

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HCHRC) MINUTES Meeting of 13 December 2005 Conference Room A Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka California

Chair Lochtie called the meeting to order at 6:01.

A. Attendance and Guests

Members present: Botzler, Filar, Lyons, Shaffer, Shaeffer, Miller, Aziz, Ward, Orr, Lochtie, Tharp.

Members absent: Jackson, Rubin (excused).

There were three guests.

B. Approval of Minutes

1. The minutes from November 8 were approved unanimously with four corrections (Filar/Botzler).

C. Public Comment

1. Jerome Bearbower of the Redwood Peace and Justice Center and Humboldt

State University (HSU) spoke on human rights training for children and the program at HSU in which college students are trained to facilitate such training. He is interested in the possibility of a partnership with the HRC. Bearbower can be reached at 822-0843.

2. Helen Jones, Director of the Office of Diversity at HSU, spoke on the possibility of creating a partnership with the HRC and the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI).

D. Correspondence Reports

Phone Line Reports.

Filar summary of calls: Total of 7 calls:

1. Individual with brain injury claimed discrimination by the Arcata Coop about a month ago. He was banned from the store following an incident with a checker, the asst. manager, and the general manager. He is handicapped, lives in Arcata, and wants to shop there. When discussing this with the Coop, it was determined that he was banished following a physical threat against an employee. There have also been several less severe incidents over the months. I discussed this with his caseworker at Making Headway, and she will handle this further.

2. Lady with the Arcata Endeavor notes two corrections to the Short Term Resource Cards (STRC). One, there are no 12-step programs offered at the Endeavor anymore. Two, the phone number for Homeless Services/Street Outreach is 445-7682. Corrections were forwarded to Rick Botzler.

3. Liz Stewart, Education & Outreach Coordinator for Food for People, requests more (current) STRCs - in English - she has plenty in Spanish.

Forwarded info to the commission - it seems we are short of cards.

4. Man complained of unfair treatment when applying for a general assistance program, that he was discriminated against because of his religion. He left no number, and never called again.

5. Lady wants to speak to Greg Allen regarding a legal matter. His number couldn't be found. Emailed her name and phone number to Christina at the ACLU, asking to forward it to Greg.
  6. Lady called regarding an issue with renter's rights/return of security deposit. Referred to John Lyons.
  7. Irate individual called, leaving an extended, slightly threatening call regarding the same-sex marriage issue. I returned his call and left a message. Somehow he got my number, and called me at home. Fortunately I wasn't there, and never returned his call.
- Shaffer summary of calls:
1. I spoke with two callers referred by Jamila.
  2. 11/19/05 I spoke with a man trying to get back his deposit refund from his former landlady and referred him to NCLS.
  3. 11/21/05 A 58 year old Black man wanted to discuss why there was racism. He would frequently get honked at while sitting on his condo porch in Sunnybrae and experience occasional honkings after moving to Eureka. We had a long discussion and I invited him to call if he experienced current instances of racism.

Other Contacts:

1. Beth Rogers of KHSU interviewed Lochtie regarding the Board of Supervisors' Same Sex Marriage Resolution.
2. Lochtie received a letter from the Civil Liberties Monitoring Project asking for dues.
3. Botzler reported that Christina Allbright of the ACLU could not attend the December meeting. Jake Smith of Northern California Legal Services (NCLS) is available to speak to the Commission in February. Botzler will invite him.
4. Botzler spoke informally with the County Council regarding whether specific persons should be named in the HRC minutes. The Council informed Botzler that Commissioners may not speak with the Council without express permission of the Board of Supervisors. Lochtie will discuss the prohibition with the Board of Supervisors.
5. Botzler reported that he met with the organizers of the Northcoast Education Summit, and will meet with them again to make plans for the HRC presentation. The theme is International Peace. Moved to January agenda.
6. Shaffer reported that KHUM ran a series of HRC audio tapes as part of its "Stop the Violence" campaign, and mentioned the HRC website. Shaffer will write a letter commending KHUM for the program, to be distributed to commissioners via e-mail. Moved to January agenda.
7. Miller reported that Loretta Nichols of the McKinleyville Animal Shelter e-mailed the HRC website to report that the shelter has many cats and dogs in need of adoption.
8. Miller reported that the Grand Jury has received reports of mistreatment of inmates at the Eureka Jail. Miller will follow up on the possibility of HRC members touring the jail. Moved to January agenda.

E. Committee Reports

1. Finance (Shaffer). \$1095.53 in the checking account, less \$10.95 for the 800 telephone line. Ward suggested asking the County to pay for the 800 number. Moved to January agenda.
2. Law Enforcement Matters (Miller). Nothing to report.

3. Independent Observers Program (Miller). Nothing to report.
4. Outreach and Education Matters (Shaffer/Shaeffer).
  - a) Public Service Announcements (Filar/Tharp). Orr will maintain the library of PSAs.
  - b) Periodic Column in the Times-Standard (Shaeffer/Tharp). Nothing to report.
  - c) Cox Media Center (Lochtie). Officers for the Media Center are being selected; the center is slated to open next fall at Eureka High School.
5. Website (Miller). Ward has agreed to serve as webmaster.

#### F. Unfinished Business

1. Committee Report: Letter re: harassment of neighbors by local elected official (Miller). The letter was approved unanimously and will be sent (Botzler/Orr). Removed from agenda.
2. Board of Supervisors Same Sex Marriage Resolution (Lochtie). The Board of Supervisors voted to pass the Resolution Regarding Same Sex Marriage; Lochtie will write a letter thanking the Board on behalf of the Commission (Botzler/Shaeffer). Moved to Committee Reports for January agenda.
3. Report on Neo-Nazi Activity (Shaffer). Shaffer contacted Kim Glory at HSU regarding neo-Nazi activity in Humboldt County. Glory has yet to respond. Moved to January agenda.
4. Coalition for Police Review (CPR) (Miller): CPR will meet January 11, 6:30 p.m., at 917 3rd St. in Eureka. Miller is the liason to the Blue Lake Police Department, Lyons to the Arcata Police Department. There is no liason to the Eureka Police Department. Moved to January agenda.
5. Human Rights Month: Ward wrote a draft letter introducing local media to the Human Rights Commission and informing them that December is Human Rights Month. The letter is to be circulated via e-mail to the rest of the commission for comments and then sent to local media outlets. Tharp reported that KHUM has invited members of the HRC to speak during its call-in program.
6. New Intern (Ward): Two social work classes at HSU will have interns available for 6 hrs/week. Students in the classes volunteer for projects in which they are interested. Ward will continue as contact.

#### G. New Business

1. Tharp invited commissioners to attend the meeting of Marriage Equality California, February 18 6-8:30 p.m., at the Arcata Recreation Center on D St. in Arcata.
2. It is time for a Commissioners' Retreat. Date and time to be discussed at the January meeting. Moved to January agenda.
3. Ward raised the possibility of mental health training for Commission members. Moved to January agenda.
4. The short term resource cards may need revision. Moved to January agenda.

With nothing further on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
H. Benjamin Shaeffer