

Humboldt Human Rights Commission

Meeting of March 11, 2008

6 p.m. Conference Room A

Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

A. Attendance and Introductions

Present: Botzler, Brake-Mills, Herbelin, Lochtie, Miller, Tharp, Tillinghast, Shaffer, Interns Mond and Duncan

Excused: Altschuler. Sanders, Munsee, Lyons

Guests: No guests

B. Minutes

Lochtie moved to amend minutes from February, 2008 meeting to clarify that the complaints of a guest during public comments dealt with his treatment at a local dental office. The amended minutes were approved unanimously.

C. Public Comment:

No guests in attendance

D. Telephone Calls, Correspondence, and Contact Reports

1. Telephone Calls

Sanders had calls but was not present to report on them.

Miller reported three calls. Two calls were concerning landlord abuse. Both calls were referred to Legal Services of Northern California. The third call came from the guest who attended February, 2008 meeting in complaint of dental mistreatment. He said he would not be in attendance for the March, 2008 meeting. Botzler received a call from a woman having trouble finding an apartment. She was referred to legal services as well.

Phone Assignments

Miller March 1 – 15

Altschuler March 16 – 31

Munsee April 1 - 15

2. E-Mails (Miller)

Nothing to report

3. Correspondence

Shaffer reported that he and Munsee had viewed the website of The County Office of Education and do not recommend linking it to our site..

Herbelin discussed her attendance of a local “Cop Watch” meeting. The group gives local citizens training on how to engage themselves with law enforcement. And they teach them what their rights are as a citizen. She found it to be very helpful.

Miller discussed the tactics that Humboldt County Code enforcement is using in Humboldt County. Including enforcing county codes through intimidation, weapons and anticipatory warrants. He wanted to let the commission know that it is happening and to be aware of it.

Brake-Mills discussed the homeless encampment in the Eureka Marsh and the new plan to clear it out. She wants the commission to be aware of this. The commissioners discussed the issue further and moved to put it on April 2008 agenda. Brake-Mills will research the issue further and send information to Botzler.

Botzler would like to have the code enforcement issue (Miller) on the agenda as well.

4. Tharp gave an update on the California Supreme Court case on same sex marriage. She said the case is looking good in favor of the same sex couples and the expected ruling is June 6, 2008 but it may come earlier.

E. Committee. Liaison, and Case Reports

1. Finance

Shaffer reported a balance of \$849.83. No change since last meeting. Herbelin asked about reimbursement for printing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Handouts. The commission will reimburse Herbelin \$33.18 for her costs. Receipts were given to Shaffer.

2. Outreach and Education (Tharp)

Nothing to report

3. Website

Munsee not present. Tillinghast asked about putting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights information on the website. The commission agreed that should be discussed with Munsee. He also pointed out that the coloration of the website could use adjustment because it is hard to read.

4. Recognitions

No recommendations

5. Internships

Mond was congratulated and thanked for his achievement as an intern with the Commission. This was his last meeting. He gave the commission his final report and the commission moved to write him a letter of recommendation.

Duncan discussed involvement with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights committee. Shared the plans that Tillinghast and Herbelin discussed with her at a committee meeting.

6. Calendar

Shaffer was asked to distribute the calendar once more because some commissioners do not have a copy. Other than that he had nothing new to report on calendar.

7. Humboldt County Jail

Brake-Mills and Miller discussed their work and said they would be meeting later this month to work on the issue.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Citizen Law Enforcement Review Board – Third Forum

Botzler reported on the Citizens Law Enforcement Review Board on April 10, 2008. There are five confirmed panel participants. He has not been able to get county council involvement due to potential conflict of interest for the office. The Supervisors have allocated \$1,000 in funding as of now for outside speakers. The Forum Committee is requesting an additional \$1,000 from the Eureka City Council. The topic is on the March 18, 2008 agenda. The Humboldt Area Foundation is not available because of the timing. The Bar association is a possibility. Brake-Mills suggested speaking with local lodging to see if they will donate rooms for panelists. She will look into it. Botzler discussed getting media involvement so the public is more aware of the Review Board. Herbelin suggested contacting newspapers. Shaffer suggested putting an announcement in local news letter, i.e. Democracy Unlimited and HOPE Coalition. Lochtie informed

commissioners that they should send their ideas for what should be discussed on the panel, so the presenter has an idea of what should be discussed on the panel.

2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Tillinghast reported on committee and the meeting on March 6, 2008 with Duncan and Herbelin. The meeting was held to give Duncan some direction and input on what she should be doing. Decided that Duncan would develop teacher packets and website information. Tillinghast asked about getting a laminate poster of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights to put in the courthouse.

Lochtie suggested putting a board in the Library around September through December. Herbelin said they are thinking about doing a story hour at the library as well. Herbelin asked the commissioners to brainstorm contacts that might want to be involved in the commemoration.

Brainstormed contacts: Eric Schimpfs, Maria Levy at C-R, Marylyn Paik-Nicely at the HSU Multi-Cultural Center, Latino Net, Michael Weiss, NAACP, Midwifery group, Carolyn Stein, Mental Health Advocacy, Boys and Girls Club, Teen Center, Raven Project, President of Teachers Association, Jessica Martin.

3. Study of Homeless Population

Brake-Mills has not received any more information on the homeless issue/study. The commission moved to keep it on agenda for next meeting.

G. New Business

1. Tillinghast brought up his concerns with making the commission more available and present in the community. Suggested having two or three commissioners to work in person with guests who have complaints. Would like to make a smaller group to attend to public comment and take care of complaints. Commissioners discussed alternatives and what might be done differently. They agreed that it should be looked at and discussed further.
2. Botzler would like to discuss elections in June for new commissioners. Would like it put on agenda for April, 2008 meeting.
3. Miller motioned to write Mond a letter of commendation. The motion passed.