

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2016, IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING.

The meeting began at 7:39 p.m.

Members present were: Rick Ransom, Kevin Hammett, Jamie Krauk, Dan Hamlin, Janet Jacobs-Parker, Sherry Burks, Dea Zugby, Edward Putens, Council Liaison and David Moran, Staff Liaison.

Syrian Refugee Referral

Rick provided a document from Mellissa Ehrenreich outlining potential action steps which CRAB could consider.

Ed distributed some handouts he picked up at the NLC Congress of Cities.

CRAB reviewed each action step and developed a list of possible next steps as follows:

1. Building Community through Events & Service Projects.
2. Host a potluck.
3. Develop data on foreign born residents.
4. Update the Welcome Packet.
5. Hold forums - Topics could be life as a foreign born person, religious tolerance, etc.
6. Join the Welcoming Community Program.
7. Develop City Support. A recognized resource person who can be the go-to person. Coordinator.
8. Encourage a Committee or group to form.

Jamie indicated that the above ideas needed to identify who would organize/perform each activity.

Kevin referenced the Community Pledge and believed one of the most important aspects was to provide an environment where these values flourish or at least we aspire to this. He believed that as the idea of becoming more welcoming gains traction, it would grow.

Janet indicated there were not Syrian refugees in Greenbelt, but there were immigrants from many other countries. She favored engaging the volunteers who approached the City and encouraging them to work to implement the actions listed above.

Dan suggested possibly creating a committee who could focus on becoming a Welcoming Community and implementing the steps identified. How can Greenbelt be more welcoming and attentiveness to the broad cultural diversity that already exists in Greenbelt.

Ed indicated there were people in Greenbelt East who wanted to work on this.

Jamie believed this was similar to the referral on Diversity and Inclusion in terms of some aspects that fell within CRAB's purview and other aspects of the request that did not. As such, she identified three categories which the action steps might fall into:

1. CRAB can be involved in the activity.
2. The petitioners that approached the City could be involved in the activity.
3. There could be a new committee or group formed to handle the activity.

Sherry believed there were resources out there to address most of the issues. She described her own experience at Charlestown North of educating new immigrant residents.

CRAB asked that the action step ideas be circulated among CRAB members. David agreed to email a list to CRAB.

Kevin favored looking at each item and determining what CRAB could do. Jamie suggested putting the list of action steps into a table format and categorizing them. She volunteered to assist with this.

Other Business

The Board scheduled the next meeting for Tuesday, April 5.

The meeting ended at 9:10 p.m.