



Annual Report

2013

Annual Report of the Durango Community Relations Commission



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Contents

To Our Community	1
Message from the Chair	2
2013 Work Plan	3
Goals for 2014	7
Spotlight on CRC	8
Resolution Establishing CRC	9
Current By-laws	12



CRC Mission:

“To encourage social harmony among residents and visitors through education and conflict resolution, to promote responsible actions, positive examples of mutual respect and inclusive community participation.”

To Our Community

Who we are

The Durango City Council created the Community Relations Commission in 2012 with the passage of R-2012-26. We are citizens of this community who are interested in promoting social harmony. There are five members of the commission appointed to staggered three year terms, as well as a youth member from the City’s Youth Engagement Program.

Bill Bolden - Appointed 10-16-2012, Reappointed 1-31-2014, Term Expires 1-31-2017

Victoria Romero Coe – Appointed 10-16-2012, Term Expires 1-31-2015

Crystal Harris – Appointed 7-2-2013, Term Expires 8-31-2016

Charles Spence – Appointed 11-5-2012, Term Expires 1-31-2016

Nancy Stoffer – Appointed 10-16-2012, Term Expires 1-31-2016

Tatiana Hovland, Youth Appointee – Appointed 5-14-2013, Term Expires 8-31-2014

What we do

We listen, track the pulse of the community, and encourage positive community dialogue.

When we meet

The Community Relations Commission meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 4:30.

Where we meet

CRC meetings are held at City Hall, 949 East 2nd Avenue. All meetings are open to the public.

How we help

The CRC wants to hear from you. Contact us at City Hall: 970-375-5017



Message from the Chair

The Community Relations Commission had a remarkable first year of existence. The 2013 Annual Report summarizes who we are and what we have accomplished.

It has been a pleasure to be involved with such a dedicated and hard working group. The CRC receives reliable staff support from Suzanne Sitter, Paralegal, and Ron LeBlanc, City Manager. Without their participation and assistance, the CRC would not have achieved so much progress. It is inspirational to our Commission that the City of Durango leadership strongly endorses and supports our existence and mission.

Sincerely,

/s/ Bill Bolden, Chair
Community Relations Commission



2013 Work Plan Summary

February

- Bill Bolden elected Chair, Nancy Stoffer elected Vice-Chair.
- CRC establishes meeting schedule.

March

- Demonstration of CRC Website.
- Presentation of Durango Police Department for citizen complaint process.
- Initial discussion regarding a mission statement for the CRC.

April

- Discussion of adding a youth appointee from the City's Youth Engagement Program to the CRC.
- Staff also directed to advertise for 5th CRC vacancy.
- CRC member Charles Spence presented first draft of Bylaws.
- Discussion of creating promotional materials.

May

- Tatiana Hovland joins CRC as a youth appointee from the City's Youth Engagement Program.
- Christopher "Kit" Chalberg, Conciliation Specialist with the U.S. Department of Justice, facilitated a training session with the CRC:
 - Assisted CRC with community outreach ideas
 - Assisted CRC with drafting the mission statement
 - Facilitated discussion of goals and objectives
 - Suggested CRC co-sponsor or participate in community education programs
 - Discussed possible community listening sessions and surveys
 - Emphasis on being proactive with outreach
 - Agreed to review mission and goals periodically to ensure currency with community needs
- Chairperson Bolden suggested the creation of bookmarks with mission statement or other deliverables to handout.



June

- CRC attended breakfast meeting with City Council (June 13).
- Final Bylaws accepted.
- CRC reviewed City Council Goals and discussed ways to incorporate with CRC goals.
- The Durango Herald (June 27) publishes article about City efforts to reevaluate ADA improvements—article acknowledges CRC.
- Discussion of outreach, goals and objectives continue.
- Discussion about hosting Community Block parties.
- Discussion of a CRC bookmark to go into City welcome packets.
- Discussion of CRC involvement with Durango Area of Tourism and the impacts on travelers with disabilities coming to Durango.

July

- Crystal Harris introduced as the 5th CRC appointment.
- Durango Police Department presented information about National Night Out and Neighborhood watch.
- CRC bookmarks distributed.

August

- Kit Chalberg facilitated a workshop with the CRC to identify challenges and opportunities:
 - Short term - The Commission agreed that it would like to discover types of community needs and enhance its visibility with outreach as an immediate short term goal.
 - Mid-term goals included implementing the outreach plan, defining services and delivery and developing a strategy to address those needs now and into the future.
 - Action plans were drafted including a list of questions created by Commission members to review.
 - Each Commission members was asked to pick three (3) questions for a possible survey. In addition, each Commission member was asked to identify one (1) organization or department the CRC might be able to begin outreach communications with.
- The City Manager Ron Le Blanc reported that the City Council attended a dinner with the Southern Ute Tribal Council. This provided an opportunity to



discuss the CRC's mission with the Tribal Council. The Southern Ute Tribal Council expressed interest in the work of the CRC and discussed the possibility of sending a representative to the CRC meetings.

