

City of Lakewood, Ohio

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Held: City Hall, Lakewood, Ohio
June 10, 2008

Pursuant to notice duly given, a meeting of the Community Relations Advisory Commission (the "Commission") was held on June 10, 2008.

Chairpersons Nicklos and Shaffer-Gill presided over the meeting. Attending the meeting were the following members of the Commission: Nickie Antonio (Lakewood City Councilwoman At-Large), Moira Dugan, Nahida Farunia, D.L. Meckes, Lisa Shaffer-Gill and Kyle Weigand. Nadia Zaiem, by invitation of Ms. Antonio, was also in attendance. Notice having been duly given and a quorum being present, the Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. local time.

Attendance was taken.

The Mission Statement of the Commission was recited.

Mr. Weigand moved to approve the minutes of the March and April meetings of the Commission, as amended; Ms. Shaffer-Gill seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The annual report to City Council (mandated by the governing ordinance and Bylaws of the Commission) was discussed and developed. Topics that will be presented by Ms. Shaffer-Gill and Mr. Weigand to the June 16, 2008 meeting of Council would consist of a presentation of the group's Mission Statement, ratification of the Bylaws and discussion of the Speakers Series, Community Conversations and various additional brainstorming and ideas that the Commission has had since inception. We will discuss visits from Heights Community Congress and the City of Cleveland's Community Relations Division, as well as the upcoming Diversity Potluck. A letter asking for permission to address council on the matter was also drafted. Much discussion and drafting took place.

The Community Organizations database/webpage, in conjunction with the Lakewood Observer (essentially a compilation of a database of all cultural, social, inclusive groups) was also briefly discussed and it was decided unanimously that further discussion would be tabled until the September meeting of the Commission.

Mmes. Antonio, Farunia and Shaffer-Gill discussed the Community Conversations Diversity Potluck event taking place at Lakewood Park's Women's Pavilion on June 26, 2008. Sponsors for the event are the City, the Schools and Lakewood Hospital. Fliers for the event were finalized and distributed, as well as a press release prepared by Ms. Melissa Garrett. Donations were secured for the event and a meeting at Ms. Farunia's home was

scheduled for the evening of June 17th. Various discussion took place.

A brief discussion regarding the Speakers Series was conducted and Mmes. Nicklos and Shaffer-Gill determined that it was important to keep dates open for the fall (so no conflicts with the City or school etc. will arise). Details for the Series will be finalized at the September meeting.

Ms. Shaffer-Gill discussed the Community Gardens and the effort lead by LEAF and the City. The City has designated many plots throughout the City for the gardens (in Birdtown, Webb Park etc.). A list was available through the City. It was unanimously decided that the Commission would promote the Gardens through word of mouth and encourage involvement since the community-building and neighborly aspect of the Gardens resounds with the Commission's mission statement. Brief discussion took place.

Lastly, Ms. Antonio introduced Ms. Nadia Zaiem, the Cleveland Field Organizer for the Arab American Institute. Ms. Zaiem spoke to the Commission members about her role as an Organizer in getting the word out to Arab-American people in greater Cleveland and the greater region as a whole that they must get involved in politics and make themselves aware of the important issues facing them. She is having people sign a petition that discusses all the important issues that have an influence on Arab-Americans. Ms. Zaiem confirmed that there was a large and influential group of Arab-Americans in Lakewood and she found that many are getting involved more and she encourages them to do so.

The next regular meeting of the Commission is to be held September 9, 2008.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Kyle A. Weigand, Secretary
Lakewood Community Relations Advisory
Commission