



**Visioneering  
Racial Diversity, Opportunity & Harmony Alliance  
Clergy Meeting Notes – April 17, 2007**

**Mission of RDOH Alliance:**

***"To create a culture that promotes and celebrates racial, diversity, opportunities & harmony within the Wichita MSA."***

**Attendees** – Deann Smith, Rabbi Michael Davis, Gail Finney, Martha Sanchez, Carol Meredith, Peggy Elliott, Melinda Walker, René Tario, John Beehler

**Leadership Team:** Brian Black, Doug Hye, Lavonta Williams, Deann Smith, Susan Leiker, Gail Finney, Sandra Harrison

**Minutes** from the March 6, 2007 clergy meeting were approved as submitted.

**The Purpose of the RDOH Alliance meeting:**

*To seek faith-based guidance and assistance on what role the faith community can play in advancing positive race relations in the Wichita region. What role can the faith community play in advancing positive race relations in Wichita? What are some opportunities to dialogue that already exist within the faith community? Provide some materials that can help promote dialogue [i.e. Study Circles, NCCJ's Denouncing Racism]; and Participants will generate next steps and 'actionable' items*

**End-in-Mind:** That faith leaders will begin strategies to promote community dialogue regarding positive race relations

**Welcome & Introductions** participants were welcomed by Suzie Ahlstrand. Everyone introduced themselves and identified their respective organizations.

**City Prayer Initiative:** Peggy Elliott reported that over 300 individuals are participating in a prayer time on the last Monday of each month. The next meeting will be on April 30<sup>th</sup> at Tabernacle Baptist Church. The meetings are usually held at WSU's Metroplex.

**Women's Meeting:** Carol Meredith stated that she would like to convene a meeting of women from all faiths. She is willing to coordinate this effort and would like to meet this summer.

**May 4-5 Prayer Meeting:** René Tario reported that there will be a 24-hour prayer meeting in the Garvey Center. Prayer will begin at 4 pm on May 4<sup>th</sup> and continue until 4 pm on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the prayer meeting is to pray for the City of Wichita.

**Presentation by WSU Dean John Beehler:** Dean Beehler reported that the Small Business & Entrepreneur Alliance is developing a 'Minority Business Initiative' [MBI]. According to Dean Beehler, the alliance decided to act after receiving the data from the RDOH survey. The MBI will have three main components: 1) educating; 2) planning; and 3) mentoring. The Kauffman Foundation has developed a curriculum that will be used, according to Beehler. Participants must be minorities and the program is to begin in the fall. Following the presentation, there was a lively question and answer session. The participants thanked Dean Beehler for his presentation and pledged their assistance.

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**Next Steps:** Members agree to the following:

- Provide opportunities for the faith community to get together
- Build relationships among all faiths
- Networking among members of all faiths
- Form short term "task force" for identifying faith-based responses to RDOH, including:
  - Convening a meeting of women for dialogue this summer [June/July]
  - Engage seniors and youth in activities and dialogue
  - Encouraging intentional planning and implementation of interracial, interfaith activities across congregations and faiths.

At the next meeting, we will continue to identify specific tasks to be completed and identify who, what and by when the tasks are to be completed.

**Next Meeting:** June 19<sup>th</sup>, 11 am-1 pm. The location will be determined later.