

**TROY ETHNIC ISSUES ADVISORY BOARD
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2008
TROY CITY HALL - CONFERENCE ROOM C**

I. Call to Order 7:10 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present:

Cathy Francois
William Lawrence
Kelly Jones
Michelle Haight
Mayada Fakhouri
Karen Yelder
Tony Haddad (7:30 pm)
Grigore Buia (8:45 pm)
Cindy Stewart, City Liaison

Absent:

Helen Yang, student rep
Lulu Guo, student rep
Reuben Ellis

Guests:

Sushma Shrestha
Jennifer Hilzinger
Sung Son
Catherine Jun
Faris Alami

III. Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2007

Motion by Kelly Jones to approve the November 13, 2007 minutes, seconded by Cathy Francois.

Motion approved with corrections: 3rd Page First Noel = Noel Night

IV. Introduction

a. Two new board members – William Lawrence & Cathy Francois

William Lawrence – Resident for 15 years, married with two children in college. Both were graduates of Troy Schools. He would like to contribute to the City of Troy.

Cathy Francois – Resident for 4 years and has been coming to meetings for more than 2 years. She is married with two kids in the Troy School District.

Guests – Jennifer Hilzinger & Sung Son – Co-chairing the Schroeder PTO Cultural Community Committee. They want to connect families at school since they noticed some segregation based on ethnicity and race. Also want to reach out to new families moving in. They started Conversation English Coffee Hour twice a month as support group.

Sung moved here 1 ½ years from Korea. It was a challenge finding grocery stores and making friends. She wants to help her kids adjust to this country.

Catherine June from Det. News is trying to push a “diversity beat” as part of the paper.

Faris Alami works for Integration Systems Mgt. Background dealing with Cultural Diversity. Speaking at schools and businesses. Presenting “I am your Neighbor” Workshop in Troy.

Sushma Shrestha volunteers within Troy, helped with 2007 Ethnicity.

V. Correspondence/Articles

VI. Old Business

a. Grant Information

Mayada has recent info from Kresge Foundation. Group/organization must be a 501(c)(3). Karen and Cindy will explore working together with Boys & Girls Club of Troy since they are a 501(c)(3).

Michelle will also check Southern Poverty Law Center about available grants.

b. Bridging the Racial Divide

Nothing to report. Remove from the agenda for time being.

VII. New Business

a. Troy School District Update

Karen has no updates since she & Michelle spoke with Joe Duda & Lara Dixon (new Athens High School Principal). Michelle and Karen will follow-up with additional meetings.

Ron Keolian, Diversity Club Advisor (Athens), working with Michelle at Barnard to bring Athens teacher to perform at Barnard’s Diversity Fair.

Cathy’s daughter has encountered some unfortunate issues related to intolerance of students related to diversity. The great strides we feel we’re making are undone. We must get to the students about sensitivity training.

Idea for EIAB to host a day-long seminar for high school students to diversity and sensitivity training. Kelly said we should focus on the students who don’t get this opportunity for diversity training.

Cathy works in Mt. Clemens Middle School. They had an anti-bullying program. Maybe this group has a diversity or sensitivity training session. She will check if this is available. Cathy said there is more diversity in Troy than Mt. Clemens but less cohesiveness here.

Mix it Up program takes kids at school and switches things up at lunch, mixing up with who kids sit with to address diversity issues.

Michelle and Karen will report back to board at March meeting.

b. 2008 Projects and Assignments

Booth at Community Kaleidoscope – Jan. 27, 2008

EthniCity – Sept. 2008

Idea to contact other communities (Dearborn, Farmington Hills, Sterling Heights, Southfield, Ann Arbor) who have committees related to Ethnicity. Kelly will compile list of questions.

Kelly – Ann Arbor, Sterling Heights

Michelle – Southfield

Mayada – Farmington Hills

Cindy – Dearborn

Cathy – Mt. Clemens

Come back in February with some ideas/suggestions for the board.

c. Community Kaleidoscope – Jan. 27, 2008, noon-4 pm

Ethnic Issues Advisory Board Booth – need volunteers. 11:30 am – 1pm: Cathy; 1 – 2:30 pm: Mayada & Kelly; 2:30 – 4 pm: Karen & Michelle.

Need items from other countries that people could look at and touch. Dress in Ethnic clothing.

VIII. Staff Report

a. MLK Celebration of Freedom, Jan. 21 2008, 8:30 am – Athens High.

IX. Public Comment

Jen and Sung's programs could be modeled by other parents at all schools to help in diversity training. Targeted moms at home, no transportation with limited English language skills. Casual conversations – places to go, fun places to take kids, what's for dinner, dealing with their children and teachers. PTO also pays for a babysitter if any moms have non-school aged kids. Average 8-12 Moms, open to all schools.

Michelle suggested putting Conversational English program on her newsletter since it goes to all schools.

X. Upcoming projects – Update Resource Guide

XI. Member Comment

a. In the minutes, change Arab Chaldean to Arabs and Chaldeans

b. Suggestion to tape record our meetings. Council meetings and other board meetings are not transcribed verbatim. Board feels no need.

- c. Faris asked if this board has talked to Oakland County Employment Diversity Council, Oakland Intermediate School District Ethnic Committee, or Global Trade Mission (Automation Alley – automationalley.com, myglobeislocal.com) as resources.

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Karen Yelder, seconded by William Lawrence to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm. Meeting adjourned.

Michelle Haight, EIAB Chair

Cindy Stewart, EIAB Recording Secretary