September

- The CRC engaged in a discussion of developing survey questions, while also highlighting what the Community Relations Commission is about.
 - *What does it mean to live in a diverse community?*
- The three survey questions chosen for a pilot meeting with an organization.
 1. *What's good about the Durango Community? How do you contribute to sustaining what you like about Durango?*
 2. *What challenges and/or issues are you (or your clients) facing in regards to social harmony in Durango?*
 3. *How could the Community Relations Commission address these issues or how could the Commission support your organization's mission?*
- Second set of tier questions
 1. *Have you experienced tensions or conflict based on your identification or association with a particular group?*
 2. *Do you feel isolated from people who are different from you? If so, how? Is this by choice?*
- CRC concluded that pilot questions should be developed and tested

Note: A complete report of the Community Relations Commission outreach findings (from the questions listed above and other CRC community participation) are part of the Meeting Summary's and are available on the City's website.

Generally, the CRC has found some of the common themes from the participants of the outreach groups to be:

Durango overall is a friendly community with many activities; the transportation system in the City is appreciated; Durango's cost of living and housing do not reflect the wages; the need for more accessibility in affordable housing for the elderly and disabled; immigration related issues regarding status, employment and housing; more encouragement from the school district to support non-majority students; emphasizing and increasing the CRC's visibility within the community.



October

- Staff reported that the City's website includes a feature where the CRC can provide a question to the community for response. Different topics can be placed on Durango's Voice. The Commission decided to use this space to get community feedback and asked staff to submit the following question: *What challenges are you, your family or friends facing in regards to social harmony in Durango?*
- Follow-up report from Durango Education Center survey session. Chairperson Bolden reported to the CRC about the meeting he and Commission Member Vicki Coe attended.

November

- Lauren Patterson, member of Embracing Diversity Initiative (EDI) and Skylah McKinney with PEAT at Durango High School attended the CRC meeting.
 - Patterson discussed EDI's purpose and explained the various types of programs and training offered by her organization
 - She also explained to the Commission the program EDI hosts called "Diversity Dialogue"
 - Patterson extended an invitation to the CRC to be a participant in the program, which is scheduled for early March, 2014
- CRC members commented that this type of program is a good fit for the Commission and that EDI could be a resource for the CRC.
- Discussion of City Span 10 creating a report on what CRC is about.

December

- Summary report from Crystal Harris was shared in regards to the CRC/Coldwell Banker focus group meeting.
- Commission discussed creation of and informational piece for local realtors to include in welcome packages.



Goals for 2014

- Continue local listening sessions and gathering information identifying community needs.
- Strategize on how to further engage groups CRC interacts with.
- Provide a referral source of community organizations that can assist with community needs that are brought to the CRC's attention.
- Work with schools to promote the value of leadership to our youth and encourage more diverse representation within the student body to apply for leadership roles.
- Enhance CRC visibility with presence at local events and through the media.



Spotlight on CRC

Tatiana Hovland

Tatiana is a senior at Durango High School. She is the current representative from the City's Youth Engagement Program to the Community Relations Commission. The following is Tatiana's story and experience working as a youth member appointee to the CRC.

I remember being 5 years old, looking up at a crowd of people that surrounded me as my mom held my hand and taught me how to march for social justice. I lived in Denver until the age of 13, and the school I attended was very active in marches and political issues.

When I moved to Ignacio about five years ago, I craved being part of something that provided acceptance and progression for cultural relations within our community. I found that acceptance in the Prejudice Elimination Action Team (PEAT), and I learned how to facilitate workshops and trainings in order to promote "No Place for Hate". From there, I applied to be a part of the Community Relations Commission as a youth advisor. Being a member of a city commission has brought me full circle, from marching to the capital in Denver to being a part of the administrative changes. I am now about to graduate from Durango High School and the Commission has had a huge impact on how I feel about Durango as a whole. There are issues in the community, which I believe have been ignored. However, the Commission represents the change and acknowledgment of the relation issues we so easily try to forget. I come from a family of six kids, so I know how hard it is to get a word in sometimes, but the Commission has also taught me to speak up, because after all we are all part of a community, a family, and if we treat it as such, our city can be a beacon for healthy community relations.



