



**COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS  
COMMISSION**  
CITY OF GOSHEN

## **Community Relations Commission City of Goshen, Indiana**

### **Annual Report – 2015**

#### **Mission**

To foster a climate of positive community relationships and non-discrimination in which all Goshen citizens enjoy equal opportunity for education, employment, access to public conveniences, accommodations and real property.

#### **Origin and Background**

The Community Relations Commission (CRC) was created by Ordinance 4201, “An Ordinance Creating the Goshen Community Relations Commission and Prescribing the Powers and Duties of the Commission,” adopted by the Common Council on April 13, 2004. Goshen was the 23<sup>rd</sup> Indiana city to establish a human/community relations commission. Mayor Allan Kauffman convened the first meeting on August 17, 2004.

#### **CRC Principles**

- Respect for each other and respect for each other’s rights
- Open communication and engagement
- Honesty
- A safe community
- Acceptance that change has positive and negative consequences
- Tolerance of differences
- Support for equality and freedom from discrimination

#### **CRC Activity in 2015**

**Latino Neighborhood Outreach:** In January the Commission approved a funding agreement for a joint effort between Bienvenido Community Solutions and LaCasa, Inc. to increase Latino participation in neighborhood associations. The initial effort focuses on the Historic South Side, Community of East Goshen, West Goshen, Rieth Park, and Chamberlain Neighborhoods.

**Sundown Resolution:** Following 5 months of discussion and editing in collaboration with authors Dan Shenk and Lee Roy Berry, community members and City Council members, the

CRC voted unanimously in March to approve the Resolution and recommend it to the City Council.

**Taste of Goshen: May First Friday:** In May the Commission expanded its' annual Taste of Goshen to include musical performances in addition to the popular food offerings. Dos Hermanos, the Dean's List, and Los Ortega provided entertainment in Ignition Garage while



hundreds of people enjoyed food offerings from cultures represented in Goshen's population. These included Palestinian, Korean, Mexican, El Salvadoran, Bolivian, Ukrainian, and Indonesian as well as an international tea tasting sponsored by Honey's.

**Vision 2025:** Darin Short, consultant to the CRC, led data gathering through surveys and small group dialogues. This process completed in 2015 with 862 total surveys submitted, and approximately 150 participants in 16 small group dialogues. David Lind, professor of sociology at Goshen College along with recent graduate Twila Albrecht provided analysis of the data gathered in a report submitted to Council members late in 2015. Steering Committee used this report in crafting the following Vision statement, adopted by the CRC in December:

**Goshen is a vibrant and dynamic community. Together we strive to**

- **Strengthen our social and economic resources.**
- **Promote vitality, safety, and wholeness.**
- **Engage, embrace and celebrate our cultural commonalities and differences.**
- **Address challenges to our common good.**

There is a lot of effort and content packed into these 5 lines; the Commission wishes to extend gratitude to those who served on the Steering Committee (listed below) as well as those who participated in any part of the process. The process of uncovering the vision was valuable as it allowed the CRC to more deeply engage with a broad cross section of the community.

Vision 2025 Steering Committee Members:

1. Alan Metcalfe-Goshen Community Schools
2. Mario Mora-Goshen Police Department
3. Mary Gilbert-Rieth Park Neighborhood Association
4. Jim Siegman-Horizon Education Alliance
5. Araceli Lepe-Goshen Community Schools
6. S. Rocio Diaz-Goshen College
7. Joe Miller-Maple City Chapel
8. Mark Lindemood-IU Goshen Health
9. Brad Weirich-Maple City Market
10. Glenn Null-CRC
11. Nathan Mateer Rempel-CRC
12. Sandra McMasters-CRC

**Neighbor to Neighbor Mediation:** In December the Commission awarded \$500 to LaCasa for use in paying for mediation in disputes arising in neighborhood settings. This is a 6-month pilot program headed by LaCasa’s neighborhood outreach coordinator Jose Elizalde. Unspent funds, if any will be returned at the end of the grant period.

**Other items of note:**

- Darin Short presented on Goshen’s Sundown Resolution process to the Indiana Consortium of State and Local Human Rights Agencies Conference in June.
- The Commission was involved in discussions around extending civil rights protections to the LGBT community by City Council ordinance, included understanding the legal role of the Community Relations Commission.
- The CRC continues to recognize the need for greater awareness of its presence, and began developing a marketing strategy in August.
- Commissioners held a retreat in November to develop a timeline of next steps in adopting and pursuing the Vision 2025.
- Revised the Memorandum of Understanding with Darin Short to more accurately reflect expected duties, and provide objective measures for evaluation.
- Nathan Mateer Rempel, CRC chair presented on the Vision 2025 process at LaCasa’s annual neighborhood leadership brunch.

