

Committee on Community Diversity

Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2009

Administrative Conference Room

Municipal Government Center

1. Call to Order

Committee Members Present: Chairman Terry D. Wright, Vice-Chairman Larry Hamilton, Helen Cuff, Fred Enderle, Bill Vogt, Barbara Miller, Richard K. Ghere. Not Present: Gordon Wise, Debra Osborne.

Chairman Terry D. Wright called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

2. **Approval of the Minutes** from the September 15, 2009 meeting. Mr. Hamilton asked to clarify the statement noted under New Business, fifth paragraph, of the Minutes, “Another suggestion, made by Mr. Hamilton concerned the opportunity to educate the public on the issue of diversity by utilizing the educational institutions we have available in Piqua.” Mr. Hamilton thought that the reference was being made to the Ideas List, #11 which was “Assist and coordinate the invitation of speakers to address municipal departments and/or other organizations and groups within the city.” Mr. Vogt made a motion that the minutes be approved, Mrs. Cuff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

a. Introduction of Mr. Shawn Ford – Edison Community College. Mr. Ford discussed the newly formed Diversity Committee for Edison. The task force completed an assessment by surveying student engagement in terms of diversity. Based on the results, the team’s goal is to broaden understanding of diversity through defining diversity and recognizing the different layers of diversity. Mr. Ford explained that they have focused on one topic of diversity at a time beginning with race. Activities have included scheduled speakers, book club discussion featuring “Bridges Out of Poverty”, “Ruby”, etc. Their next featured topic to be introduced is gender. Edison’s student base is in the Tri-County area which includes Miami, Darke and Shelby counties.

b. Mr. Ford indicated he would like to work with the Committee on writing grants. He believes that it would be of benefit in highlighting events at Edison and in pursuing grants together. The Committee was invited to Edison’s next presentation: Digital Terrorism and Hate with speaker Rick Eaton on Monday, October 19th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Edison’s Theatre. Mr. Wright expressed that he would be glad to work with Mr. Ford on diversity and grant writing.

Mr. Ghere asked about the reaction from students and Mr. Ford explained that response from students has been good. Edison is trying to concentrate on all aspects of diversity, such as age, gender, social, economic and environmental diversity. He went on to explain that they have used a poster displaying students of Edison and asked for student feedback on whether the poster is representative of ESC. Mr. Wright asked if there were other speakers scheduled. Mr. Ford

explained that in February 2008, Mr. Hamilton presented a lecture series for the entire month with four topics and feedback was very good. ESC has also just hired a grant writer, Liz Schonner. The ESC Diversity Task Force has also been working on a Kids Campus for next year.

c. Mr. Wright re-introduced the request of Ms. Carver, Mr. McCullough's daughter for ideas on obtaining interviews. Mr. Wright suggested a display in the library with pictures and a device outlining the history of Mr. McCullough. Ms. Carver is associated with radio and not sure how she is going national. She is reaching out to contact people that would be willing to talk to her for an oral history.

Old Business

a. The list of projects and programs compiled by the Committee was reviewed. Mr. Ford was given a copy. Mr. Ford indicated that he would be glad to work on # 11 listed on the Ideas List: of assisting and coordinating the invitation of speakers to address municipal departments and/or other organizations and groups within the city. He commented that Kris Lee currently teaches at Edison and has pulse on the community. He would also be interested in partnering with #13 listed on the Ideas List: Partner with schools on mentoring/skills development program. Mr. Hamilton commented that sometime ago he tried to coordinate with ESC and through the Chamber of Commerce to endorse the "Right Concept" as part of the Randolph initiative. This would require grant writing and larger community for Edison target area. Mr. Hamilton would like to revive that proposal. Mr. Hamilton responded favorably when Mr. Ford asked if he would like to meet with their group.

Mr. Hamilton asked if most students relate inclusion primarily with race. Mr. Ford indicated yes and that when polled, would probably be the response to the definition of diversity. ESC is working on broadening that understanding by including more information on subgroups such as gender, age, etc.

Mrs. Cuff asked Mr. Ford what he thought of #2 regarding the Ohio History Day program. Mr. Ford was not familiar with the program. Mr. Wright explained that the Ohio History Day program is a competition. Students are bused from all over the state for the regional competition. Mr. Wright explained that participants choose a historical topic related to the annual theme which they then research and analyze and then present their conclusions through a paper, exhibit, performance/skit, etc. which is judged. Those chosen then go on to the State competition. Andy Hite from the Historical Society would like to see more participants from Piqua schools. Mr. Hamilton asked if the theme related to diversity. Mr. Wright indicated that it could be used that way. Participants focus and address issues and even defend their topics. Mr. Hamilton commented that he was not sure how the event ties into diversity. Mr. Ford stated that he would still be interested in assisting the event.

