

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES  
Meeting of 11 October 2005  
Conference Room A  
Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka California

Chair Byrd Lochtie called the meeting to order at 6:10 because Commissioners were temporarily locked out of the meeting room.

**A. Attendance and Guests**

Members present: Jackson, Tharp, Rubin, Ward, Lyons, Botzler, Miller, Shaffer, Shaeffer, Lochtie, Filar.

Members absent: Aziz (excused); Orr.

There were three guests.

**B. Approval of Minutes**

Approval of Minutes from September 2005 was moved to November agenda.

**C. Public Comment**

1. A guest followed up on his earlier complaint that he is being electronically harassed. The Commission advised that he call the Eureka Police Department and/or North Coast Legal Services.
2. A guest followed up on her earlier complaint that she is being harassed by her neighbor, city councilman Mike Jones. She would like the Commission to write a letter to Jones. Because three of the members of the Committee involved in her case were absent, discussion was moved to the November agenda.
3. A guest followed up on her earlier complaint that she was wrongly deemed 5150 (severely disabled) by a doctor at Mad River Community Hospital (MRCH) and was given a pelvic exam and held in a psychiatric ward against her will. She asked the Commission to conduct an inquiry into the legality of the doctor's behavior. The Commission formed a committee to investigate and make recommendations. The committee members are Aziz, Rubin and Ward. The Committee offered to write a letter to MRCH in her support. She declined. The Commission gave her the web address for the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors.

**D. Correspondence Reports**

*a. Phone Line Reports*

1. Miller summary of calls (10/1 - 10/15).
2. Lyons summary of calls (10/16 - 10/31).

*b. Other Contacts*

None.

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

- a. *Finance* (Shaffer). The checking account balance is \$1119.42.
- b. *Law Enforcement* (Miller). Miller not present, moved to November agenda.
- c. *Independent Observer's Program* (Miller). Miller not present; moved to November agenda.
- d. *Outreach and Education* (Shaffer/Shaeffer). Shaffer suggested writing an article for the local media on encouraging school programs that promote racial tolerance. Moved to November agenda.
- e. *Web site* (Miller). Miller not present; moved to November agenda.

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

- a. *Committee Report: Mike Jones* (Miller/Orr/Aziz). Moved to November agenda (see above).
- b. *Committee Report: Complaint against Mad River Community Hospital and Sempervirens* (Aziz, Rubin, Ward). Moved to November agenda (see above).
- c. *Letter to the Board of Supervisors Re: Media Center* (Lochtie). Lochtie sent a copy of the letter supporting the creation of a community media center to the rest of the Commissioners via e-mail, another copy to the city managers, and the city councils of six cities that are negotiating Cox Communications' renewal agreement.
- d. *HRC Involvement on Board of Supervisors' Same Sex Marriage Resolution/Update* (Tharp/Lochtie). Lochtie reported that Supervisors Bonnie Neely and Jill Geist have met and are working on a resolution to bring to the BOS. County Council needs to review the resolution before it goes to the BOS. It was decided that Lochtie will report to Neely that the Commission would like to host a public forum on the issue when it comes before the BOS. The Commission discussed the possibility of sending a letter to local media expressing the Commissions' support for the resolution. It was decided that such a letter might be counterproductive.
- e. *Death With Dignity Act* (Cernohlavek). Removed from agenda. Cernohlavek has resigned from the Commission.
- f. *National Coalition Building Institute* (Botzler). Removed from agenda.
- g. *Civilian Review Board of Law Enforcement* (Miller). The first meeting of Citizens for Police Review will be held at 6:00 p.m., October 12, 917 3rd St in Eureka. Miller's letter supporting the formation of a civilian review board will be discussed in November, and was moved to the November agenda.
- h. *Public Service Announcements* (Tharp/Filar). Nothing to report. Moved to November agenda.
- i. *Periodic Column in local media* (Tharp/Shaeffer). Nothing to report. Moved to November agenda.
- j. *Northcoast Education Summit* (Botzler, Miller, Shaffer, Lyons, Tharp, Lochtie). Proposals are due Monday, 31 October. The committee has had e-mail contact and discussion. Botzler made a list of possible projects that he distributed via e-mail to other members of the committee.
- k. *New Intern* (Tharp). Ward will investigate the possibility of finding a candidate through Humboldt State University. Moved to November agenda.

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

- a. Lochtie reported that she inquired with the District Attorney what the definition is of a hate crime and how it is decided whether something counts as a hate crime. The District Attorney decides whether to charge someone with a hate crime. Botzler will distribute the legal definition of a hate crime in California via e-mail.
- b. It was decided that Jake Smith of North Coast Legal Services (NCLS) will be invited to speak to the Commission.
- c. Lochtie reported that the last day to register to vote in the November special election is October 24; Loctie distributed a flyer containing arguments for and against the various propositions that appear on the ballot.
- d. Ward reported that the Social Work Department at HSU is offering a course on Human Rights. Discussion of possible involvement by the HRC was moved to the November agenda.
- e. Lochtie announced "The People Speak" and "Building a Safe World" will be presented on October 27, sponsored by the League of Women Voters.
- f. Miller reported that he and Orr met to discuss the case report regarding the woman who has complained about mistreatment by MRCH and Sempervirens.

#### **H. Adjourn**

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45.