes. He noted the first award could be people that helped during Covid. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan will have the nominations sent to the commissioners.

Ch. Wexler explained there are two components. The first is the acknowledgement and reflection that the choices were seen and appreciated by the community where you live. She questioned how the Commission can make news out of ordinary things. Ch. Wexler also expressed concern about giving everyone an award for participation. She believes the Commission can look at this through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion in terms of opportunity and kindness. Mr. Antokal noted diversity, equity and inclusion has become very important in everyday existence. Ms. Boyajian believes if people act in a respectful, dignified, kind way that diversity, fairness and inclusiveness would just happen. Ch. Wexler noted some people are so above and beyond that they are not just doing sufficiently, they go to be so inclusive and respectful that they bring others to be their best selves. Ms. Anderson believes it is based on the action. When focusing on equity and inclusion, it could be being an ally or bringing someone into a conversation. Some people just naturally do that. The Commission has to be inclusive in the recognition awards.

Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan suggested the Commission focus on one area for the first award. Ch. Wexler suggested fostering a challenge instead of making an award. She asked the commissioner's thoughts about hitting a benchmark of contributing acts of kindness. Ch. Wexler suggested something like hitting x amount of kindness acts over the

summer. Mr. Rauen questioned if it is more of a campaign. Mr. Antokal questioned whether this would wear out the Community if there is a blast right in the beginning.

Mr. Rauen noted this could help identify the different aspects in the community. Mr. Antokal noted there are many aspects the Commission could go with. We need to keep the momentum going. Ms. Boyajian suggested we would be letting the people doing the acts of kindness drive what we are doing. Ch. Wexler will provide a bit more structure to determine what the other communities are doing, so the Village has some direction. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan will put together a rough outline of an application and allow the Commission to work on the actual text. This will help drive the discussion for the next meeting.

Mr. Raimi asked if the recipient would just get recognition, or if they would get an award. Mr. Antokal explained the Commission discussed this briefly. In the past, the recipient received a plaque. There is also a plaque in Village Hall.

2. Updates from the Village and Partners

Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan reported the Mayor and Board of Trustees approved the Ordinance with the changes to the Commission's duties and functions. It is now part of the Municipal Code.

The waste hauling transfer has been going well. The composting program is very popular.

The vaccinations at Patty Turner Center are going well. 3500 people will be vaccinated there this week. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan encourage people to sign up for the vaccine on All Vax. Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan noted the Village worked with partners to open some closed pods at the Patty Turner Center. They also worked with some hourly workers in Deerfield to facilitate vaccination appointments. Mr. Antokal noted this was a terrific partnership with the Village, Park District, Lake County and the doctor's organization. He noted they should be able to vaccinate up to 1000 per day.

Mr. Fitzgerald-Sullivan noted Rebekah Metts-Childers was elected to the Village Board and has resigned from the Commission. Ch. Wexler noted there are two or three vacancies in this Commission.

3. Other Items for Discussion

Ms. Anderson noted the high school will start vaccinations on April 30, 2021. They are excited because they will host graduation on campus this year.

Ms. Hoffman reported the library is now open four hours a day. It is very exciting for the Village.

Community Relations Commission

April 13, 2021

Page 4 of 4

Adjournment:

Mr. Antokal moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lundquist seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Antokal, Boyajian, Lindquist, Rauen, Raimi (5)

NAYS: None (0)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

The next regular Community Relations Commission meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeri Cotton
Secretary