

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

Meeting of 9 April 2002

Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

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

A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Miller, Jewell, Keele, Schimps, Sloane, Shaffer, Eastman, Aziz, Graebner, Lyons, Intern Blume, Botzler

Excused absence: de Leon

Unexcused absence: Taylor

Guests: 7

B. Approval of Minutes

Shaffer moved (Keele seconded) approval of the 12 March 2002 minutes with the correction that Eastman had an excused absence.

C. Public Comment

1. One guest reported that his wife was severely mistreated by the Eureka Police Department on at least two occasions, and also treated disrespectfully by a local hospital and ambulance company.
2. One guest was a Hoopa resident who noted that the Commission should address "higher levels of human rights issues" and who also had considerable concern with conditions on the Hoopa Reservation.

D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

1. Miller received a call from Supervisor Woolley regarding a woman with complaints about the Arcata Police Department; the call was referred to Botzler.
2. Jewell received four calls. One was a request for the mailing address for the Commission. One call was regarding a housing issue, but no direct contact could be made with the caller. One was from a disabled woman who was not allowed to purchase alcohol with her underage son present; the case was referred to Redwood Legal Services. One call was too garbled to comprehend.
3. Botzler had 7 calls. One was the referral from Miller about a woman angry about her treatment by the Arcata Police Department; she did not request any specific action from the Commission other than to have her story heard. Her case was summarized to the Commission. One caller had had the services for his rental turned off by a community services district; he planned to contact Legal Services of Northern California. Two calls were from a woman who claimed mistreatment by the Sheriff's Department; she also planned to work with Legal Services of Northern California. One call from Channel 3 News was referred to Miller. One call of a case handled by Shaffer was referred to Shaffer. One caller from the American Civil Liberties Union requested information about tonight's Commission meeting.
4. Schimps followed up on a call received from the New Jersey Public Defender's Office inquiring whether the Commission has discussed possible discrimination with sex offenders in the past. The Public Defender's office will formally request information from the Commission on their letterhead stationary.

E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports

1. Committee on Law Enforcement Matters (Jewell)
No new information
2. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer).
 - a. Shaffer followed up on an earlier case involving a possible hate crime at Arcata High School. On investigation by the Arcata Police Department, it was not clear that a hate crime had been committed. Plans are being developed to hold a Unity Week on campus from 6 to 10 May 2002.
 - b. Shaffer distributed copies of the Teaching Tolerance flier
 - c. Shaffer noted that the deadline for including new programs in the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) catalogue for next fall was about 22 May. He will send a copy of the Commission's speaker's bureau to the HCOE for possible inclusion in the catalogue.
3. Finance (Keele) – No statement was received.
4. Intern Report (Blume)
Intern Blume acquired a new list of community resources that she will organize for local groups and also compare phone numbers with the Commission resource list. She also put the new brochure on a computer disk for easy future revisions. She has compiled a list of Latino community resources for the area. She also is participating in Humboldt State University's Poor

People's Economic Human Rights Campaign rally of 6 May. Schimps will help staff a table with the Commission's fliers at the event. Blume is seeking speakers to address the topics of affordable housing, universal health care, and a living wage at the rally.

5. Follow-up on previous case reports
 - a. A case of a blind woman denied assistance at a local food store felt resolved.
 - b. The Eureka Housing Authority is requesting the court to decide the issue regarding a tenant who has been using medical marijuana in federally-supported housing.
6. Other reports
Miller spoke on the topic of local law enforcement agencies at a meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Miller noted that he had no new information about the Neutral Observers program
2. Eastman and Jewell will present some basic ideas for the Commission web page at the next meeting.
3. Miller received the financial disclosure statements from the Board of Supervisors. Most commissioners present completed the forms; one other had completed it earlier.
4. Graebner was requested to contact a local Boy Scout official to attend our next meeting and clarify the local and national policy regarding membership and treatment of homosexual boys in the Boy Scouts program.

G. New Business

1. It was moved (Schimps) and seconded (Keele) that the Commission support the Resolution for a Moratorium on Executions in the State of California, and forward this resolution to the Board of Supervisors for their endorsement, and to request the Board to forward their endorsement to Governor Gray for implementation of the resolution. Passed unanimously.
2. It was moved (Eastman) and seconded (Keele) that the Commission convey to the Board of Supervisors their opposition to the death penalty as inhumane and as a violation of human rights. The motion passed: 8 in favor; 1 opposed, 1 abstention (it was clarified that the chair votes only in the event of a tie). This position will be conveyed to the Board along with the moratorium resolution.

H. Adjourn

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 14 May 2002, 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Botzler, Secretary