

Members Present:

Andy Ansola
Michael Everett
Roland A. Foulkes
Jaemi Levine (Chair)
Inez Romaguera
Tom Runyan (Vice Chair)
Leilani Smith-Tellez (Secretary)
Sam Subramani

Guests: Commander Richard Wierzbicki, Broward Sheriff's Office

Staff: Al DiCalvo, Assistant County Attorney; Dalton Barrett, County Liaison, Helene Udell, Staff Liaison

The Broward County Diversity Advisory Council meeting was called to order at 6:38 PM by Chair, Jaemi Levine. The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance and observed a moment of silence. The members introduced themselves.

Council Action Approval of Minutes

Leilani Smith-Tellez moved to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2009 meeting. The motion was seconded by Tom Runyan and was passed unanimously by the membership. Andy Ansola raised the issue of his being listed as "absent" in the body of the minutes. It was determined that he attempted to call in to the meeting and that the telephone bridge was not working properly. The minutes were corrected to show that he was not absent.

Chair Report: The Chair welcomed Inez Romaguera, the Council's newest member, recently appointed by Commissioner Diana Wasserman-Rubin. Ms. Romaguera is an employment benefits broker.

Guest Speaker: Commander Richard Wierzbicki of the Broward Sheriff's Office is heading the Sheriff's Hate Crimes Taskforce. Commander Wierzbicki introduced himself and outlined his background in law enforcement. He explained that Sheriff Lamberti is committed to action in light of the County having been designated #1 in the State of Florida in the commission of hate crimes. He explained that the Sheriff also is creating a Council on Diversity, a Racial Profiling Taskforce, and intends to review the current cultural diversity training in order to replace it with a customized program.

Commander Wierzbicki advised that crimes against the homeless, although they are increasing, are not considered hate crimes. In order to bring attention to the plight of the homeless, it was suggested by the Chair and Ms. Romaguera that a "sleep-out", perhaps by Cub Scouts might be organized.

Roland Foulkes asked questions about the 2006-07 death threats against the Director of CAIR, Florida. Commander Wierzbicki was not involved in the investigation but offered to look into it to determine what agency(ies) investigated. Mr. Foulkes also asked about anti-homeless actions perpetrated by law enforcement officers.

The National Sheriff's Conference will be held in South Florida in June. The Sheriff will be holding his Summit in September 2009. Mr. Ansola asked that the Taskforce go to local resources for its diversity and cultural training that will take place during the Summit.

Old Business

Parliament of the World's Religions: Leilani Smith-Tellez gave a brief overview of her view of the Council's event including the idea of separating it from the Parliament to be held in Australia in 2009. She read a draft letter to the Commissioners including a suggested program of the day's activities. Michael Everett moved that the Council give Ms. Smith-Tellez the authority to draft a formal letter to the Commissioners on the subject, outlining her plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ansola and was carried unanimously by the membership.

The Chair raised the issue of the pending proclamation for Moremi Akinde. Sam Subramani moved that the proclamation, as revised by Mr. Runyan and approved by the membership at the September 16, 2008 meeting, be submitted to the Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Ms. Smith-Tellez and was carried without opposition.

Mr. Foulkes inquired about his nomination of Jawhar Badran for recognition by the Council. Mr. Subramani moved that staff prepare the certificate. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ansola.

New Business

Mr. Ansola offered congratulations to Mr. Foulkes who received a Civil Rights award from CAIR.

Round-A-Bout

Ms. Smith-Tellez reported on the grand opening of the Islamic Foundation in Sunrise. Mr. Runyan reported on the Equality Florida rally in Tallahassee and advised that there will be a PRIDE celebration at Holiday Park later this month.

Leilani Smith-Tellez moved for adjournment. The motion was seconded by Sam Subramani, passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

Leilani Smith-Tellez, Secretary

Date