Resolution Establishing CRC

Resolution R-2012-26

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE CITY OF DURANGO AND DEFINING ITS PURPOSE

WHEREAS, the City council of the City of Durango recognizes the importance of promoting and accepting diversity within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council seeks to discourage all forms of discrimination including, but not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, creed, economic condition, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, marital or familial status, military or veteran status, political affiliation, socio-economic class, physical or mental disability; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes the jurisdiction exercised by the City of Durango is limited to within its municipal boundaries and should not conflict, or duplicate, the jurisdiction of any county, state or federal agency that may have legal authority over cognizant matters.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Durango, Colorado, that:

Section 1. The Durango Community Relations Commission is hereby established for the purpose of promoting social harmony among all visitors and residents within the City of Durango; increasing participation in government, business, media and social life among all sectors of the community; and to recommend resolution of matters relating to community relations from within the City of Durango through referrals to other agencies, or through mediation and conciliation when the complaint falls within the City of Durango's jurisdiction.

Section 2. The Commission will promote acceptance and respect for diversity through promoting and extending existing educational programs and cultural events; assisting in the creation of new educational programs and cultural events; and



working with local businesses, governmental units, media and nonprofit agencies to increase their awareness of and accessibility to all members of the community. The Commission will also discourage all forms of discrimination including, but not limited to discrimination on the basis of race, creed, economic condition, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, native language, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, marital or familial status, military or veteran status, political affiliation, socio-economic class, resident or public assistance status, organizational membership or physical or mental disability.

Section 3. The Commission will encourage participation by all groups in local government. To this end, the Commission may advocate for accommodations for specific groups and individuals including but not limited to publication of written material in braille and foreign languages, and the provision of ASL and foreign language interpreters in courts and City of Durango functions that are open to the public.

Section 4. The Commission will encourage the City of Durango and other governmental units to adopt policies that promote social harmony and prohibit discrimination, and encourage the creation of a regional Community Relations Commission.

Section 5. When requested, the Commission will use its best efforts to resolve community conflicts and tensions when the complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the City of Durango. To this end, the Commission may:

- a) Consult or confer with public officials, private individuals and organizations when requested.
- b) Render assistance, advice and informed advocacy to agencies of local government, community groups and individuals when requested.
- c) Provide education and communications regarding civil and human rights.
- d) Provide information, guidance and referrals for voluntary mediation and conciliation services to aggrieved individuals.

Section 6. When complaints fall outside of the jurisdiction of the City of Durango, the Commission may provide information and referrals to appropriate state and federal agencies.

Section 7. The Commission shall not have any regulatory authority or enforcement powers.

Section 8. The Commission shall be advisory in nature and shall submit regular meeting minutes and activity reports to the City Council. Procedures for determining officers of the Commission, meeting protocols, determining of vacancies on the Commission and similar matters shall be in accordance with the City of Durango Rules and Procedures for Boards and Commissions.



Section 9. The Commission shall consist of 5 members appointed by the City Council and representing a cross-section of the community. The City Manager, or his designee, shall serve as staff to the Commission.

Approved and adopted this 4th day of September, 2012

CITY OF DURANGO, COLORADO

/s/ Mayor, Doug Lyon



Current By-laws

CITY OF DURANGO
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION
BYLAWS

Section I - Purpose of the Commission

The Durango City Council established the City of Durango Community Relations Commission as an Advisory Commission. The Commission is assigned the following functions by City of Durango Resolution R-2012-26:

- A. To promote social harmony among all visitors and residents within the City of Durango.
- B. To increase participation in government, business, media and social life among all sectors of the community.
- C. To recommend resolution of matters relating to community relations from within the City of Durango through referrals to other agencies, or through mediation and conciliation when the complaint falls within the City of Durango's jurisdiction.
- D. To promote acceptance and respect for diversity through promoting and extending existing educational programs and cultural events.
- E. To assist in the creation of new educational programs and cultural events.
- F. To work with local businesses, governmental units, media and nonprofit agencies to increase their awareness of and accessibility to all members of the community.
- G. To discourage all forms of discrimination, including, but not limited to discrimination on the basis of race, creed, economic condition, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, native language, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, marital or family status, military or veteran status, political affiliation, socio-economic class, resident or public assistance status, organizational membership or physical or mental disability.
- H. To encourage participation by all groups in local government, including but not limited to advocating for accommodations for specific groups and individuals



and the provision of ASL and foreign language interpreters in courts and City of Durango functions that are open to the public.

I. To encourage the City of Durango and other governmental units to adopt policies that promote social harmony and prohibit discrimination, and encourage the creation of a regional Community Relations Commission.

J. When requested, the Commission will use its best efforts to resolve community conflicts and tensions when the complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the City of Durango and to review related issues that affect Southwestern Colorado. To this end, the Commission may:

- i) Consult or confer with public officials, private individuals and organizations when requested.
- ii) Render assistance, advice and informed advocacy to agencies of local government, community groups, and individuals when requested.
- iii) Provide education and communications regarding civil rights and human rights.
- iv) Provide information, guidance, and referrals for voluntary mediation and conciliation services for aggrieved individuals.

