

## Memorandum

DATE: May 15, 2009  
TO: Mayor & Council Members  
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator  
RE: Board And Commission Memo April 2009

This is the first of what will become monthly memos to the City Council containing information from the Board and Commission Chairs. The memo will be used as a forum to keep council informed of board and commission issues and activities. The memo is consistent with the 2009 Council Goal of improving communication between the Council and Boards and Commissions. Although the schedule is off track this month because of the initial implementation, the hope is to post the Board and Commission memo the first Friday of each month. Thank you in advance for your patience as we get the procedure up and running. The next due date for information is Monday, June 1, 2009 and the posting will be Friday, June 5, 2009.

### **Below is information from Board and Commission Chairs on Northfield board and commission items of interest:**

#### **Arts and Culture Commission**

*Submitted by Philip Spensley, Chair*

In an effort to serve the goals of the City Council, the Comprehensive Plan, and the recommendations contained in ArtsPlan06, the Arts and Culture Commission continues to work collaboratively with Northfield's Arts and Cultural organizations, the Library Board, the Historical Preservation Commission, the schools, and with the NDDC's and the EDA's infill committees to help enhance cooperative efforts toward economic development through the arts, and to identify and market Northfield as an Arts Town.

Some specific initiatives include joining with the Library Board and others to propose an eventual Arts and Culture Center as part of a long range plan for the development of the downtown from Second to Fifth streets beginning with the Library expansion, working with the River Walk Arts Committee on the development of an arts and entertainment district downtown, facilitating the creation of an on-line community arts calendar with arts and cultural leaders and promoters for both planning and marketing purposes, the placement of plaques denoting historic and significant sites along the river, and the installation of public art.

#### **Heritage Preservation Commission:**

Did not meet in April due to the lack of action items

#### **Human Rights Commission**

*Submitted by David Schlosser, Vice Chair*

The HRC met on Thursday, April 9, 2009.

The commission discussed our continuing role in National Night Out, and our suggestions and feedback based upon last year's event (including the involvement of more minority groups as had been a tradition in previous years) were submitted to the Police Department. Councilor Pownell discussed the City Council

goals with the commission and the initiatives that the council would like the commission to focus upon. Commissioners will begin by finding out from minority community members about their experiences and perceptions of city services, signage, etc.

The Commission discussed a resolution that other cities have brought forward regarding divestment in companies investing in the Sudan region, and will research this. We discussed the need for new, updated brochures for our Hate Crimes Response and Prevention Committee and the Public Education Committee. Councilor Pownell discussed again the need for our fundraising for our annual MLK Day event to be funneled through a non-profit to comply with state regulations; Evans-de-Carpio will ask Jim Blaha of the CAC about the HRC becoming a member of the CAC to facilitate this process. The HRC voted to purchase a copy of the *Offense Taken* DVD for educational purchases; the DVD has been shared with Gary Lewis, the Northfield district's Special Education Coordinator, who will let us know if this will be used in the schools. Utilizing the video for other public educational viewings is under consideration by the HRC.

### **Library Board**

*Submitted by Margit Johnson, Chair*

The Library Board relies on three working committees to do homework between our monthly meetings:

1. Planning Committee: With circulation continuing to rise (8% at the library in March 2009 with an average of 122 items checked per hour, and that doesn't count the spike in computer usage) the Planning Committee is working with staff to determine how to fit programs, services and resources into the current building even as demand increases. The committee is also poised to begin planning a 2009 design charrette with other boards, commissions, local architects, and citizens, at the mayor's invitation, in keeping with the Council's goal #3 re: city facilities.
2. Financial Resources Committee: With the Council's approval to hire a fundraising feasibility consultant this committee will post the RFP, interview candidates, and hire someone to determine the potential of a private capital campaign for the proposed library expansion, as per the Council's goal #3, first library action step.
3. The Public Relations and Partnership Committee: The Carnegie Library building will be 100 years old in 2010, so this committee is developing a calendar of centennial events to celebrate the first 100 years and anticipate another 100 years of outstanding library service to the Northfield community.

### **Planning Commission:**

The Planning Commission had not yet met in April at the time of this submission due to the lack of action items, but had scheduled a work session on April 28th to hear a staff presentation on form-based codes, and to review 2009 City Council goals. Various members also participated in the Land Use Regulations Advisory Group and Safety Center Taskforce.

cc: Board & Commission Chairs  
Department Managers