

HUMBOLDT COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

Meeting of 12 September 2006

Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Chair Botzler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A. Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Filar, Lyons, Miller, Aziz, J. Shaffer, Ward, Tharp, Munsee and Botzler

Excused absence: B. Shaeffer, Loctie Unexcused absence: Rubin Guests: 2 (Bud Tillinghast, Christina Allbright)

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion (Miller) and *second* (Filar) that the July 11, 2006 minutes be approved as presented. *Motion Passes.*

C. Public Comment

1. Christina Allbright thanked the commission for her commendation. She announced that there is an ACLU conference in Washington, D.C. October 15-17, there is a local ACLU and Citizens for Police Review meeting on Sept 25th at 6pm at 917 3rd Street, Eureka, and that Jack Nownen received recognition from the ACLU recently.

2. Bud Tillinghast shared that he is observing the meeting and wished to express his interest in the commission.

D. Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

1. Phone line reports

Ward had no items requiring Commission discussion.

Botzler discussed a female caller who has called multiple times and has already had contact with many local resources. J. Shaffer has also spoken with this caller. There was discussion about potential resources for this caller. J Shaffer had provided caller with suggestions for prioritizing her needs. No further follow up for the caller was identified.

Miller discussed a call from a tenant in Samoa who was denied permission to grow marijuana within the limits of their 215 medical care allowances. Miller shared that the owner of the Samoa property has a policy which prohibits tenants from exercising their 215 rights. Miller also discussed a call from a man who stated he was receiving death threats from white supremacists based on his sexual orientation. Miller consulted with Tharp on the issue and also referred the caller to Todd at Queer Humboldt. The current contact number for Queer Humboldt is 834-4832. Miller and Tharp suggested that the caller be connected with the independent observer program and Christina Allbright offered to help the caller access that resource.

Tharp stated that she received two calls from persons in the Humboldt County jail who wanted to file complaints. She coordinated with Miller on those calls. She also received a call about a man who believes he was passed over for a raise due to his American Indian ethnicity. Tharp had emailed the commission requesting resource suggestions to assist with that call and she thanked the commissioners for the resources they shared.

2. Other correspondence

J. Shaffer passed around a brochure listing professional development opportunities available through the Humboldt County Office of Education. The listings are viewable on their website at www.humboldt.k12.ca.us/pdo.

Botzler stated that he received permission for the commission to use a secure file cabinet located in the hall between the county administrative office and conference room A of the courthouse. Miller stated that he has some of the commission files and he will place them in the file cabinet. Filar suggested that organizing the file cabinet would be a good task for an intern and there was general agreement with that suggestion.

Phone list for coming weeks.

Tharp	1 to 15 September	Munsee	1 to 15 November
Filar	16 to 30 September	Botzler	16 to 31 November
Miller	1 to 15 October	Aziz	1 to 15 December
Lyons	16 to 31 October	Tharp	16 to 31 December

E. Committees, Liaisons, and Case Reports

1. Finance (J. Shaffer) There is \$965.48 in the current Commission account.

2. Law Enforcement Matters (Miller)

No new information from Miller. Christina Allbright reported that the ACLU is working with the Humboldt County jail to make sure inmates have legally required access to legal materials so that they can act on their own behalf in court. She stated that the ACLU may pursue a class action lawsuit for those denied access to legal materials while in the Humboldt County jail. The ACLU plans to approve packets that can be provided to inmates so that they have the necessary forms to participate in the court process.

3. Outreach and Education Matters

- a. Public Service Announcements – No new information to report.
- b. Periodic Columns – None of the commissioners have a column idea or proposal at this time.
- c. Cox Media Center (Lochtie) – Lochtie is not present and no other commission has new information.

J. Shaffer asked if there was any further discussion about re-offering the educational presentation from the Northcoast Education Summit. It was decided that this would be placed as a discussion topic for the next meeting.

J. Shaffer distributed copies of a one page summary with information about a recent study on human rights.

4. Web site (Ward) There are no web site updates reported.

5. Recognition.

Aziz suggested that McKinleyville High School be recognized for providing a positive environment for students of various religious backgrounds, specifically referring to the experience of his grandchildren and other children. There was discussion about whether the recognition was appropriate and if it should be based on specific experiences or be in support of policies implemented at the school. The commissioners came to consensus that Aziz can author a statement of recognition for the other commissioners to review.

6. Intern. (Ward)

The Sociology and Political Science departments at Humboldt State University have agreed to add the commission as a placement option for their student interns. Ward has not received any calls from potential interns for the current school semester.

7. Calendar.

Botzler reports that the Humboldt State Campus Dialog on Race is coming up soon. Ward and Filar report that an event for local veterans called The Stand-down will be taking place in October. The organizers have requested resource cards for the event and Filar states that he will try to attend if he is able to.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Humboldt County Jail phone line access (Miller)

Miller reports that he was informed by Lieutenant Figas that the flyers for the commission have been posted in the jail and that the commission voice mail is accessible from the jail phones. Tharp reported that she has received two calls from the jail while on her phone shift. Miller reported that he has met with Donna Wheeler, mental health department director, and Mary Johnson, mental health clinician assigned to the jail, and that they are actively working to resolve issues in the jail. Miller is still compiling information about mental health services, phone access and other human rights issues in the jail and will present a full report to the commission when he has all the information.

2. Safe Schools Initiative Research (Tharp)

Tharp presented information about the Safe School Initiative, which was pending signature by the governor, and explained that the initiative would prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in California schools. There was discussion about how the commission could become more involved in discussing or supporting statewide initiatives. It was agreed to add an item of discussion to the next agenda to determine the appropriate methods for the commission to participate in state level political actions.

3. Rubin Resignation

Botzler will notify the Board of Supervisors that commissioner Rubin has not been absent without contact more than three consecutive meetings.

G. New Business

1. New resource cards printing costs/approval

Motion (Ward) that 2000 resource cards be printed at a quoted cost of \$303 +tax by Printing Expressions.

Second (Filar)

Discussion: It was recommended that a GLBT resource number be added to the cards before printing. Sources of funding for the cards was discussed and it was decided that the cards could be paid for out of commission funds and that reimbursement for the costs could be sought. Tharp will ask St. Joseph's Hospital about funding and Lyons will ask the local bar association. *Motion Passes*

2. Application form revision

Motion (Ward) to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they adopt the revised form for application to the Human Rights Commission.

Second (Tharp)

Discussion: Tharp requested that a letter urging the Board of Supervisors to appoint new commissioners be submitted along with the revised form. *Motion Passes*

H. Adjourn

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned 8:05 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 10 October 2006, 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the County Courthouse, Eureka.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Ward, secretary