

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

Meeting of 12 March 2002

Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Chair Larry Miller called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Larry Miller (Miller was replaced by Vice-chair Lyons at 7 p.m. because of a previous commitment).

A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Miller, Jewell, Keele, Schimps, Sloane, Shaffer, de Leon, Aziz, Graebner, Lyons, Taylor, Blume, Botzler

Excused absence: Eastman

Unexcused absence: None

Guests: 2

B. Approval of Minutes

Keele moved (Jewell seconded) approval of the 12 February 2002 minutes with two typographical corrections.

C. Public Comment

1. One guest was an HSU student who was assisting in starting a human rights movement at HSU with a faculty member and some other students.
2. One guest was an HSU Journalism student working on an article on hate crimes.

D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

1. Miller has received information from the Board of Supervisors that Commissioners must again complete financial disclosure statements.
2. Shaffer noted that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has issued a revision of the pamphlet, "Know Your Rights." He also pointed out an article in the current NAACP issue of Crisis magazine. He also called attention to two other brochures, "Taking Action" (Anti-Defamation League) and "Fight for Your Rights" (AOL Time Warner Foundation).
3. Lyons received four calls. One was from a former Commissioner interested in serving on the Commission again. Three involved various housing dispute issues; one of these was a landlord asking a tenant to leave on short notice and another dealt with a possible eviction. For the latter case, Humboldt Legal Services is seeking to negotiate with the Eureka Housing Office.
4. Schimps received 12 calls; four were the same calls addressed by Lyons. Among the new calls was a family support issue referred to Redwood Legal Services. A disabled man facing eviction was referred to Humboldt Access Project and Redwood Legal Services. A call was received from the New Jersey Public Defender's Office inquiring whether the Commission has discussed possible discrimination with sex offenders in the past (Keele made reference to one such case about 5 years ago). One man was concerned that he and his family intentionally were exposed to lead paint by a landlord; he was referred to the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program of the County and Redwood Legal Services. An Arcata High School student was seeking a speaker on Native American problems and community race relations for a presentation at one of the school clubs. A call was received from the Community Resource Center (Eureka) regarding an illegal alien who has worked in the U.S. for 30 years and seeks social security but has no green card; this case was discussed with U.S. Representative Mike Thompson's office.
5. Keele reported on a Native American who was a crime victim and who claimed that the crime was not investigated properly. The case was referred to the District Attorney's office and, in turn, was referred to the Humboldt County Grand Jury.
6. Sloane reported that Californians for a Moratorium on Executions is seeking petitions to institute a California moratorium on executions. Discussion of this item and the death penalty inadvertently had been omitted from the March agenda and will be placed on the April 2002 agenda.

E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports

1. Committee on Law Enforcement Matters (Jewell)
Jewell proposed setting up a meeting with Sheriff-elect Philps to discuss some human rights concerns. After some discussion, it was proposed that Mr. Philps be asked when he might feel it appropriate to meet with members of the Commission
2. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer).
No report
3. Finance (Keele) – \$112.77 remains in the treasury.
4. Botzler reported that the anti-capital punishment group, For Whom the Bells Toll, has issued a public service announcement of its activities and is contacting other local churches.

5. Intern Report (Blume)

Intern Blume completion of a Human Rights Education Resource Information sheet in conjunction with Commissioner Shaffer. Copies were distributed to other Commissioners. She also plans to develop a list of telephone numbers for Latino resources for the Commission telephone list of resources.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Botzler and Aziz reported that, despite the low number of attendees, the Commission presentation at the HSU Diversity Conference (2 March) went very well. Aziz has had a number of opportunities to represent Islam to the Humboldt County community and noted that the community has been very supportive of Muslims in the local area.

G. New Business

1. Discussion of the Boy Scout position on homosexuality was addressed and will be carried over to the next meeting.

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, 9 April 2002, 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Botzler, Secretary