

# HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

## DRAFT

Meeting of 8 June 2004

Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Chair Maura Eastman called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

### **A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests**

Present: Eastman, Lochtie, Lyons, Aziz, J. Shaffer, Stein, Miller, B. Shaeffer, Jewell, deLeon, and Botzler

Excused absence: Tharp,

Unexcused absence: None

Guests: 2

### **B. Approval of Minutes**

J. Shaffer moved (Jewell seconded) that the 11 May 2004 minutes be accepted as written. Passed unanimously. It was requested that this be an agenda item on the next meeting.

### **C. Public Comment**

1. One guest advocated that the Commission should recommend to the Supervisors that same-sex marriage be endorsed in Humboldt County.
2. Another guest inquired on the current status of the County resolution opposing the Patriot Act, and encouraged the Commission to complete the steps needed for bringing that resolution to completion. The same guest also raised a concern about the number of surveillance cameras to which all citizens are exposed in the County. It was requested that this be made an agenda item for the next meeting.

### **D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls**

1. Botzler reported on two additional calls received since the last meeting
  - a. A man claiming that he was being held at Sempervirens (Eureka) beyond the time he wished, and requested assistance in being released. Botzler spoke with the Director of Nursing. After she received the patient's approval for discussing his case, the Director noted that the patient currently had the Patient's Rights Advocate working with him. Botzler called the direct patients' phone line 48 hours later, and the patient was not present at Sempervirens.
  - b. A Eureka woman had an auto accident and was cited for reckless driving; she claimed that she had received some medication from her dentist for a dental problem. She currently is working with a public defender.
2. Lyons received several calls
  - a. One was from a Humboldt State University (HSU) student wishing to volunteer his services to the Commission. Referred to J. Shaffer
  - b. A Garberville man had submitted a Citizen Complaint form, and wanted to send a copy to the Commission
  - c. One was for information about the Commission
  - d. One person raised a complaint about the Public Guardian program inappropriately charging a client. The woman has her own attorney. She also was recommended to consider informing the District Attorney's office and the Grand Jury
  - e. One HSU staffwoman is interested in applying for membership on the Commission, and was referred to L. Canzoneri of the Supervisors' office
  - f. Lyons handled one complaint about black mold in a house.
  - g. An Orick fisherman complained about a temporary injunction on his commercial fishing because of the snowy plover. He believed this was a discrimination against his livelihood. Lyons suggested he forward the appropriate information to the Commission. The case generated some discussion among Commissioners.
  - h. A complaint was raised about Denny's restaurant discriminating against use by homeless of their toilet facilities. Further information made it evident that the policy was clearly marked in the restaurant.
  - i. There was a request from St. Joseph Hospital for the Commissions tax identification number so that their donation for the Short-term Resource list could be sent.
  - j. Two calls regarding the Patriot Act resolution were referred to Miller
3. Eastman reported several phone calls
  - a. A man from Mendocino County complained about the Ferndale Police Department. There was no response when his call was returned.
  - b. A call regarding housing matters was referred to Lyons

- c. A woman was swindled of \$40,000 in a scam perpetrated by her daughter's boyfriend. The District Attorney has not yet pursued it. The woman was encouraged to pursue legal avenues since there was little that the Commission could do on this matter.
- d. Eastman announced the Gay Pride parade this next Saturday.
- 4. Shaffer gave Short-term Resource cards to 3 homeless, and informed the Commission about articles in the most recent issues of Crisis (NAACP) and Intelligence Report (Southern Poverty Law Conference). He also discussed Commission work with Mr. Segal (Hope Coalition).
- 5. Lochtie attended the recent meeting of the local American Bar Association, and received a check for \$300 to support the Short-term Resource list duplication.
- 6. Botzler attended the NET meeting and summarized the Commission work on the Short-term Resource list.
- 7. Phone list for coming weeks.
 

Eastman	1 to 15 June
Shaffer	16 to 30 June
Tharp	1 to 13 July
Stein	13 to 30 July.
Jewell	1 to 15 August
B. Shaeffer	15 to 31 August

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

- 1. Finance (Eastman). The current bank balance is \$713.49; there has been no change in the past month.
- 2. Law Enforcement Matters
  - a. Botzler sent another e-mail to Chief Randy Mendosa of the Arcata Police Department (APD) regarding the request to have a notice on the availability of the Commission's assistance attached to the APD citizen complaint form. No response has been received yet.
  - b. No further activities has been done of a Commission member mentorship program for law enforcement liaison programs.
  - c. Eastman has not had further contact with the Law Enforcement Chiefs Association of Humboldt County (LECAH).
- 3. Independent Observer Program (Miller)
 

There are no know conflicts at the current time. The group still meets regularly.
- 4. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer)
  - a. B. Shaeffer will continue following up possible programs with Channel 12. The HSU Philosophy Department probably will not be involved.
  - b. J. Shaffer suggested contacting the HSU World Languages Department and have each component identify a particularly good video
  - c. Botzler will contact some HSU staff and discuss possible cooperative community and campus programs between the Commission and HSU.
  - d. No additional decisions were made on goals for outreach services
- 5. Homeless issues
  - a. The Spanish language translation of the short-term Resource list was completed by Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) staff. A letter appreciation will be sent. After some comparison of various fonts and size reductions, it was decided that the 3x5 card also was appropriate for the Spanish language list.
  - b. Botzler will use \$300 to duplicate approximately 6,000 English and 3,000 Spanish language cards. Based on responses and corrections received during this initial distribution, the cards will be update, corrected, and improved for a second duplication at a later time.
  - c. Letters of appreciation also will be sent to the American Bar Association and St. Joseph Hospital for their support of the Short-term Resource list program.
  - d. Following discussion of a draft letter by Botzler, Stein, and Eastman, the Arcata City Council was requested (26 May 2004) to give their further attention to a lack of toilet facilities and a lack of safe overnight lodging in Arcata.
  - e. Miller reported that the estimate for Humboldt County homeless, based on one of the RCAA planners, ranged from 800 to 1200 on any given day.
- 6. Calendar review of upcoming events (J. Shaffer)
  - a. June is the month to elect officers and review the annual report. June also is the time liaisons should contact their law enforcement offices.
  - b. July is the month for the annual report of the Commission to the Supervisors.
- 7. Patriot Act Resolution. The topic was briefly discussed and will be put on next month's agenda for action.
- 8. Other reports and liaisons. None

#### **F. Unfinished Business**

1. Eastman reported no new information regarding the airing of the Anti-Defamation League public service announcements (PSA's) for local stations.
2. Botzler distributed a revised set of the Speaker's Bureau list. Several more suggestions were made and will be discussed at the next Commission meeting
3. Eastman reported no new information regarding a Commission intern for the fall. A job description will be discussed at the next meeting
4. Tharp currently is writing a short article on the history and mission of the Human Rights Commission for local news media.
5. Eastman reported that Kim Kerr, County Risk Manager, informed the Commission that the County is donating a file cabinet to the Commission.

#### **G. New Business**

1. Lochtie proposed (J. Shaffer seconded) to amend the Human Rights Commission By-Laws by removing Article II, Section 3 (Term Of Office), which reads "the officers may be elected for no more than two full successive terms."
2. J. Shaffer moved (Lochtie seconded) that the following officers be elected  
Chair: Eastman  
Vice-Chair: Lochtie  
Secretary: Botzler  
Passed unanimously
3. Eastman submitted a draft of the annual report for discussion.

#### **H. Adjourn**

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 13 July 2004, 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Botzler, Secretary