

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HCHRC) MINUTES

Meeting of 9 May 2006

Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

A. Attendance and Introductions

Chair Lochtie called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Members Present: Shaffer, Aziz, Shaeffer, Lochtie (Chair) Botzler (Vice Chair), Filar, Lyons, Tharp, Miller, Rubin.

Members Absent: Ward (excused) Ferguson (excused).

There was one guest.

B. Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the meeting of 11 April 2006 were approved unanimously with several adjustments (Botzler/Filar).

C. Public Comments

Jake Smith of Legal Service of Northern California (LSNC) gave information on the Legal Services Corporation (LCS). LCS serves low-income citizens in civil cases, offers legal clinics, and has a lawyer referral service. The group also works with Humboldt Housing Development for low-income home ownership. Smith was an invited speaker. The Commissioners thanked Smith for providing useful information in handling/referring phone calls.

D. Correspondence Reports

Lochtie received a letter from the Cascade corporate management complaining about noise from diesel trucks in the neighborhood. Lochtie will write a letter making several suggestions, including that they hire a lawyer. A draft of the letter will be circulated via e-mail for the Commission's approval.

Lochtie received an invitation to the Humboldt Builder's Exchange Awards Dinner.

Lochtie received a letter from Supervisor John Wooley regarding funding for the Commission's toll-free telephone number and the Commission's internet domain name.

Botzler reported that the campus dialogue on race will be held at Humboldt State University November 1 -10 2006.

Miller and Lyons were responsible for phone calls.

Miller: 1. Mother of 17 yr. old pregnant female in custody at Juvenile hall called concerned that she was not getting proper diet. **Response.** Call head of juvenile hall, a Doug Mersenas(SP?) who assured me that pregnancy was a special condition which warranted a special diet and cooks and supervisors were made a ware of the situation as soon as it was known. Called mother back and gave her the info.

2. A man called to express his concern over the shooting of the mentally ill woman. **Response.** None required
3. A lady called wanting info on how to file a wrongful death suit. **Response.** Called her back with number of the local bar association which takes messages request for pro bono assistance. Also told her to call back if that did not work . no follow up call.
4. A man called requesting information on the Citizens for Police Review and whether there was any conflict with HRC's role with law enforcement. **Response.** Assured him that the HRC supported the CPR and were hoping that they would take over our police review functions.
5. A woman working with Rape Crisis called asking about our role with law enforcement. **Response.** Discussed our role historically as well as currently and we talked about CPR as well.
6. A call came in from our 800 number from a lady who had a cousin in the Del Laneo(sp?) prison who had a bullet in the back from a gang shooting and the prison was not providing proper medical treatment. **Response.** Called, told her were we were and that I had no specific help for her but suggested she get on the net and search for prisoners rights groups.

Lyons received three calls, one a housing issue, another complaining that no one answers the HRC phone, and a third regarding worker's rights. The latter had been resolved when Lyons returned the call.

E. Committee, Liaison and Case Reports

1. Finance (Shaffer). Checking account has \$975.50.
2. Law Enforcement (Miller). Nothing to report.
3. Outreach (Shaeffer/Shaffer). Nothing to report.
 - a. Public Service Announcements. Nothing to Report.
 - b. Periodic Columns (Tharp). Nothing to report.
 - c. Cox Media Center (Loctie). Nothing to report.
 - d. Web Site (Ferguson). Absent.
 - e. Intern (Ferguson). Absent.

F. Old Business

1. **Compassionate Choice.** The Commission will take no action. Removed from agenda.
2. **Structural Changes to HRC/Volunteers for Humboldt.net** Nothing to report regarding structural changes to HRC (Ward absent). Botzler is no longer active with Humboldt.net; Loctie will attempt to attend the next meeting and see about getting on future agendas.

G. New Business

1. Miller is preparing a preliminary draft of a letter regarding the Eureka Jail. Miller will meet with Donna Wheeler, who is the new director of Mental Health facilities for Humboldt County. Miller reported that the jail is stalling on posting the sign with the HRC's phone numbers. Miller has contacted Lt. Figas of the Eureka Jail but has received no response. Aziz will act as the Muslim chaplain at the jail. **Moved to June agenda.**
2. Shaffer proposed that the Commission address the issue of the shooting by Eureka police of a person who was under the care of mental health facilities. There was considerable discussion, including the suggestion that the Commission make a brief statement to the Board of Supervisors suggesting that priority be given to constructive training of police officers to avoid further such incidents and that the

Board of Supervisors form a task force on the incident (Shaeffer/Botzler). It was agreed that Lochtie would write a letter to the BOS asking that the supervisors take a leadership role in ensuring that similar situations have a better outcome. The letter would detail suggestion about constructive training and process for appropriate law enforcement interactions, better communication between law enforcement and mental health services, and support for the independent citizens police review committee. A draft of the letter will be distributed by e-mail to the rest of the Commission for possible amendment. **Moved to June agenda.**

3. Botzler reported on a meeting of the Coalition for Police Review (CPR). CPR met twice in April. Christina Allbright of the American Civil Liberties Union reported on CPR and suggested closer work between CPR and the HRC. **Moved to June agenda.**

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55.