

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 4, 2013**

Present

Councilor Penny York, Chair
Councilor Mike Beilstein
Councilor Bruce Sorte

Staff

Jim Patterson, City Manager
Carolyn Rawles-Heiser, Library Director
Mary Beth Altmann Hughes, Human Resources Manager
Carrie Mullens, City Manager's Office

Visitors

Jacque Schreck, Corvallis-Benton County Public Library Board Vice Chair
Jasper Smith, Commission for Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Chair
Barry Jerkins, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Corvallis Chapter President
Frederick J. Edwards, Corvallis business owner
Joe Raia, *Corvallis TidBits* editor

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Information Only</u>	<u>Held for Further Review</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
I.	Boards and Commissions Sunset Review: Corvallis-Benton County Public Library Board			Amend Municipal Code Chapter 1.16, "Boards and Commissions," continuing the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library Board by means of an ordinance read by the City Attorney
II.	Boards and Commissions Sunset Review: Commission for Martin Luther King, Jr.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend Municipal Code Chapter 1.16, "Boards and Commissions," continuing the Commission for Martin Luther King, Jr. by means of an ordinance read by the City Attorney; • Suggest staff review options to reduce support costs, including reducing the number of meetings; and • Direct the Commission to review its charge and forward recommendations to the Human Services Committee on ways the mission can be better met.
III.	Other Business	***		

Chair York called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

Chair York said the agenda items are related to the public process and participation Council goal to ensure that input and advice is received from citizens and viable opportunities are available for citizens to be involved in city government.

I. Boards and Commissions Sunset Review: Corvallis-Benton County Public Library Board

Ms. Rawles-Heiser said the Library Board is comprised of ten members; five appointed by the Mayor and five appointed by the Benton County Commissioners. Liaisons from the City Council and County Commissioners serve on the Board along with a student representative appointed by the County Commissioners. The Board advises Library staff and Council about Library issues related to budget, operations, and the future public library system. The Board reviews Library policies and fees and makes recommendations for amendments. They advocate for the library and communicate with the public, informing citizens of the value of the library system.

Ms. Schreck said the Board is a diverse tight-knit group of ten who function as one for the City and throughout the County. Libraries are not static and must be dynamic to be successful. The Board supports the changes the Library must make to be successful and Board members are willing to suggest alternatives. The wisdom of the Board has been very valuable to the Library and City management during recent financial challenges. The Board successfully advises without overstepping boundaries.

Ms. Rawles-Heiser said the Board also appoints liaisons to the Friends of the Library and Library Foundation to ensure a cohesive and collaborative role. The staff report includes a review of the Board's accomplishments. Staff recommends continuing the Library Board for another four years.

Ms. Rawles-Heiser invited everyone to attend the Monroe Library grand opening on Saturday, June 8.

Councilor Sorte stated support for continuing the Library Board. He noted that Ms. Altmann Hughes set a new standard for sunset reviews in her staff report for the second agenda item. He agreed that it is important during discussions of budget reductions that Council recognize the investment of staff to support advisory boards. He requested that sunset reviews include a calculation of staff support (number of meetings, average amount of extra time, etc.). He recognized that some boards require more staff support than others.

Ms. Rawles-Heiser said the advantage of providing a minimal investment of staff support for the Library Board is having a historical record. For example, when Tom McClintock was researching information for his book about the history of the Library, he referred to the Board minutes.

Councilor Beilstein noted that the Library Board meeting also includes reports from the various Library Divisions. Those reports would most likely not be completed if the Division was not reporting to the Board.

Ms. Rawles-Heiser said the Library Divisions would still need to keep those kinds of records, although it could be with an alternative mechanism. A summary of the reports are included in the monthly City Manager's Report.

Chair York reported that she attended some of Council's advisory board meetings when she was running for Council election. She researched the sunset process and was concerned that Council reviews each board separately. She noted that it is difficult to address time, scope, and consolidation when only one board is being reviewed. She said she looks forward to Council identifying a process for comprehensive reviews of advisory boards to ensure the City's resources are utilized effectively.

Chair York stated support for continuing the Library Board and said the Board brings many volunteers into the City to provide services the City cannot afford. Without the volunteers many Library services would not be available to patrons.

The Committee unanimously recommends Council amend Municipal Code Chapter 1.16, "Boards and Commissions," continuing the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library Board, **by means of an ordinance read by the City Attorney**

II. Boards and Commissions Sunset Review: Commission for Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK)

Ms. Altmann Hughes announced that staff recommends sunsetting the Commission for MLK, but offers three options for consideration:

1. Retain the Commission,
2. Sunset the Commission, or
3. Sunset the Commission and contribute approximately 50 percent (\$5,000) of the allocated budget to the OSU Office of Equity and Inclusion toward sponsorship of the OSU MLK Celebration.