The Committee continued to discuss the items on the Ideas List. Mrs. Cuff suggested some event or activity that would get all groups together and then build on it annually. As we have other people in our community that we don't know anything about. Mr. Hamilton shared his experience at the Upper Valley Medical Center last week which hosted an event about religious diversity. The theme was on how different community faiths deal with medical and health issues. There were representatives from many faiths: Mormon, Jehovah Witness, Brethren, Jewish Synagogue, etc. which was fascinating. It was excellent.

Mrs. Cuff suggested having all groups cook something as a cultural diversity event. Mr. Wright raised the question about how groups would be invited. Would you have everyone bring

in something from their culture, i.e. a dish or pot luck. Mr. Enderle reminded the Committee that our purpose is to serve as advisory to the City Commissioners and then gain approval whether the City wants to be involved. He then suggested that we narrow the list to 5-6 areas to work with. Have everyone pick their top 5 and vote on that. Take that list and submit to the Commissioners for their approval. The tasks need to be concrete enough for City to approve, such as work with Edison or other community groups to bring in speakers. Mr. Wright asked what Commissioners would say about Rossville even though outside City limits. Mr. Enderle said that they would have to propose to the Commission to see, but Rossville is hot a button as some people want to leave the area alone. He also doesn't know what county or township thinks. Mr. Hamilton indicated that people in Rossville have been approached and was not enthusiastic about initiatives. Some things we could lump together in our area and not cause problem. Such as items #3 and #4. Mr. Vogt commented that Miss Helen Gilmore works on it. Mr. Hamilton informed that there is a museum over there. Discussion regarding the Randolph/Rossville Settlement and whether the cemetery had markings or not. Mr. Hamilton said no. Some things would require cooperation/coordination and Miss Gilmore is sensitive to that initiative. However, if the will of the community, then would have to be discussed. Maybe add signage for the cemetery. Mr. Enderle reminded that it may be county property. Mrs. Cuff reintroduced that different nationalities could register for the event and have a cook off. Mr. Hamilton commented that everyone has done that. Mrs. Cuff suggested art instead of cooking. Have people register and invite as Ethnic/Community Festival. Mr. Wright suggested picking 5 items and formulate request for commissioner. Mr. Vogt commented that we should pick ideas that might be better addressed. Mr. Enderle said that with Mrs. Cuff's suggestion, we would need to solicit and develop programs. Mr. Vogt discussed Heritage Festival which would include everyone that settled at one time. Mr. Wright asked Mr. Ford if ESC had a multi-cultural calendar. Mr. Ford explained that ESC has an inside printing capability for anything that doesn't have too much graphics, if more graphics than go on outside. Mr. Enderle suggested that we start listing ideas on board. The results of the top 5 selected by each person present were:

Mr. Ghere - # 2, 8, 11, 13, 17
Mr. Wright - # 1, 11, 2, 13, 8
Mrs. Cuff - # 3, 8, 12, 13, 17
Mr. Ford - # 3-4, 10, 11, 13, 17
Mr. Vogt - # 3-4, 10, 11, 14
Mr. Hamilton - # 3, 5, 8, 11, 1
Ms. Miller - # 3, 8, 11, 13, 17

Top Count: #11 received 7 votes
#8 received 6 votes
#13 received 6 votes
#3-4 received 5 votes
#17 received 5 votes

Top 5 Ideas to be submitted to the Commission from the Committee are: #11, 8, 13, 3-4 and 17. Asked about idea #1, which was working with Ms. Carver on the W.M. McCullough documentary. Mr. Ghere said that that was a different issue and can be done separately. Ms. Miller asked if we needed approval and was told no. Mr. Wright suggested working through the

library on an individual basis on the project. Mr. Hamilton has emailed Ms. Carver. He went on to share that he would like having something at the library such as an interactive display. Mr. Wright indicated that we have completed our review of the projects. Mr. Enderle volunteered to bring the list to the next Commission meeting.

The Committee thanked Mr. Ford for coming and his participation.

Next Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2009 beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the Administrative Conference Room of the Municipal Government Complex.

Mr. Vogt moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m. and Mr. Hamilton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Miller, Recording Secretary