K. To supplement the foregoing purposes by the following means:

- i) Formation of special subcommittees, including non-Community Relations Commission member specialists;
- ii) To solicit aid from and collaborate with other social, charitable, and governmental agencies in educating the public; and
- iii) To communicate with other similar commissions in order to share experiences and become more sensitive to potential problems.

L. To perform such functions as are committed to it by other ordinances or resolutions and otherwise advise the City of Durango City Council.

Section II - Name. The official name of the Commission is the City of Durango Community Relations Commission.

Section III – Meetings;Voting.

A. **Regular Meetings.** The Commission shall designate a regular meeting date and time to be included in the City’s schedule of public meetings. Notification of regular meetings shall be made by the chairperson, or other designated individual, five days in advance of each regular meeting. In addition, the chairperson of the Commission, or other designated individual, shall provide a copy of the agenda for



regular meetings to the news media as a means of notifying the public of all Commission meetings.

B. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Commission chairperson or by three members through a written request submitted to the chairperson. Notice of special meetings shall be made in writing by the chairperson to all members with the purpose of the meeting set forth in the notice at least five days' prior to the meeting date. In addition, the chairperson of the Commission, or other designated individual, shall provide a copy of the agenda for special meetings to the news media as a means of notifying the public of all Commission meetings.

C. Quorum Requirements. A majority of the Commission members (vacancies excluded) shall constitute a quorum, for the transaction of official business. The chairperson or other presiding officer may undertake any business before the Commission, but no formal vote shall be taken unless a quorum is present.

D. Voting Privileges. Only regular members of the Commission shall have the privilege of voting on matters and questions before the Commission.

E. Manner of Voting. Voting shall be conducted in the following manner:

- i) Each regular member, including the chairperson, shall have one vote.
- ii) When a quorum is present at any meeting, the vote of a majority of members shall decide any question brought before the Commission.

Section IV - Attendance; Open Meetings; Executive Sessions.

A. Attendance at Meetings. Members are strongly encouraged to attend every scheduled regular meeting for the Commission. In the event a regular member is absent from three consecutive meetings, a member's appointment may be terminated by City Council upon recommendation of the remaining Commission members.

B. Open Meetings. All meetings shall be open to the public. When the chairperson decides that a topic requires confidential discussion as defined in C.R.S. 24-6-402, 1973, the chairperson may move for an executive session.

C. Executive Session. By the consent of a majority of a quorum, the membership may recess for the purpose of discussing in executive session consistent with the City of Durango's Boards and Commissions Rules and Procedures Manual.



Section V - Membership; Officers.

A. Membership. The City of Durango shall appoint five members representing a cross-section of the community. The City Manager, or his or her designee, shall serve as staff to the Commission. A member of the Commission whose term has expired will continue to serve until a replacement has been appointed or reappointment is made. Commission members shall serve without compensation.

B. Officers.

i) Method of Selection. Officers shall be chosen from among the regular membership of the Commission by a majority of the members present at an organizational meeting called for that purpose.

ii) Number of Officers. Officers shall consist of a chairperson or vice-chairperson with each Commission reserving the right to select additional officers as it deems necessary.

iii) Duties of Officers. The following duties shall be undertaken by the respective officers with a right to delegate duties to other Commission members being reserved to the chairperson.

1) Chairperson's Duties.

- a) To preside at Commission meetings.
- b) To call special meetings.
- c) To make appointments to committees, subcommittees, or task force groups.
- d) To represent the Commission in public and speak and act on behalf of the Commission.
- e) To execute reports on behalf of the Commission.
- f) To take initial action on directives from City Council.
- g) To establish the agenda for Commission meetings.
- h) To authorize special assignments for Commission members.



- i) To inform the Commission of results of all Commission reports or recommendations to the City Council.
- 2) Vice-Chairperson's Duties.
 - a) In the absence of the Commission chairperson, the vice-chairperson shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the chairperson.
 - b) To assure adequate staff support is provided by the Commission in the conduct of its business.
 - c) To oversee all matters of attendance by regular members at Commission meetings.

Section VI – Amendment. The Bylaws may be changed and amended by motion passed by a majority of the entire Commission.

Section VII – Continuing Relation of the Commission to the City Council.

Reports:

The Commission shall provide an annual report to the City Council in January. It shall also provide other reports at such time as requested by a Councilor when deemed advisable by the Commission.

Adopted by the City of Durango Community Relations Commission this 24th day of July, 2013.

/s/ Chairperson, Bill Bolden