

Humboldt County Human Rights Commission
Meeting of June 12, 2007
6 p.m., Conference Room A
Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

Attendance and Introduction of Guests

Present: Botzler, Munsee, Miller, Tillinghast, Lyons, Shaffer, Sanders,
Lochtie, Mond (intern)
Excused Absence: Filar, Tharp
Guests : There were eight guests present.

Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Public Comment

A member of the community addressed the Commission regarding a change in policy at St. Joseph Hospital whereby doctors no longer treat chronic pain in the emergency room. She feels that the new policy was improperly inaugurated without notice to chronic- pain patients , leaving them without an avenue for the care they need. She addressed the Commission in hopes of raising community awareness regarding this situation. She stressed the need for a chronic-pain clinic in Eureka in the absence of services at the hospital. Several commissioners and guests offered resources. One guest referred her to the health committee of the Grand Jury. Munsee referred her to The Brain Tumor group in Arcata. Shaffer referred her to The Board of Directors of the hospital. Shaffer also suggested that The Commission send a letter to the Board of Directors indicating that we have been made aware of this problem and asking for information regarding the change in policy. Munsee and Lyons will work with the community member to gather more information and research resources.

Another guest addressed the Commission regarding a letter from the chief of police of The University Police Department. As he had conferred previously with Botzler, Botzler and Miller agreed to meet with him regarding this matter after the Commission meeting.

Christina Allbright, Chair of The ACLU, reported a sweep last weekend in the Fortuna area by officials of The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency. The ACLU is considering class action suits in various parts of the country as well as in Humboldt County. She asked that anyone who knows or has contact with anyone affected by the sweep refer those people to her.

Correspondence, Contact Reports, and Telephone Calls

Tharp had reported a call regarding treatment of a transsexual person by The Eureka Police Department. Since she was not in attendance, this matter was put off until next meeting.

Botzler reported having received a letter from Karen Welch about terms expiring for some Commissioners. Munsee will email Kathy Hayes, Clerk of The Board, indicating that Munsee, Botzler, Filar, Shaffer, and Lochtie would like to be reappointed.

Botzler reported having done an eight-minute interview on KHUM recently.

Tillinghast commented on laws regarding rights of the disabled in England where he had recently visited.

Phone List for Coming Weeks

Botzler	June 16 - 30
Miller	July 1 – 15
Shaffer	July 16 – 31
Tillinghast	August 1 - 15

Committee, Liaison, and Case Reports

Finance – Shaffer reported no change in the financial situation. We have a balance of \$935.38.

Law Enforcement – Miller distributed a draft report of Commission work in this area to be appended to the annual report. We agreed to study the draft and discuss it at the next meeting. There was discussion of the whole idea of serving as liaisons with law enforcement. Miller stated that he feels that there is a real need for this service. Lyons gave an overview of how the system of serving as liaison was previously organized. Miller will send emails to Commissioners describing the job description for liaisons and the specific sites in need. The subject will then be discussed at the next meeting of The Commission. Miller also reported that the Coalition for Police Review is continuing to meet and is looking at medical and mental- health care in the jail.

Outreach and Education – no report

Web Site – Munsee reported that the web site has been corrected and updated, and it was clarified that she will be responsible for the web site.

Recognitions – no report

Internship – Mond reported that he is still looking at other commissions to determine what they do and how they utilize staff. Lochtie suggested some additional areas to be surveyed such as how they deal with law enforcement issues, how they're funded, and how they recruit.

Event Calendar – no new report

Unfinished Business

Citizen Law Enforcement Board – Botzler reported that the sheriff has not responded to his invitation to meet with the Commission and Bonnie Neely. Nor has Bonnie Neely responded to the same invitation. The Commission subcommittee has met and decided on the following actions to be taken while we try to arrange a meeting with the sheriff and Bonnie Neely. Strengthen our liaison program. Have a member of The Commission attend meetings of The Law Enforcement Chiefs' Association of Humboldt (LECAH). Organize a forum of mental health professionals, the sheriff, the new police chief of Eureka, and others to discuss the issue of law enforcement advisory bodies – what they are, how they function, and what are the possibilities for our community. Lochtie suggested having a representative attend LECAH meetings as a start. She and Tillinghast will be co-representatives. They, along with Miller, will prepare a presentation for the members of LECAH. Christina Allbright will email them with information regarding previous practice involving The Commission and LECAH.

Challenge Day – Munsee reported having contacted Linda Thompson, the person in charge of Challenge Day, and having offered our services to conduct our workshop, “Sticks and Stones CAN break Bones,” as a follow-up to Challenge Day. Ms Thompson gave a description of our program to the board in charge and said that the members felt that our program was very appealing, and someone will contact us as the program evolves for the next school year.

Homelessness in The Community- There was no report. This will be on the agenda next time. Munsee will email Miller information re locating the report of the task force on homelessness in Arcata.

New Business

Election of Officers – Sanders nominated the current slate of Botzler as Chair, Lyons as Vice Chair, Munsee as Secretary, Shaffer as Treasurer. The election will occur in July.

Annual Report- The Commission acknowledged the draft summary prepared by Botzler. Miller will contribute his law enforcement report. Lochtie reminded The Commission that in the past the report has referred to recommendations made by The Commission to The Board of Supervisors but not acted on .. She suggested the possibility of mentioning the fact that we've continued to work on the citizen law review board, and we will be coming back to them on that issue.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:55.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Munsee