Ms. Altmann Hughes said it was a difficult process and review that lead to a sunset recommendation. She reviewed historical activities, staff resources, MLK charge, and considered the best way to move forward. She also reviewed Human Resources (HR) staff support and overall HR budget. HR has experienced a number of staffing reductions in the last few years while continuing to provide work to support City Departments on a daily basis. The HR staff member who supports the Commission does so outside of normal part-time work hours.

Ms. Altmann Hughes said the Commission receives \$10,000 annually from the City for the annual Dr. King memorial celebration. In light of City budget constraints, staff considered whether this expenditure is appropriate. She noted that the \$10,000 allocation is one of the largest line-item expenditures in the HR budget outside of staff costs.

During the May Commission meeting, Ms. Altmann Hughes announced her intention to recommend sunsetting. Since only three commissioners were present, she sent a follow-up email the next day to all of the Commissioners. During the discussion, it was evident that the Commissioners had been discussing the possibility of losing the \$10,000 allocation due to the City's budget issues.

Mr. Smith added that the Commissioners did not agree sunsetting was appropriate since they have not achieved the mission and charge of the Commission. The community is not a fully inclusive, diverse community honoring the legacy of Dr. King. There continues to be work for the Commission to conduct. The Commissioners understand the budget issues and the City can decide what they want to do about staff resources and funding, but they feel the Commission should be able to continue their work. Most likely, there are opportunities for efficiency related to the annual celebration. The investment the City is making toward a diverse, inclusive, welcoming community is not a huge investment and is most likely inadequate. During the last few months, the Commission has gone through some changes and is now a more empowered group to pursue these goals.

Councilor Beilstein said he is not surprised that occasionally a commission has less than a quorum at a meeting. He inquired whether this is a trend for MLK and whether some commissioners are not participating. Mr. Smith responded that May was the first meeting in the last six months that there was no quorum. Many OSU people are on MLK and there is active participation by all commissioners.

Councilor Beilstein noted that MLK is essentially seasonal since their main activity is preparing for the annual event in January. Mr. Smith said it is possible that the annual celebration can be done more efficiently by partnering with OSU; however, it is important to have a community event. The Commission is also the Affirmative Action Advisory Committee. This role has been under-utilized by the Commission and the City.

Councilor Sorte inquired whether the Commission could meet on a quarterly basis, which would dramatically decrease staff resources. He confirmed that attendance has been good since he was appointed as Council Liaison in January.

In response to Chair York's inquiries, Ms. Altmann Hughes said she is not sure when the staff support for the Commission transferred to HR from the Police Department. In her HR experience, she has not heard of an advisory board having affirmative action oversight and could not find any information in historical materials identifying what may have been reported.

Councilor Beilstein said during Fiscal Year 1999-2000, he was the Council Liaison to the Commission. HR brought the affirmative action policies to the Commission for review. He noted that this is unusual and maybe not necessary. He does not view this as an essential function of the Commission and thought it had been eliminated from the ordinance.

Mr. Smith added that the make-up of City employment is not fully reflective of the community that the City is serving. There is room to have an advisory committee consider how to make the City more inclusive and identify impacts policy decisions have on groups that may not be represented within City government.

Councilor Sorte agreed and said OSU has an entire department, not related to HR, that deals with these types of issues. He opined that the annual celebration needs to be clearly identified in the City's calendar, there needs to be common understanding between the Commission and Community Alliance for Diversity (CAD), and the Commission should begin reporting on affirmative action to initiate oversight to make more progress.

Barry Jerkins spoke in favor of continuing the Commission for MLK. He attended the MLK celebration last year and was impressed by the organization of the event. He noted that it was well attended by students and community members and the keynote speaker was excellent. He posted pictures from the event on the Corvallis NAACP Web page. He said American history continues to be shaped by the legacy of Dr. King. He fought and died for diversity and inclusion, which is an important standard in American society. Citizens must never forget Dr. King's work. It is important to keep his dream alive for the future of Corvallis, youth of the Country, and students at OSU.

Mr. Jerkins read from testimony submitted by Keisha Merchant (Attachment 1).

Frederick Edwards requested the Committee reconsider sunsetting the MLK Commission. Sunsetting will only take the energy away from the activities the Commission is trying to accomplish. Sunsetting this Commission is appalling to talk about and it deducts from Dr. King's dream. As an African-American, he would not have been allowed to attend this meeting or marry his Finnish wife if it were not for Dr. King. He acknowledged the City's has financial issues. Mr. Edwards asked what was not good about the Commission, other than attendance.

