

Human Relations Commission
Remote via Zoom
Live streamed via Facebook
Minutes of March 25, 2021 Regular Meeting

Meeting called to order by Werksma at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Madigan Lautzenheiser (present in Nunica, MI), Barbara Lee-VanHorssen, Louann Werksma, Shyle Lyons, Wes McGee, Angela Tran, Rhonda Kleyn. Each member indicated verbally his or her city and state location as Grand Haven, MI unless noted.

Absent: Reyna Masko

Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved with the following changes: Liaison report moved to 6a and added item 8b, research request from Grand Haven facilities manager Todd Brand. Motion by VanHorssen, Seconded by Tran, all in favor.

Approval of Minutes of February 25 meeting: Motion by Lee-VanHorssen, Seconded by Lyons, all in favor.

Welcome Guests: Mike Dora, Grand Haven City Council, Robert Monetza, Grand Haven Mayor, Ashley Latsch, Assistant to the City Manager, Ryan Cummins, Grand Haven City Council, Todd Brand, City of Grand Haven Facilities Manager, Spencer Wheelock, Wood TV8.

General call to the audience-No comments at this time.

New Business Item 6a

Liaison Report-Grand Haven Public Safety Sergeant Lee Adams gave a report about Nixle. Nixle is a platform for the delivery of alerts, advisories, community type messages and local traffic information from your local police department. Nixle is used to get information to people who are signed up. Adams reported it has not been used as much recently as Facebook. Residents can sign up on the Grand Haven Public Safety website to used Nixle.

Old Business :

- a. **Strategic Plan**-No survey results, Tabled
- b. **Town Hall update**- Lee-Vanhorsen provided an update from the February Town Hall. This month was the second in a series of three on the topic of Racism in the Justice System. The event had 135 registrants and 100 participants.
- c. **Visionary Award update** – The presentation of award recipients and plaques went well. The video (produced by Dennis Threadgill with HRC assistance from Lyons, Masko, Lautzenheiser and Werksma) was excellent. Gabrielle Scott is the 2021 student recipient and John Martin, Director of Loutit Library is the adult recipient. The plaque is currently in Kleyn's office and needs repairs. It was poorly made. Werksma is working to confirm that the original art is owned

by the City. Werksma suggested the art be permanently loaned to the Loutit Library for display at the library and the commission agreed.

- d. **Commission Recruitment**-Redick and Werksma created a matrix, which will be used to help fill HRC openings. The interviewer will use the matrix. The group discussed the matrix and added some categories.
- e. **Ottawa County Gateways for Growth Nominees due**-The group did not have any additional nominees. Kleyn explained the current nominees have been emailed regarding the application process.

New Business:

- a. **Musical Fountain Family Friendly Standards**- Recently it was brought to the attention of the City that the Grand Haven Musical Fountain music policy may have some inappropriate language that discourages inclusiveness. The City of Grand Haven Facilities Manager Todd Brand asked the HRC to help review the policy and make suggestions for improvements. Werksma presented a thorough review with recommendations (attached). Brand thanked the group for their work.
- b. **Boy Scout Artwork**-City of Grand Haven Facilities Manager Todd Brand explained he has received communication that the artwork (Statue of "McKenzie Boy Scout" on Chinook Pier near Farmer's Market) should be removed from City property as it represents a discriminatory group. The HRC formed a subcommittee of members McGee, Redick and Lautzenheiser to research the history of the artwork and possibly other Boy Scout structures that may be deemed controversial. The subcommittee will provide a report at the April HRC meeting.
- c. **Expenses and Account Balance**-Kleyn gave a report of current expenses and account balance.
- d. **Communication/Correspondence Reports**-Lyons reported the social media engagement numbers. The visionary award posts had the most engagement.
- e. **Agency Updates** – Werksma talked about the 2021 MI ALICE report that was released on March 23, 2021. The report shows Ottawa County has 30% ALICE households and the City of Grand Haven is 43%. Lee-VanHorssen talked about an initiative with the Ottawa County Suicide Prevention Program. They are doing a direct mailer to 115,000 residences referring people to 211 to find help. Kleyn gave three updates regarding COVID 19 financial hardships. Rental assistance is available through Salvation Army and Good Samaritan Ministries. The federal government American Rescue Plan will have a Homeowner Assistance Fund to help homeowners transition from their mortgage forbearances. And, a bill has been introduced at the state level to add "source of income" as a fair housing protected class, which is good news for renters.

Second Call to the Audience - no comments.

Motion to adjourn at 7:19pm by Lee-VanHorssen, seconded by McGee, all in favor.

Next meeting April 22, 2021 via Zoom at 5:30 p.m.

ATTACHMENT

Date: March 25, 2021
To: Todd Brand, Dept of Public Works/City Liaison to Musical Fountain Committee
From: Human Relations Commission
Re: Recommendations for Changes to Grand Haven Musical Fountain Website's "Family Friendly Standards" Section

The Grand Haven Musical Fountain is an attraction that draws visitors of all ages from all over the world. Because of our very diverse audience, the Grand Haven Musical Fountain is dedicated to keeping our selection of music and themed shows family friendly and "suitable for general audiences." The Grand Haven Musical Fountain Committee has set a standard of family friendly music, which is defined below:

- Lyrics must not contain obscenity, racial slurs or words that denigrate individuals or groups of people.
- Lyrics must be free of words generally regarded as inappropriate in American culture.
- Lyrics must be free of references to sexual activity.
- Lyrics must be free of references to drug use, the sale of drugs or drug solicitation.
- Lyrics must be free of language that encourages or mentions acts of violence or any other illegal acts.

While considering a song to include in a program, please think about the people who will be listening to the program, both those who attend the performances as well as others in the vicinity, as the fountain's speakers can be heard throughout the downtown area. The Grand Haven Musical Fountain Committee reserves the right to determine if a program meets the above guidelines.

RESOURCES

Obscenity is a category of speech unprotected by the First Amendment. Obscenity laws are concerned with prohibiting lewd, filthy, or disgusting words or pictures.

Fcc.gov:

It is a violation of federal law to air obscene programming at any time. It is also a violation of federal law to broadcast indecent or profane programming during certain hours. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines indecent speech as material that, in context, depicts or describes sexual or excretory organs or activities in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium.

<https://www.freedomforuminstitute.org/about/faq/what-is-the-legal-definition-of-obscenity/>

What is the legal definition of obscenity?

The U.S. Supreme Court set up a test for obscenity in its 1973 decision *Miller v. California*. The Court provided three “basic guidelines”:

- Whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest
- Whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law
- Whether the work, taken as whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value

These different guidelines are sometimes called the prurient-interest, patently offensive and serious-value prongs of the Miller test.