

Committee on Community Diversity

Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2009

Administrative Conference Room

Municipal Government Center

1. **Call to Order**

Committee Members Present: Chairman Terry D. Wright, Vice-Chairman Larry Hamilton, Fred Enderle, Bill Vogt, Gordon Wise, Helen Cuff, Barbara Miller, Richard K. Ghere, Debra Osborne.

Chairman Terry D. Wright called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

2. **Approval of the Minutes** from the November 3, 2009 meeting. There were no corrections or additions. Mr. Vogt made a motion that the minutes be approved, which Mr. Hamilton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **New Business**

a. Review Tabled Resolution R-103-09. Mr. Vogt enlightened the Committee on last month's Commission Meeting. Mr. Vogt noted his frustration at the reading of the Resolution as Commissioner Fess' expressed her opinion that there wasn't a problem with diversity in the City. Mr. Vogt did not want the Resolution to be dropped, so he made a motion to table the Resolution and asked Commissioner Fess to attend our next Committee meeting on January 5th. Mr. Vogt believes that a study session with the whole Committee and Commissioner Fess will assist in understanding the need for the Resolution.

Mr. Ghere said that he saw the tape of the last Commission Meeting and stated that Commissioner Fess didn't seem to know of the existence of this Committee even though she was on the Commission when the Committee was developed. Mr. Enderle said that we need the blessing of the Commission in order to continue and that it is a good idea to sit down to have mutual understanding. Mr. Wright commented that diversity ties in with economic development and that this needs more thought. Mr. Vogt stated that every generation needs schooled on diversity and to have an understanding for their future success. Each one will end up out in the world and could inadvertently say something that could be misconstrued which they didn't mean and could create problems for them.

Mr. Hamilton stated that he would need to see the tape of the meeting but it sounded like the Commission is having a more reactive response, which is more indicative of a crisis mode. Our role is to be proactive as Piqua has areas we can tout and move forward and put in positive light. He said it is disappointing to have leaders make the comments that he is hearing. He agreed that we need a study session and have discussion.

Ms. Osborne asked if information was given at the time the Ad Hoc committee was established and if it had received a forward "yea" from the Commission.

Mr. Enderle assured that the Commissioners were aware and had responded favorably, adding that they just needed to be reminded of the background. He stated that the Commission needs to hear the thinking of each member of this Committee. He is not surprised by the comments, but is surprised by the reactive, rather than proactive response. He continued to agree that we need to address issues proactively and believed that some people might not believe that there is a problem since it doesn't make it on the news and may be afraid that openly discussing it will raise issues.

Mr. Vogt said if someone wants to name a street after me don't have to fight about it, we have things like that, which are specific projects. Mr. Enderle is concerned as to what the Commission may not want the Committee to get into. We have kept our purpose general so that we can work through to narrow down specific ideas.

Mr. Vogt said some people asked why Looney Road is called Looney Road and asked the group if they knew. No one did. He said it sounds like a job for Mr. Wright to find out. He thinks maybe it should be renamed since it has several educational facilities built on it. Mr. Wise asked that if some of the Committee members are responding to email inquiries from the Commission regarding the Diversity Committee; it would be helpful if they were forwarded to all of us.

Old Business

- a. Grant Preparation for Guest Speaker – Mr. Terry Wright.

Mr. Wright tried unsuccessfully to contact Mr. Ford. Mr. Ford has not responded, perhaps he is on vacation. Nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Vogt wanted to further discuss mentoring and the conversation Mr. Enderle had with Mr. Rick Hanes was that there was no time within the school schedule to add to a program. Maybe we should contact the YMCA or HYPE through the Chamber of Commerce for young people was suggested. Mr. Enderle said that Mr. Hanes concern is that schools are being asked to do more and more and that they are getting back to teaching what is needed. Mr. Hanes was not opposed to discussing an after school program, but concerned over adding to the curriculum. Mr. Enderle thought it would be a good idea to have Mr. Hanes attend and have dialogue with us. Mr. Vogt said that Commissioner Fess stated we have a mentoring program, why have another one. Mr. Wise asked what mentoring has to do with diversity and that he was still struggling with that. Mr. Hamilton agreed with Mr. Wise and had questions concerning that also. The Ad Hoc committee had wanted to go down that path.

Mr. Wright commented that mentoring was in his English curriculum. Mr. Hamilton interjected that it doesn't have to be a curriculum offering. What happens with the programs between the Chamber of Commerce and the High School? Does the Board have to pass that for those programs to be offered? How does it work? We need more information.

Other Business

Mr. Wright asked the Committee if there was any other business to be discussed. There was none. Mr. Enderle stated that he will try to have the Commission attend our January 5th meeting as a study session – joint meeting.

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

Mr. Wise moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and Mr. Vogt seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Miller, Recording Secretary