Mr. Patterson stated one of his favorite Dr. King quotes: "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now." As part of an internal process of the sunset policy, Ms. Altmann Hughes did her job and is now representing a recommendation to this Committee, which is a subcommittee of Council. It has nothing to do with Dr. King's legacy. City staff recognize the importance of and how passionate people feel about Dr. King. Ms. Altmann Hughes agonized about this recommendation. The staff report includes alternative options for Council consideration. The spirit of the recommendation is not about a lack of respect of Dr. King's legacy and great work. Ms. Altmann Hughes went to great effort as she worked her way through this process. She considered many alternatives, including the option to partner with OSU's MLK celebration. Recommending sunsetting is not an attack on the Commission or Dr. King in any way. Mr. Patterson said he sees an opportunity for the community to learn from the youngest citizens who have the most diverse population in the community. Partnering with OSU could be a positive solution and it is up to Council to determine if and how that partnership might develop. Mr. Patterson thanked Mr. Jerkins and Mr. Edwards for attending the meeting on short notice and for speaking from their hearts.

Chair York clarified that staff makes recommendations to this Committee in a routine way for every board, committee, and commission (BCC) on a pre-set schedule. There are three Council standing committees and nine Councilors. Three Councilors serve on each standing committee. Each committee reviews sunsetting for the BCCs related to that specific committee. During the review, staff makes recommendations to continue, sunset, combine with other BCCs, etc. In this case, staff offered three options. This Committee can recommend any of the options or draft a different option for full Council approval. This Committee does not make the decision, it only forwards a recommendation.

Mr. Jerkins noted that he received an e-mail from Councilor Beilstein stating that this meeting was about sunsetting the Commission and that he would be voting against it. Mr. Jerkins said he was not aware of the process or background prior to Chair York's explanation.

In response to Mr. Jerkins' comment that the Commission is not seasonal, Councilor Beilstein said the main work of the Commission is to organize an event in January. The activity level of the Commission is higher prior to the event, but he also understands that they engage in year-round activities.

Councilor Sorte said Committee members have not discussed any of the options presented by staff. He spoke with Ms. Altmann Hughes and Mr. Smith prior to the meeting about the process and Commission goals. He believes there will be a different review process in the future. This may include looking at the goals for each BCC and deciding whether they are appropriate and what amount of staff resources are needed for each. There are opportunities for collaboration with OSU in regards to the MLK celebration and this could be something the Commission can work toward. Another consideration might be to meet quarterly or once every two months which would dramatically reduce staff support. He suggested the Commission consider whether they can function without staff support. Councilor Sorte said he is opposed to sunsetting the Commission and would consider other options.

Councilor Beilstein said he is convinced the Commission is on a good path. When he served as Council Liaison to the Commission, regular support staff was not available. He noted that the OSU MLK Celebration calendar includes the City-sponsored celebration. He stated disappointment that elected officials and staff do not attend the City's celebration. He would prefer more City involvement. He agrees that the Commission can get by with less staff support. Quarterly meetings would be appropriate except for the months just prior to the January celebration. An alternative could be that the Commission continues to meet monthly with staff support scheduled quarterly. He would oppose reducing the \$10,000 allocation, and expressed interest in an increased commitment from the City. He would support continuing the Commission as currently outlined in the Municipal Code with no amendments. He would consider a reduction in staff support which can occur without any changes to the ordinance.

Chair York said City stationery refers to the City as a community that honors diversity. She opined that it is not visible. She expressed interest in how BCCs work, how they provide an opportunity for Council to receive advice on important issues and for members of the community to express their point of view. She is interested in BCCs working efficiently, having something to say, and worth the time given by staff and volunteers. The Commission for MLK does not appear to be effective at the current time. Organizing one event is not a big enough charge for the investment of time the City and residents offer. There are other ways to organize an event, honor a legacy, and follow-through on commitment. The Commission is not living up to the charge. Councilor York said she is willing to sunset the Commission, but there would not be three votes to do so. If she voted to sunset the Commission, it would be to raise an issue about honoring diversity and how it should be integrated in our lives. She accepts keeping the Commission for now as a placeholder to ensure the diversity issue remains and Council addresses it during a comprehensive BCC review. She suggested Council give the Commission something worthwhile to do. The Commission could advise Council on how to address diversity and how to support a functioning commission. The Commission should provide structure that is worthy of the volunteer and staff time.

Councilors Beilstein and Sorte, respectively, moved and seconded to continue the Commission for Martin Luther King, Jr. for another four years, recommend staff review options to reduce the staff commitment, and continue the \$10,000 annual allocation.

Chair York said she cannot support the motion since it does not ask the Commission to do anything different until the next sunset.

