

Lincolnwood Human Relations Commission Meeting
Monday, February 13, 2012
7:00 PM Lincolnwood Council Chambers

1. **Role Call:** Present – Anjum Ali, Martina Keller, Jean Ikezoe Halevi, Paul Kramer, Maria Ugarte Ramos, Stacie Katsiabaros, Sgt. Mark Weidner, John Swan (Board of Trustees Representative). Excused – Anna Pawlowski and Rita Eng. Guest – Alan Goldstein.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes were approved with no substantive changes.
3. **Guest Presentation & Discussion about Restrictions on Group Homes in Lincolnwood:** Alan Goldstein has been a resident of Lincolnwood for 13 years. He works as an attorney with Equip for Equality, a private, non-profit advocacy agency for people with disabilities. He is not in any way connected to the parties seeking to install a group home in Lincolnwood. He has only been involved as a private resident in the discussions that have taken place at Board of Trustees and Planning Commission meetings regarding Lincolnwood's current zoning code and any future inclusion of group homes. His peripheral involvement includes his preparation of a legal memorandum, addressed to Mayor Turry, outlining the current legal precedents relating to a municipality's authority to restrict group homes. A copy of that memorandum was provided to the Human Relations Commission. Alan believes that the issue is about community integration for people with disabilities and is thereby an issue falling within the scope and mission of the HRC. Although there were some opposing views among members of the HRC about Lincolnwood's readiness for group homes, members of the HRC generally agreed that the issue, particularly in the light of community integration, falls within the mission of the HRC. There may be some ancillary role the HRC could play in transitioning the community to welcome group homes– such as partnering with non-profit organizations to host educational programs for the general population. John Swan, speaking on behalf of the Board of Trustees, confirmed that the Board has not formally presented the issue to the HRC, because, so far, it has only been discussed as a zoning issue. John also noted that the Board would welcome any suggestions from the HRC for ideas in "building bridges" on the issue of group homes in Lincolnwood. Anjum agreed to follow up with Alan regarding contact information for potential partnering organizations.
4. **HRC Kick-Off Event Proposal:** Stacie presented ideas for a kick off event to promote awareness of the HRC. She recommended that the event occur some time close to the start of the school year. We could work with neighborhood businesses and community groups. Activities could include a raffle of prizes for ethnic museums and restaurants, a PowerPoint presentation, and presentation a suggestion box. HRC members could mingle with community members. It was agreed to table the discussion, particularly in light of the HRC's involvement in the upcoming Naturalization Ceremony.
5. **Report on Expenditures:** There is \$479.03 left in the budget for the fiscal year.
6. **HRC Award:** Still no nominations to date. Martina asked each of the three principals in Lincolnwood to promote the nomination process. Mark and Maria are working on getting the word out to religious leaders in the area.
7. **Food Drive:** Food drive will officially kick off on March 1. Martina contacted the schools and they are all on board. Other members will contact local banks. Anjum asked that we count and keep tabs of the bags of food that are donated so that we have a sense of how much has been given. The food bank is open only Mondays through Fridays from 9:00 to 1:00, so we have to collect the donations and bring

them to the food bank within those time frames. Each HRC member will be designated donation locations.

8. **World Music: Korea - Chamber Music Event:** The Director of the Lincolnwood Chamber Orchestra (an independent organization using Lincolnwood in its name) recently contacted Anjum for “support” from the HRC. It was agreed that clarifications are needed. Paul will call the director to sort out the details.

The topic of the chamber orchestra led to a side discussion about the fact that many groups are asking the HRC to “support” activities, often with requests for volunteers and often in relation to events that do not particularly fall within the scope of the HRC. The question was posed whether the HRC has the capacity to handle all of these requests. It was agreed that “cross fertilization” was important and that members of the HRC should attend/participate in as many activities as we can (when possible) to keep abreast of the issues and events affecting our community.

9. **Winter Carnival:** Members of the HRC were asked to volunteer at the Winter Carnival, an event sponsored by Lincolnwood Parks and Recreation. Anjum was going to suggest to Parks and Recreation that local high school students be recruited, as many students need service hours.

10. **Naturalization Ceremony:** Mark provided more details about the Naturalization Ceremony that is scheduled to take place in Lincolnwood on June 5. It was agreed that participation in the Naturalization Ceremony was clearly within the scope and mission of the HRC. Anjum suggested that the HRC coordinate with the schools for an art project to “welcome” the newly naturalized citizens. Martina will be the point person on this project and will contact Jan Hincapie for more details.

11. **Diversity Month Flags:** No news this month. See last month’s minutes.

12. **Publicity:** Different versions of updated HRC brochures were presented and selected.

13. **Old Business:** Jean attempted to contact the people who had signed up as potential volunteers on a sheet made available at the last Lincolnwood Home & Garden Show, but was unable to reach anyone successfully.

14. **New Business:** Martina had a meeting with the principal of Todd Hall, Ellen Shankar, at Ms. Shankar’s request. As a relatively new principal, Ms. Shankar was very interested in the existence of the HRC and was very enthusiastic about collaborating with the HRC on designated projects. She also promised to promote the HRC Award nomination process to her faculty and staff. Todd Hall recently had its metal sculpture stolen. Ms. Shankar reported that she was receiving an outpouring of support in connection with the stolen sculpture as a result of all the media attention, including offers to replace the sculpture.

Anjum reminded the group that April is the month when the new slate of HRC officers is selected. A discussion should take place at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45. The next meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2012.