

**Minutes**  
**Minnetonka Community Commission**  
**Meeting of March 29, 2010**

**1. Roll Call**

Commission members present: David Hakensen, Betty Johnson, Michael Kelly, Heather Odland, Barb Westmoreland, Melissa Williamson-Herren

Commission members absent: Paul Ansolabehere, Marli Komarek, Paul Thyren

Staff: Jacque Larson

Chair Hakensen called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

**2. Discussion Items**

**A. Introduction of New Members**

All of the commission members introduced themselves to new members Heather Odland and Lucie Taylor.

Taylor said she recently retired after working for many years in gifted education. For 24 years she drove to Macalester College from Minnetonka, and she's pleased not to make the drive anymore. She has lived in Minnetonka for 11 years, and is also chair of the Friends of the Ridgedale Library.

Odland said she moved to Minnetonka from Minneapolis in November 2009, and when it came time to move she knew it would be to Minnetonka. She related some very positive experiences she had with the city related to the purchase of her home, and said she wanted to be on the commission in order to give back to the community.

**B. Meeting Minutes: February 22, 2010**

Prior to the meeting, Johnson found an error in Item 2E, which indicated the Reflections Award had been tabled until the February 22 meeting. It should have read that it was tabled until the March 29 meeting. This correction was made before the meeting and commission members were given a corrected copy.

Kelly moved, Johnson seconded, all voted to accept the minutes of February 22, 2010, meeting as written.

**C. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2010**

Taylor nominated David Hakensen for chair, with Kelly seconding the nomination. Hakensen accepted the nomination, but said it would only

be through the end of this year and then he would want to transition off as chair in order to allow someone else to lead the group.

Commission members unanimously voted to elect Hakensen as chair.

Current Vice-Chair Williamson-Herren said she is stepping down to allow someone else to take a leadership role. Odland volunteered to serve as vice-chair.

Taylor nominated Odland, Kelly seconded the nomination. Commission members unanimously voted to elect Odland as vice-chair.

Chair Hakensen and Vice-Chair Odland will serve in these roles until the first meeting of the commission in 2011, at which time a new chair and vice-chair will be elected.

**D. Report from Commission Members/Staff**

Westmoreland, who served as co-chair of the recent Empty Bowls fundraiser in Hopkins, reported the event raised more than \$64,000 to fight hunger in the area. The money raised will go to ICA foodshelf and to ResourceWest.

Westmoreland also talked about the recent five-part series hosted by Hopkins Schools regarding community diversity. This series was based on a Twin Cities Public Television series called Close the Gap, which is available for viewing online at <http://www.mnchannel.org/partners/closethegap/>. Westmoreland said the first session had 75 people, and the rest had 40 to 50 attendees.

Taylor asked if the city Web site was available in different languages. Larson said it was not, as there had not yet been a demand for it.

Hakensen talked more about the Close the Gap project. In his opinion the Itasca Project, which gathered the information, selectively chose data to support its assertions.

Taylor asked Hakensen if anyone had ever asked minority communities what they thought should be done to close the gap. She said she had a real problem with telling minority groups what they should do. She was in support of starting a dialogue rather than talking one way. Hakensen agreed.

Hakensen asked Westmoreland to share if she received more feedback on the program.

Johnson mentioned three recent deaths of prominent Minnetonka residents: Ty Abel (January 19); Charla Bennis (March); and David Call. Kelly mentioned he was at the Ty Abel funeral and the family had many interesting artifacts from the Minnetonka Boulevard and County Road 101 history. Johnson asked Kelly if he could talk with his family contact about making copies of the items. Kelly will follow up.

**E. Upcoming Events**

Larson reminded commission members to RSVP for the April 21 volunteer recognition dinner.

The commission decided to wait until the end of the meeting to determine if there was enough business to meet again on April 26.

**F. Photo contest proposal**

Larson explained to commission members a recent proposal received from *Lake Minnetonka Magazine* to partner with the city in hosting the annual photo contest.

Taylor asked if printed copies of the photos could be made and displayed at businesses, senior centers and other places to build interest in the contest.

Kelly suggested asking businesses to sponsor a photo display.

Taylor said it would be a good idea to approach libraries about showing photos. She asked if Hopkins or Minnetonka community education classes are encouraged to participate in the contest, then view the results.

Williamson-Herren suggested a photography tour, that would take people on a historical tour of Minnetonka and allows for photo opportunities that would then inform the entries to the photo contest.

Odland suggested guided tours of the city, similar to the specialized tours some southern cities offer (ghost tours, holiday tours, etc.).

**G. Neighborhood Initiative Program Discussion**

Larson shared with the commission members the results of four questions on the 2010 residential survey related to neighborhood activities. In one of the questions, 83% of respondents indicated they were not interested in having more neighborhood activities.

Taylor speculated about whether or not interest may change over the next five to ten years as the city's population changes.

- H. Next meeting: Monday, April 26, 2010  
Johnson talked about a “chat night” format with 15-minute presentations, then a dialogue.

Discussion of the Reflections Award was tabled again and will be discussed at a later meeting.

Taylor asked about Minnetonka Reads, and wondered if the commission had considered pursuing the very youngest readers.

Odland asked for the date of the Burwell House ice cream social, which is Saturday, June 26.

The April 26 meeting was cancelled. The next meeting of the community commission will be Monday, April 24.

**3. Adjourn**

Meeting concluded at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacque Larson  
Community Relations Manager