**Upcoming Initiatives**

**Diversity Events:** The CRC is continuing with its expanded role with Downtown Goshen for First Friday events this coming May. The May event is branded as ‘Taste of Goshen’ after the CRC’s annual event. In addition to our usual tent featuring a variety of ethnic foods, we are sponsoring musical performances, as well as sharing the newly minted Vision with the community

**Continuation of Community Project Support from CRC:** In the past the CRC has made monies available for community projects or initiatives particularly where those projects interact with our Mission, Vision, and Principles.

**Goshen Vision 2025:** While we develop methods of publicizing the Vision in the community, we are working to prioritize elements of the Vision that most directly intersect with our Mission and Strategic plan.

**Financial Summary**

Private Funds, Grants and Donations

Balance, January 1, 2015	\$	8041.29
Return Check		50.00
Interest Earned		1.98
Interra Donation		
Total Expenses		0
Balance, December 31, 2014	\$	8093.27

Public Funds

Balance, January 1, 2015	\$	0
Encumbrances from 2014		13,214.00
Income		34,000.00
Total Expenses		<u>(27,536.00)</u>
Balance, December 31, 2015	\$	<u>19,678.00</u>
Encumbrances from 2015 to 2016	\$	15,200.00
Return to General Fund	\$	4478.00

**Statistics**

**Commissioner Meeting Attendance**

The Commission held 12 public meetings in 2015. Average attendance for the year was 73%, 10 points lower than the average for 2014.

Commissioner	Ja	Fe	Ma	Ap	My	Jn	Jl	Au	Se	Oc	No	De	Tot	% P
Bryce Gast	A	1	A	A	1	1	1	A	1	1	1	1	8	67
Sandra MacMasters	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	A	1	1	1	11	92
Nathan Mateer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	100
Rempel														
Sreekala	A	A	A	A	A	1	1	1	1	A	1	A	5	42
Rajagopalan														
George Smucker	A	A	1	1	A	1	1	A	1	A	1	1	7	58
Bob Rademaker	1	A	1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	2	67
Kelly Huffman	1	A	1	1	A	1	1	A	1	A	1	1	8	67
Ed Ahlersmeyer	1	1	1	A	1	1	1	1	A	1	1	1	10	83
Anne H Berry	x	1	1	1	1	1	A	1	1	1	1	A	9	82
Members Total	5	5	7	5	5	8	7	5	6	5	7	6		73
Guests & Others	4	6	10	1	2	2	8	4	2	1	8	3		

**Incidence and Prevalence of Discrimination**

The CRC is mandated (Ordinance 4201) to receive and process complaints of discrimination related to employment, real estate, education, public accommodation and credit on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, and familial status. Monitoring the frequency, trends and nature of complaints is an assessment of the extent of discrimination, thus identifying needs for education and community building.

The primary tool for receiving information about discrimination is a private and confidential phone reporting/recording or email system advertised on the CRC website.

**Results**

The Commission received no calls or emails related to specific incidents of discrimination in 2014. We did receive calls related to issues between tenant and landlords, and wrongful termination, and other miscellaneous inquiries that we were able to forward to the appropriate offices. In addition we received one report of racist graffiti in a public park and one report of possible discrimination related to access to voting. The graffiti was abated. In vetting the

complaint of discrimination with local attorney Felipe Merino, it was determined that the voting access issue was one of poll worker training and not of discrimination.

**Meetings** (*unless announced otherwise*)

- Monthly on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M.
- Goshen City Hall, Conference Room, 202 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Goshen.

All community members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Commission Members on December 31, 2015**

**Common Council Appointments and Terms** (year ends December 31)

Sandra MacMasters (2013-2015)  
Sreekala K Rajagopalan (2013-2015)  
Ed Ahlersmeyer (2013-2015)  
Kelly Huffman (2015-2017)

**Mayor Allan Kauffman's Appointments and Terms**

Bryce Gast (2014-2016)  
Bob Rademaker (2014-2016) \*resigned in March 2015  
Anne H. Berry (2015-2017)  
George Smucker (2013-2015)  
Nathan Mateer Rempel (2015-2017)

**2015 Officers**

Chairperson: Nathan Mateer  
Rempel  
Vice-chair: George Smucker  
Treasurer: Bryce Gast  
Secretary: Ed Ahlersmeyer\*  
Diversity Day Advisor: Sreekala  
Rajagopalan  
Ambassadors at Large: Sandra MacMasters  
Bryce Gast  
Bob Rademaker  
Anne H. Berry

\*-Liaison to City Council

**2015 Volunteers and Donors**

Beth Berry  
Ignition Music Garage  
Dos Hermanos  
Los Ortega  
The Dean's List  
Honey's Frozen Desserts  
David Lind  
Twila Albrecht  
Lee Roy Berry  
Dan Shenk

---

Adopted by the Goshen Community Relations Commission March 2016