Councilor Sorte the Commission has already started conversations with CAD and they recently installed a kiosk in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park that will require maintenance. Earlier this year, Dr. Teryl Ross spoke to the Commission about diversity next steps in Corvallis. Councilor Sorte opined that affirmative action in Corvallis needs some type of oversight.

Chair York clarified that the Commission's charge already includes affirmative action oversight.

Councilor Sorte said he would be receptive to expanding the Commission's charge; however, he believes the charge is adequate.

Chair York said she is not suggesting HSC revise the charge. She would prefer the Commission review their purpose and charge and made a recommendation to HSC for change.

Chair York and Councilor Sorte, respectively, moved and seconded to amend the motion to direct the Commission for Martin Luther King, Jr. to review its charge and forward recommendations to HSC on ways the mission can be better met.

The amended motion passed unanimously.

Chair York made a friendly amendment to the main motion to "suggest" staff review options to reduce support staff costs, possibly reducing the number of meetings. Councilors Beilstein and Sorte accepted the friendly amendment.

Mr. Patterson added that this discussion is exactly how a sunset review should occur. This vigorous, comprehensive, robust debate has resulted in new and positive relationships. It is important that the Commission and staff discuss Council's desire for the Commission to be more successful and achieve its goals.

Councilor Beilstein said most people believe the purpose of affirmative action is to create a diverse work force. The purpose is to prevent organizations from being sued for discrimination. It is not a matter of having a diverse workforce, it is demonstrating that the City is not biased in hiring and firing processes. Sometimes affirmative action misses the goal of creating a diverse workforce because they are more concerned with ensuring the organization is not in danger of being sued. Creating a goal to increase the City's diverse workforce to match the population it is serving is a good goal, but is not accomplished through affirmative action.

Human Services Committee
June 4, 2013
Page 8 of 8

Chair York noted that in her experience, affirmative action was viewed with the goal of a diverse work force, not avoiding lawsuits.

The main motion passed unanimously.

III. Other Business

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 pm.

The next Human Services Committee meeting is scheduled for 2:00 pm on Tuesday, June 18 in the Madison Avenue Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Penny York, Chair

Dear City of Corvallis

In regarding to the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission having a place in Corvallis. I have been a resident of Corvallis or the Linn-Benton area for the past 1995 to present. I have noticed that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "I have a Dream" goals and initiatives are kept alive by the Commission. As you know, Corvallis struggles with the spirit of inclusivity. People in the community do not feel as a general population welcomed or embraced, and celebrated for their unique qualities of race, sex or class.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. may be seen as a black man being celebrated, but he is more. He is a morale spirit that runs deep in every city that protects his vision for people to be judged by their motives, intent and not the construction of others. It is to my disappointed that I have seen Corvallis not value the efforts of this commission to assist the City to keep peaceful ties to the ever growing multiculturalism that is happening on campus and sprinkle down in the community.

Yes, I am aware that many organizations have their celebrations of the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but it is not the morale of the city. It is in my encouragement and recommendation this Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Commission appointed by the City continue to be protected as a historical monument of the pursuit of the American Dream to have a dream to be protected by the city, under the law, and within reason for character, morale and trust; and not discriminated by a construction by men and women who fail to identify the truth that freedom reigns in unity and not division.

It is to my statement that I have taken the time to continue to ask everyone to protect this "I Have A Dream" morale by keeping programs alive and commissions that have initiatives that best exemplify unity bonding and inclusive for multiculturalism. We are an interdependent community that count on the city to be a leader in their initiatives to remind people it is not by a construction of blinded men and women that keep us unified, prospered and sustained, but through the morale of character and responsibility to be a Samaritan citizen of the community and at large of the city.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s park was in question years ago, and I am proud to see our city continue to keep the park. All of the country, cities are embracing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in their city's initiatives as a symbolic descriptor of their own mission, vision and values: objectives and goals to remind cities that they are leaders of change management systems to increase unity and decrease division which ultimately becomes a stronger system against crime and conflict. It is before us today, to reflect as decision makers, ethical actors, what would it take to keep initiatives alive that best represent and remind others of the race at hand, "I have a Dream" will always be one of the strongest morale spirits in this city keeping people in remembrance that we did not come this far in the race to quit. Keep the dream alive, and keep the commission in business for our generations of tomorrow. The rainbow reminds us that we have a covenant with God that the earth will not be destroyed but protected as a citizen of the universe, therefore, we need a reminder that we have a covenant with each other, government, community members, students and overall each other, that unity is more profitable than division.

Much Love,

Your Long standing Resident, Ms. K
Keisha L. Merchant
06/04/2013