

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Community Engagement Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES

December 16, 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:42 PM
- B. WELCOME:
Commissioners share updates from their personal lives.
- C. ROLL CALL:
Karen Cooley-Kistler_X_ Julie Ebbesen_X_ Curt Stockford_X_ Mishy Wang_X_
Rebecca Leighton_X_ Denise King_X_
- STAFF PRESENT:
Elke Johnson_X_
- COUNCIL LIAISON:
Melanie Leehy_X_
- D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- Motion to approve – Leighton, Second – King unanimously approved
- E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
- October 21, 2024 Community Engagement Commission Meeting Minutes
 - November 18, 2024 Community Engagement Commission Meeting Minutes
- Motion to approve – King, Second – Leighton, unanimously approved
- F. AGENDA
- Unfinished business
 1. Human Rights Day Recap
 - a. Stockford & Leighton – kudos to Johnson for the coordination and execution of the event
 - b. Stockford - was well attended, and attendees genuinely appreciated the service that the city provided.
 - c. Johnson – a program that the state started, and the county has waived the fee and Just Deeds has offered to provide attorneys to volunteer.
 - d. Cooley-Kistler – everyone commented about the fact that we had hot pizza

- e. Johnson - 100 people signed up, 50% maybe did not need to come in. Many people stayed for the Mapping Prejudice presentation. Mapping Prejudice does have volunteers to help with their program. Will chat with Amber in the new year to see how to move forward since we do not have the resources that some larger cities have. It is complex because every property is different, so it is time-consuming and there are multiple parties to complete the project
- f. Stockford - Falcon Heights is the city with the highest number of racial covenants per capita
- g. Leehy - lets understand that the "per capita" number is not something to dwell on an emotional tie and false sense of guilt. The atmosphere at the event was great because you weren't just hearing data and getting information; you could do something about it. That was the difference.
- h. Stockford - the other important point is that the redlining and covenants are illegal today, but now the discharging is telling others that you are taking personal accountability for making the change.
- i. Leehy - last council meeting, became very welcome as a new resident. This is another element
- j. Johnson - Just Deeds liked the event and how it was managed
- k. Stockford - this is a great model for other cities to follow
- l. King - as we reduce that percentage, we should consider announcing that reduction and have information about the program at each event we do moving forward. It is an important way for us to continue building a welcoming community
- m. Leehy - can we add information to the website - reducing redlining and erasing racial covenants?
- n. Johnson - we will need to track this independently. Mapping Prejudice does not update their map after updates have been documented. We will work to do what we can to track the information. Planning to continue working on this project.
- o. Stockford - feels it is important that there is agreement between elected and staff officials that this will continue to be an active project
- p. King - we need to continue to communicate this to residents as part of our CEC work
- q. Leehy - maybe once a year, the commission suggests to the council that we bring visibility to the project

2. Apartment Outreach

- a. Leehy - ready to bring this up to the council to let them know that we will be bringing this up
- b. Johnson - brought this up at the last City Council workshop. The information was warmly received
- c. Leehy - we need to share the proposed schedule, and council will sign up for the dates they are available for.
- d. King - we have 14 properties or property clusters. Suggests starting with largest properties and ask for already scheduled events that we

might be able to participate in. Smaller properties may require us to be more precise and specific about when and where we would be able to connect with residents. Larger facilities most likely have indoor gathering areas that we can make use of for inclement or cold weather. Looking at Feb, Mar, Apr, May, June, Sept, Oct

- e. Leehy - consider August for Night to Unite month
- f. Johnson - some cities have a Night to Unite event at City Hall or in a park
- g. Leehy - previously had events in the City Hall green space and those were successful. Made great connections and recruited commissioners
- h. Johnson - has considered holding a small event on Night to Unite for those who don't have an event. Next year, we may also have St. Anthony police, and we can do ice cream and something small.
- i. Stockford - we need a division of responsibility to contact the properties
- j. Leehy - suggests defining roles so not everything falls on one person or city staff
- k. King - volunteers to call larger properties for information sharing and gathering.
- l. Stockford - thanks King and suggests to reach out to ask for help sooner than later
- m. Leehy - suggests any volunteer to come to City Hall to make calls so caller ID shows that the call is official.
- n. King and Leighton - will share the responsibility to make contact.
- o. Wang - does not plan to be a part of the commission next year so will not be able to make the calls.
- p. Leehy - make sure to ask about an on-site caretaker
- q. King - Once we get these
- r. Leehy - Do we have the safety in apartments and new resident handbooks? We can offer those to the contacts from properties if they would like them.
- s. Johnson - will see if we can get some of the new police force available for these events
- t. Leighton & King - will make calls to see if they are interested and check availability. Will share information and proposed dates. Then, the information will be shared with the council. After that, we will start scheduling dates and requesting council member availability.
- u. King - will build spreadsheet and script for King and Leighton to work from.
- v. King and Leighton - Will review the information from calls at the next meeting then assign other roles and responsibilities.
- w. Johnson has requested a budget for giveaways
 - i. Suggestions
 1. Stickers
 2. Magnets
 3. Pens
 4. Chip clip magnets

- x. Leehy – St. Anthony will have a non-emergency number that we should share once they are covering our city.
 - y. Johnson will provide “badges” for commissioners when we are planning to be present at these events or other city activates
- New Business
 - 3. 2025 CEC Goals and Tentative Meeting Calendar
 - a. Johnson - Wang and Kistler plan to step down from the commission. That will leave 3 vacancies, making reaching a quorum challenging. We will need to start recruiting commissioners
 - b. Leighton - will be attending a gathering of residents that may be interested
 - c. King - will post on the Falcon Heights Neighborhood page and Nextdoor
 - d. Leehy – suggests reaching out to neighborhood liaisons to ask them to share the openings with their block or network.
 - e. Johnson - will reach out to the individuals who have registered for Night to Unite or requested barricades.
 - f. Johnson - will send calendar notes for the 2025 meetings and events.
 - g. Johnson – at next meeting we will discuss other goals for the year, officer assignments and Spring Together
 - h. Leehy – asks Wang to send notes to Johnson and Stockford for any feedback about commission.

G. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

H. ADJOURNMENT: 8:16 PM

Motion to adjourn – Ebbesen, Second – Leighton, unanimously approved

Next Regular Meeting is on Monday, March 17 at 6:30 PM