

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES
Meeting of 14 June 2005
Conference Room A
Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Acting chair Byrd Lochtie called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m with Pledge of Allegiance in honor of Flag Day.

A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Lochtie, Lyons, Miller, J. Shaffer, Tharp, Filar, Orr, and Botzler

Excused absence: Aziz, B. Shaeffer Unexcused absence: None

Guests: 3

B. Approval of Minutes

Filar moved (Miller seconded) that the 12 April 2005 minutes and 10 May minutes be accepted with minor corrections. Passed unanimously.

C. Public Comment

1. Christina Allbright, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) chair, announced that the Human Rights Commission would be awarded the ACLU 2005 Patriot Award for their community work on July 21.

2. R. Herick, Arcata Endeavor, announced that the Arcata Endeavor program may be required to withhold food from people on probation, in order to renew their lease.

D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

1. Phone line reports

A. Orr summary of calls

1. A woman who believed she was unfairly fired could not be contacted, but was referred to legal services through voice mail.

2. A caller called to provide information to the HRC regarding the Patriot Act.

B. Miller summary of calls

1. a State Probation Psychologist, requesting info on who could help a parolee who claimed to have been beaten by a guard while in prison was referred to the American Civil Liberties Union and the web as a source of possible support groups.

2. an earlier caller who still was having water problems was given additional suggestions and told to call us back if she continued to have the problem:

3. a woman with employment problem was referred to both local and State resources; Miller also suggested she call back if no help was found.

4. a State Parole with interest in the work of HRC received some basic info; Miller volunteered to talk about the HRC at his monthly parolee orientation.

5. a woman called to inform the HRC about problems in the mental health system after hearing about an incident on the news. No response requested

6. A male caller who did not give his name made a threat against law enforcement and the

City of Eureka. Miller contacted the Eureka PD and gave her a transcript of the message. No follow up at this time.

7. A call concerning a unjust eviction was referred Northern Calif. Legal Services.
8. a caller concerned about a unjust conviction for not wearing his seat belt did not return calls.
9. a man claiming a local bank stole \$10,000 dollars from him requested referral to J. Shaffer.

C. Filar summary of calls.

1. Computer dialed sales call
2. Thank you call for Jack Shaffer – referred to Jack
3. Call from Fortuna man about general harassment and illegal spying by law enforcement and other public agencies. No return call requested.
4. Call from Times-Standard wanting to know if we handle fair housing issues. Gave number to John Lyons.
5. A woman phoned with complaint about police brutality. Returned call three time, and got no answer or message machine.
6. Man phoned with complaint about harassment by coworkers and lack of concern by supervisory personnel at Eel River Sawmills. Gave him phone nos. for Legal Services Of Northern California and State Fair Employment Dept.
7. Call from man in Crescent City inquiring as to the rights of parents. His step daughter had filed a complaint against her parents with the police and with social services. Social services investigated the complaint, found no basis for further action, and closed the file. Six months later charges were filed by the Del Norte DA. Couple has spent over \$50K in various fees. Recommended continuing work with an attorney, and also the Grand Jury a possible course of action.
8. Man called with complaint about his doctor, who he says called him a “junkie”. He states the label is unfounded and considers it defamation of character. Returned call, left message.

D. J. Shaffer contacts

1. A caller had a variety of general concerns and was referred to the Humboldt Community Switchboard.
2. A caller expressed appreciation for past help received from J. Shaffer as part of the Commission.
3. J. Shaffer distributed copies of an article on the topic of “isms” and “phobias,” including homophobia.

E. Other contacts.

1. Botzler noted that the attached language on the Arcata Police Department citizen complaint form, S notifying the complainant that the Commission is available to assist, still is present.
2. Filar reported that the new toll-free number for the Commission is 1-877-268-2548.
3. Lochtie reported that the Commission is listed with the Volunteer Directory of the Volunteer Center of the Redwoods.

Phone list for coming weeks.

Lochtie	15 to 30 June
B. Shaeffer	1 to 15 July
Botzler	16 to 31 July
Orr	1 to 15 August
J. Shaffer	16 to 31 August

E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports

1. Finance (J. Shaffer). There is \$1136.32 in the current Commission account.
2. Law Enforcement Matters (Miller)

No new information.

3. Independent Observer Program. Christina Allbright (IOP chair) is preparing an annual report for the Supervisors
4. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer)
 - a. J. Shaffer noted that training regarding hate crimes is standard in law enforcement academies. He noted an 80-page handbook used for training police

F. Unfinished Business

1. Acting chair Lochtie delivered the Commissions proposed same-sex civil marriage proposal to the Clerk of the Supervisor's office on 27 May, and requested the Supervisors to inform the Commission on their decision and course of action. Considerable discussion followed among Commissioners on the best strategy for following up with the Supervisors. Lochtie will contact Supervisor Woolley to determine when it may become an agenda item.

2. Web site modification (Miller). The previous CD including minutes and agendas from past Commission meetings has been misplaced. Botzler will send another.

3. At will employment agreements. Botzler will send a revised version of the letter proposed by a community letter to Lochtie for transmission to Humboldt State University.

4. A proposed standardized form for collecting information from callers using the Commission telephone line was distributed, with requests that suggested modifications be e-mailed to Miller for incorporation.

5. The information packet for new commissioners was proposed by Botzler and was agreeable to the Commissioners.

6. Tharp and Filar reported that the public service announcements are appearing on Channel 3, and also will be presented on Channel 6, 29, and on UPN. Further inquiry will be made with Channel 23 in Redding.

7. Tharp reported no further articles in progress for local media

G. New Business

1. Northcoast Education Summit. Miller, J. Shaffer, Lyons, Tharp, Lochtie, and Botzler expressed interest in preparing for the February 2006 meetings. The item will be addressed on the August agenda.

H. Adjourn

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned 8:50 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 12 July 2005, 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Botzler, Secretary