

City of Lakewood, Ohio

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Held: City Hall, Lakewood, Ohio
March 18, 2008

Pursuant to notice duly given, a meeting of the Community Relations Advisory Commission (the "Commission") was held on March 18, 2008.

Chairpersons Greenwell and Shaffer-Gill presided over the meeting. Attending the meeting were the following members of the Commission: Nickie Antonio (Lakewood Councilwoman At-Large), Don Carlson, Steve Greenwell, Nahida Farunia, Lisa Shaffer-Gill, Kyle Weigand and Melissa Garrett (Office of Community Relations). Notice having been duly given and a quorum being present, the Chairpersons called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. local time.

Attendance was taken.

Mr. Weigand moved to table the approval of minutes from October and November meetings of the Commission; Ms. Shaffer-Gill seconded.

A discussion of the membership of the Commission and how to proceed with expired terms ensued. Expiring terms included Messrs. Brennan, Greenwell and Timieski. Mr. Greenwell stated he would be willing to continue on in a sub-committee capacity. Ms. Whisman informed the Commission that she would no longer be able to fulfill her obligation due to conflicts. Open positions of the Commission will be discussed with the Mayor and other appointing councilpersons.

Brief discussions ensued regarding conversations with new administration in block club-type settings as well as Councilwoman Antonio discussed possible involvement with the Diversity Center's walk/run in May, 2008. Participation would be on an individual basis.

It was re-established that regular meeting dates of the Commission are to be set for every second Tuesday of the month, throughout 2008, except for the months of July and August, in the Jury Room of City Hall at 6:30 P.M. unless otherwise amended.

Ms. Shaffer-Gill discussed the Heights Community Congress presentation which lead to conversation about how to involve our own community members in such an organized event like a forum or smaller talking groups. The challenge is how to get those who don't often get involved to, in fact, get involved (otherwise the same several people are in attendance and nothing "new" gets discussed or presented). It was decided that more standardized/regular programming must be planned in order for us to garner support and exposure for the Commission and its mission/goals.

Mr. Carlson began a discussion about the Speakers' Series event. Mr. Carlson and various other Commission members felt it was essential to solicit larger organizations within the community (with resources etc.) to partner up with us to both sponsor the event and even help with advertising the events; to pick a venue with some visibility to it (i.e. the hospital, the auditorium, a new school etc.); and start out the series with "non-scary" or non-intimidating topics...topics that will garner discussions but not cause tension or riots, per se.

Along the lines of brainstorming on how to get the word out about the Commission and its mission/goals, it was discussed that a possibility would be to attempt to gather up all of the materials and information about all groups/organizations in the city including churches, ethnic organizations etc. and try to consolidate it into a mass distribution that could go out in the Welcome to Lakewood package.

Briefly discussed was the idea of the "old, but now new again" Community Gardens that are being discussed around the City. It was decided that it was an excellent use for underutilized or abandoned land and it would be looked into further in the future to get people in the community together.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, at approximately 8:00 p.m., Ms. Shaffer-Gill declared the meeting adjourned and Mr. Weigand seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Weigand", written over a horizontal line.

Kyle A. Weigand, Secretary
Lakewood Community Relations Advisory
Commission