

Minutes, Community Relations Commission of Goshen
Goshen City Hall, Feb. 9, 2010 – 7:39 PM

Present: Sreekala Rajagopalan, George Smucker, Chic Lantz, Miguel Millan, Richard Aguirre
Darin Short – CRC Consultant

Absent: Joe Liechty, Laura Oyer, Dixie Robinson, Glenn Null

1. Richard called the meeting to order at 7:39 PM.
(Note: A lack of quorum prevented the meeting from being called to order until Chic Lantz arrived at 7:39 p.m. Chic earlier attended another city meeting.)
 - Agenda reviewed & accepted.
 - The scheduled opening reflection by George Smucker was deferred until the March meeting.
2. Review of January minutes – Minutes were reviewed and accepted. (Sreekala, Miguel, carried)
3. Treasurer’s Report – The report was distributed. Sreekala noted that \$2,000 was dispersed for the Peacemakers program and \$2,000 for CRC consultant Darin Short. The 2010 budget has \$26,450, plus \$12,860 encumbered for the previous calendar year for a total of \$39,310.
4. Reports and Statistics – Phone activity – None
Discrimination reports – None
Referrals – None
Diversity Day — Sreekala said Diversity Day will be May 8 at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds. She said planning continues to go well and a site visit is planned for April to help determine the placement of booths. A new idea is being explored — a road run, which was proposed by Maria Schirch. Donations continue to be difficult to obtain. About \$1,200 has been raised, but the Diversity Day donations account has a balance of \$8,123, and that will more than cover expenses.
5. Proposed criteria for Diversity Day exhibitors/participants were discussed, but action was deferred to the March meeting so more CRC members could participate in any decision. Darin, Sreekala and Joe may meet to discuss the criteria before the next CRC meeting.
6. Gilberto Pérez of Northeastern Center, Inc. discussed the “Talk it Out” program. Perez has lived in Goshen for eight years and the Northeastern Center opened a Goshen office in September 2009. Perez described the “Talk it Out” program and its work with adults and children to help them cope with stress, depression and other mental health issues related to the economic downturn. Northeastern has increased its services in Goshen and may offer a program in conjunction with LaCasa. CRC members commended Perez for his efforts.
7. The discussion of the proposed criteria/procedures for CRC funding proposals was deferred to the March meeting so more CRC members could participate in the discussion and any decision.
8. Darin discussed ways to increase communication to the community about the CRC, including a business card and magnet. Revised samples were passed around. Darin will get cost estimates to produce the card and magnet, so a decision can be made at the March meeting.

9. Partnerships with Goshen neighborhoods – Darin spoke about the increasing values of CRC members making informational presentations to neighborhood associations. Chic and George endorsed the value of such presentations. Sreekala noted that CRC business cards and magnets could be distributed as part of such presentations. Darin will continue to explore the issue so that CRC members can begin attending association meetings.
10. Floor open for public comment - None
11. Closing comments –
 - Miguel suggested inviting Goshen Police Chief Wade Branson to address the CRC regarding neighborhood crime issues. Miguel stated that he would like to learn the extent of crime problems in certain neighborhoods. Chic, Sreekala and George endorsed the suggestion. Richard agreed to check with Chief Branson and to ask whether the chief can appear before the CRC in April or afterward.
 - Darin stated that he believes the CRC and neighborhood association representations should co-sponsor a conversation café.
14. Motion to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. (Chic, Miguel, carried)

Minutes submitted by Richard R. Aguirre, CRC chair.