

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

Meeting of 9 March 2004

Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Chair Maura Eastman called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Jamila Tharp and Karolyn Stein were introduced as the new Commissioners

A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Eastman, Lochtie, J. Shaffer, Stein, Tharp, Aziz, B. Schaeffer, Miller, de Leon, and Botzler

Excused absence: Jewell, Lyons

Unexcused absence:

Guests: 2

B. Special Items

K. Glory, University Police Department, reported on a lack of clear evidence for KKK activity in Ferndale, CA. He also reported on the upcoming presentation of Ward Connerly at Humboldt State University on 11 March.

K. Thobaben reported on the state of homelessness in Humboldt County. There is a multiagency task force, Humboldt County Homeless and Affordable Housing Coalition working to provide support. Currently approximately 300 to 1200 homeless are estimated to occur in the county on any given night. About 50% are believed to be families with children and about 50% couples or single adults. These figures vary considerably, including by season. Among the various points made were that the homeless do not always receive the same quality response from law enforcement as received by other citizens, and that local businesses often pressure law enforcement to keep homeless away from their areas (e.g., to reduce loss of tourists coming to the business).

C. Approval of Minutes

Lochtie moved (Miller seconded) that the 10 February 2004 minutes be accepted with minor typographical corrections. Passed unanimously.

C. Public Comment

1. No other public comment was received.

D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

1. Shaffer reported the following calls and contacts.
 - a. K. Glory reported money given to the commission to address hate crimes
 - b. He referred report of a hate crime to Jewell
 - c. A disabled homeless man complained about various landlords believed to have been abusing tenants; the man is on probation for assault. Police have not been responsive.
2. Eastman reported phone calls
 - a. A man claimed unlawful termination at a casino. Eastman referred him to some resources of the tribal council
 - b. A woman having requested assistance from a Hawaii Human Rights Commission wondered how long it typically took to get a response. She was directed to the supervising body over that Commission.
 - c. A woman called to complain about police constantly being called by her neighbor when the woman and her boyfriend got into a fight.
 - d. A woman requested support from the Commission when she goes in for a court hearing. She was directed to an attorney for that.
3. Lochtie reported several calls
 - a. Two calls from a fighting couple (same as who contacted Eastman); the boyfriend was taken to jail
 - b. Three calls from a woman and her fiancé claiming excessive force by Blue Lake police. Referred to the liaison
 - c. A man claimed being harassed by undercover agents in Fortuna.
4. Miller informed the new Commissioners of the need to complete the disclosure forms from the county.

E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports

1. Finance (Eastman). The current bank balance is \$713.49.
2. Law Enforcement Matters (Miller)
 - a. Miller reported that Albright has met with some law enforcement chiefs and Commission liaisons to assess liaison program and discuss sex offender registration programs.

- b. Botzler noted that the Arcata Police Department no longer had the notice of assistance from the Human Rights Commission attached to its citizen complaint form. Miller provided him with the language; Botzler will contact the Arcata PD and request to have it added.
- 3. Independent Observer Program (Miller)
 - The group will monitor the peace march on 20 March and may attend the Ward Connerly presentation on 11 March 2004.
- 4. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer)
 - a. Shaffer spoke with Bruce Brown, Channel 12, regarding broadcast of human rights-related videos. It is relatively easy to submit videos for showing on Channel 12. Any program involving live appearance of moderators after the video is somewhat more complicated. B. Schaeffer also volunteered to help develop the program in conjunction with the HSU Philosophy Department's development of some Channel 12 programs.
 - b. Shaffer will talk with Jerri Jones, HSU Multicultural Center, about some cooperative activities between the Center and Commission in the community. Miller, Aziz, and Botzler volunteered to participate too.
 - c. There currently is no continuation of the catalogue on educational opportunities from the Humboldt County Office of Education. Rather there are some periodic fliers and the Commission is welcome to announce possible speakers from the Speaker's Bureau, if they wish.
- 5. Calendar review of upcoming events (Shaffer)
 - a. No specific events are scheduled in the near future for which the Commission should act.
- 6. Other reports and liaisons. None

F. Unfinished Business

- 1. Botzler distributed the revised 3x5 card set of short-term resources that might be of assistance to houseless persons or those travelling through the area on low budgets. The following Commissioners took responsibility for their distribution to user sites.

Miller	Redwood Community Action Agency, Humboldt County Welfare Department
B. Shaeffer	Eureka Rescue Mission, St. Vincent dePaul
Stein	St. Joseph Emergency Room, General Hospital Urgent Care facility
	County Mental Health Department, Street Outreach Services (SOS) van
deLeon	Mateel Community Center, Tiger Lily Bookstore
Eastman	Fortuna Community Services District, Food Bank for Humboldt County
J. Shaffer	Open Door Clinic of Arcata, North County Clinic
Botzler	Arcata Endeavor, Arcata Night Shelter
- 2. B. Shaeffer reported finding that motel managers can refuse service to anyone, but must be consistent in the policies used.
- 3. No new information on the Independent Observer Program
- 4. Eastman reported that she and Nezzie Wade still are searching for a new Commission intern.
- 5. The Times-Standard has expressed interest in a periodic column by the Commission. Eastman took names of those interested in contributing.
- 6. Botzler will send directions to his home.

G. New Business

- 1. None addressed

H. Adjourn

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 13 April 2004, 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Botzler, Secretary