

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES  
Meeting of 12 December 2000  
Conference Room A,  
Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

The meeting was called to order by John Lyons, Vice-chair, at 7:03 p.m.

**A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests**

Present: Schimps, Lyons, Shaffer, Eastman, Shulman, Keele, Miller, Graebner, Taylor, Jewell and Botzler, DeCicco

Excused Absence: Giovannetti, Shoffner, de Leon. Guests: 2

**B. Approval of Minutes**

Shulman moved (Jewell seconded) to approve the 14 November minutes. Passed unanimously.

**C. Public Comment.**

One guest reported an incident of excessive force at juvenile hall and inquired on whether this facility was covered by CLEM's law enforcement liaison program. The same guest inquired about the vacancy on the Commission. Finally, this guest informed the Commission of the National Association of Mentally Ill (NAMI) desire to have crisis intervention training introduced into the law enforcement programs of the northern 16 counties of California.

**D. Correspondence and Telephone Calls**

1. Keele received a packet of information about a case referred to the Commission by the Humboldt County Grand Jury.

2. The County forwards Commission mail to Keele that is received at the Court House address.

3. Shoffner received a fax from the environmental community concerning some of the forest conflicts occurring in southern Humboldt County on Pacific Lumber Company (PALCO) land.

4. Botzler reported a call from de Leon noting his need to miss the last meeting and this meeting because of illness.

**E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports**

1. Neutral Observers – Shulman

Shulman reported some communications with Supervisor John Woolley. Essentially, two directions are proposed by Woolley: forming a temporary, ad hoc group of neutral observers to deal with the current problems on PALCO land, and the Commission working with the County Supervisors for a long-term solution.

Miller reported on a meeting on 6 December at which he and Shoffner represented the Commission in discussions with Bonnie Blackberry and Roger Zos (ACLU), the County Sheriff's department, John Campbell and an attorney for PALCO. The issue addressed was the potential for violence at the demonstration sites and a discussion of whether permission should be given for neutral observers to be present at the demonstrations on PALCO land. PALCO did not appear supportive of having neutral observers on their land but is taking the issue under advisement.

Shulman summarized recent events, including concern of the County Counsel for possible lack of sovereign immunity and Senator Chesbro's consideration of possible legislation to expand the scope of human rights issues formally covered by state law. He then presented the four options proposed by Supervisor Woolley for the Commission to consider:

Option 1: Have the Human Rights Commission develop the responsibilities, protocols, training and deployment of the Neutral Observer Program. The County provides liability insurance

Option 2: The Commission develops for the first time only, the protocols, identifies and trains observers, and organizes the deployment of observers with the Sheriff. The observers, however, are then contracted to the County as individuals and not as Commission members and are then disassociated with the Commission. The county would provide liability insurance.

Option 3: Request legislative support for changes to the state statute defining the breadth of the scope of activities assigned to the Commission. (This already is being done)

Option 4: Create by County ordinance a county-recognized human rights committee that would include a neutral observer program.

After considerable discussion, Keele moved (Shaffer seconded) that Option 1 be recommended by the Commission. The measure passed and Shulman will inform Supervisor Woolley of our position.

2. Committee on Law Enforcement Matters (CLEM)
  - a. Miller reported that liaisons continue to work with the various agencies
  - b. Jewell and Shoffner met with Chief Deputy Philips of the County Correctional Facility.
3. Law Enforcement Chiefs Association of Humboldt (LECAH)
  - a. Miller reported that there will be no more meetings until January.
4. Outreach and Education Committee - Giovannetti
  - a. The Youth Educating Against Homophobia Workshop will be held April 10, 8 a.m. to 12 noon in the front boardroom of the County Office of Education.
  - b. Eastman is coordinating the Human Rights Month Proclamation acceptances. The following Commissioners will receive the proclamations at the following locations:
 

Board of Supervisors	Shulman
Eureka	Shoffner
Arcata	Schimps
Rio Dell	Shulman or Miller
  - c. Shaffer summarized the Faculty Needs Assessment Survey drafted by DeCicco, with assistance of Lois Beechey of County Schools. The corrected draft will be reviewed by Beechey and the County Office of Education before distribution.
  - d. Shaffer noted the distribution of a needs list given by Eureka City Schools. Lyons in helping to set up a speaker's program at one school
  - e. Lyons contacted College of the Redwoods to provide Commission support after a hate-related threat to a teacher.
5. Hate Crime Information Network - Keele
 

No report; this committee will not be listed for a separate report unless it is involved in responding to a hate crime or hate incident.
6. Finance – Keele: The treasury holds \$112.77
7. Community for Common Ground (CCG) – Botzler: No report
8. Other Committees and Liaisons: There were no other reports from committees or liaisons.

## **F. Unfinished Business**

1. After some discussion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month is a possible alternate meeting time for the Commission. De Leon will still be contacted.

## **G. New Business**

1. Shulman presented an agenda for the 6 January workshop. Shulman moved (Graebner seconded) that the agenda be accepted. Passed unanimously
2. A follow-up of a high school hate incident will be discussed in the January meeting
3. Nine Commissioners expressed interest in a tour of the County Correctional Facility.

## **H. Adjourn**

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be Tuesday, 9 January 2001, 7:00 p.m., Conference Room A, County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard G. Botzler, Secretary