

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

Meeting of 08 January 2002

Conference Room A,

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Chair Larry Miller called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Eastman, Graebner, Miller, Keele, Schimps, Sloane, Taylor, Shaffer, de Leon, Lyons, Botzler

Excused absence: Jewell, Intern Blume Unexcused absence: None

Guests: 2

B. Approval of Minutes

Keele moved (Eastman seconded) approval of the 11 December minutes. Passed unanimously.

C. Public Comment

1. One guest expressed strong discontent with an experience he had in which 2 Sheriff's deputies pointed loaded weapons at him during a mistaken identity case. He complained to the Sheriff's Department but was not satisfied with their response, and also was treated disrespectfully in the process. His charges also are being considered by the Humboldt County Grand Jury. Other options were discussed with him at the meeting.
2. One guest made note that there is an interfaith conference being held on the HSU campus in February. Botzler was asked to arrange for including the Commission as a participant, including having a table to make Commission literature available.

D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

1. Graebner received 7 calls. One was from an unidentified commission in San Francisco. One was from a San Francisco resident, and one was from a man inquiring about the Arcata Police Department who had been referred to us. Graebner raised the issue about returning calls that were out of the area; the group agreed that such toll calls should be reimbursed from our treasury.
2. Shaffer received three calls. One was from a San Francisco Bay resident whose son had dropped out of a drug rehabilitation program because he did not accept the religious overtones associated with the program and had been placed in jail as an alternative. Since the case currently was in litigation, no Commission action could be taken. A second case was from a man claiming to be incarcerated in the Sempervirens facility against his will. He could not be reached by the phone numbers he left, or after Shaffer attempted to reach him at Sempervirens. Shaffer responded to a call from CAHRO to assist them in updating their list of Human Rights organizations.
3. Miller received 6 calls. One was from a woman upset regarding a neighbor who appeared to abuse their child after he was seen playing with her own child, because her own child had been seen playing with children of color. The case is being handled by the Arcata Police Department. Another case was referred to Shaffer and reported above. One call was from a citizen interested in becoming a Commissioner. One was a call from College of the Redwoods. Two other calls could not be returned.
4. Keele learned of a hate crime at St. Bernards School. Lyons will respond.
5. Botzler had two calls. One was from an Orleans resident who claimed to have been falsely imprisoned. He was referred to Indian Legal Services and Legal Services of Northern California. The second was from the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors indicating that no arrangements had been made for this calendar year for the Commission to meet at the County Courthouse; those arrangements were made.

E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports

1. Committee on Law Enforcement Matters (Jewell)
No new information to report
2. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer).
Shaffer queried the Commission on what concerns the members had for Outreach and Education.
This will be a discussion item at the retreat
3. Finance (Keele) – \$112.77 remains in the treasury.
4. Intern Report (Blume)
No report due to the HSU semester break.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Botzler and Taylor met with Arcata Chief Gallagher to discuss homeless people. Chief Gallagher was unaware of any harsh treatment of homeless people by Arcata officers but asserted that he would be quick to stop it and even prosecute an officer if such an event occurred.
2. Lyons, Miller, Graebner, and Taylor met with Eureka Chief Douglas. Chief Douglas was concerned to hear the Commission concerns about possible brutality by Eureka officers, but did not provide a specific response. The Commission members discussed other possible resources for homeless, and further steps that the Commission could take.
3. Taylor met with Jim Hogue, who agreed that County Risk Manager was technically correct about the sloped walkway leading to the Courthouse, but that the walkway did not meet the spirit of the law.
4. Eastman reported that Human Rights Month proclamations had been received from Rio Dell, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Arcata, Trinidad, and the Table Bluff Reservation.
5. Miller will provide an agenda for the retreat and Botzler will forward the agenda to all members along with directions to his house for the 26 January retreat.
6. The HSU Diversity Conference Subcommittee will request a display table to make Commission literature available to those attending the conference; Keele volunteered to staff the table. The program and participants for the Commission presentation will be formalized at the February meeting.

G. New Business

1. Discussion of the Boy Scout position on homosexuality was postponed to the next meeting
2. Miller discussed the neutral observer program with Supervisor Woolley. Supervisor Woolley recommended submitting a letter to the Board clarifying the Commissions intention to pursue the Neutral Observer program.
3. Eastman reported that the Commission can notify the County Technical Office as soon as we have our information ready to be placed on the County web page.

H. Adjourn

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 12 February 2002, 6:00 p.m. Subject to confirmation, the meeting was tentatively planned to be held at the Redwood Community Action Agency, 904 G. Street, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Botzler, Secretary