

**Humboldt County Human Rights Commission
Minutes**

Meeting of Tuesday, June 10, 2008
Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

A. Attendance and Introductions

Present: Botzler, Sanders, Miller, Altschuler, Shaffer, Tharp, Duncan
Excused: Brake-Mills, Herbelin, Munsee, Lochtie, Lyons, Tillinghast
Guests: One

B. Approval of Minutes: Minutes were approved.

C. Public Comment:

A guest reported to the commission about possible child abuse occurring at his neighbor's house. He has made numerous reports to the Sheriff's Department, Child Protective Services, and to the county supervisors. He gave suggestions of what he felt should be done to deal with the issue. In addition he stated that he came to the commission to receive advice and counsel on how to deal with the problem. Commissioners asked about what the follow up has been from C.P.S. He said there has been no follow up, possibly due to procedure and legalities within C.P.S. Miller said he would contact C.P.S. to see if the report has been investigated, or if his complaint has been received. Miller will report back to the gentleman as soon as he finds out.

D. Telephone Calls, Correspondence and E-mails

Miller had no calls to report on.

Sanders reported that he received four phone calls. One was from a woman who said that she had her rights violated at the mental health department. He attempted to contact her but was not successful. The second call was from a woman who stated that her child had been the victim of discrimination at a Eureka School. Sanders contacted the woman but got no reply. The third call was from a woman who calls frequently. She left a message but did not have any complaints. She just wanted to talk. The fourth call was from a man who had been hit by a law enforcement officer in his car. He sued the law enforcement department and lost. Now he wanted to know what he should do about this. He also complained of police abuse in an arrest and an additional legal issue he is dealing with. He was referred back to his lawyer.

Shaffer reported on five calls. The first call was from a woman with switchboard and the United Way. She pointed out that some of the numbers on the commission's information cards were out dated. Shaffer referred this information to Botzler. The second call was from a man concerned with possible child abuse occurring at his neighbor's house. He was also concerned about the behavior of a deputy who responded to his call. Shaffer referred the man to Miller. Miller advised him on what steps to take in order to deal with the issue. He also recommended that the man attend the next commission

meeting. The second call was from the same man who called about his neighbor again. The third call was from a man who complained that he had been roughed up by an officer from the Arcata Police Department. He also complained that he had not received adequate treatment in jail regarding his medications. He was referred to Miller. Miller spoke with the man and said he would be happy to help him file a report with the Arcata Police Department. The man has since filed a complaint with the Arcata Police Department. The fourth call was from a 53 year old woman who believes she is being unfairly targeted by the Ferndale Police Department. Shaffer said that he would contact the police chief regarding the issue and get back to her. The fifth call was from a 65 year old woman who is a resident at Silvercrest. She has been mentally ill and suicidal for forty years. She called to complain about her treatment at Silvercrest. She was recently put into isolation for four days upon which she did not receive her medication. She also complained about dirty facilities and having to walk up flights of stairs with a heart problem. She was generally overall concerned with the mental health situation. She was referred to Senior Legal Services.

Correspondence:

Botzler reported that he was contacted by Humboldt Pride about the upcoming play about the Laramie Project. He was also contacted about the Humboldt Pride Festival and wanted to know whether the Human Rights Commission should attend the festival this year. There was a motion to have a presence at the festival and the motion was approved.

Tharp asked if Miller had heard anything about (security) issues concerning the June 17, 2008 same sex marriage ceremonies at the courthouse. Miller had not heard anything and stated that Christina Albright, the A.C.L.U or the County Clerk might know more information.

Shaffer proposed the commission have an orientation or workshop on how to handle calls and complaints referring to law enforcement. Miller was asked to make a bullet point list of law enforcement complaint contacts and tactics or methods of handling these issues. Sanders volunteered to help Miller compile this list. There was a motion to list the topic for handling law enforcement on the Agenda for September.

Miller brought up the upcoming immigration issues; i.e. 300 people being fired for not having paper work. He just wants the commission to be aware of the issue.

E. Committee, Liaison, and Case Reports

1. Finance

Shaffer reported a balance of \$ 614.64. \$200.00 was paid to Barbara Attard

2. Outreach and Education:

Nothing new to report

3. Resource Cards:

Altschuler reported that College of the Redwoods Printing Department would print the cards (5,000) for \$72.00 and KINKOS would cut and score the cards for

- \$112.00. Altschuler suggested applying for a Humboldt Area Foundation Grant to pay for the cards. The commission agreed on printing 2500 cards. And agreed that looking into the grant was a good idea.
4. Website: Nothing to report (Munsee not present)
 5. Recognitions: Nothing to report
 6. Internship: (Duncan) Nothing to report. Agreed we would include it with the U.D.H.R. committee report.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Election of Officers:
Motion passed to nominate Sanders as Chair, Lyons as Vice Chair and Munsee as Secretary. And a note of appreciation has been made to Shaffer for volunteering to keep track of commission finances.
2. Citizen Law Enforcement Review Board:
Botzler reported the committee has not met since the last report. He sent the report to LECAH and they said they would rather not work collectively with the committee. The sub-committee will meet in early July. They are hoping to receive involvement in the sub-committee from local law enforcement. Miller suggested contacting the woman from the officers association to see if she would like to be involved. Shaffer stated that it might be helpful to take into account future obstacles to implementation that might occur.
3. Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
Altschuler presented letter draft for obtaining community involvement in an advisory committee as well as, use for a possible press release.
4. Homelessness in Humboldt County: Nothing to report. Brake-Mills not present.
5. Mental Health Care in Humboldt County: Miller had nothing new to report as of now.
6. Humboldt County Code Enforcement:
Miller reported that the investigating commission officers have been given code manuals to read and interpret. They are currently in the process of reading the manuals to figure out how to deal with the problem.

G. New Business

1. Relocation to 720 Wood Street and PSA:
The issue was discussed among commissioners. Miller was concerned with who approved the move and whether the county will be providing security. Tharp suggested that the commission bring this issue up to the board of supervisors. Miller motioned that the commission draft a letter to be sent to the Board of Supervisors before the next meeting, expressing the commission's discontent with having to move to a distant and less secure location. A motion was passed to have Sanders write a letter to the Board. Miller also suggested and volunteered to call other county courthouses to see how they have dealt with similar situations.
2. Annual Report:
Botzler asked for feedback on the annual report. Commissioners agreed that the information to be included looked good. Botzler stated that he would get a draft out to the commission in July and have it completed and ready to present to the

board by August.

Motion to adjourn passed: 7:55 p.m.

Ronni Duncan, Intern
Humboldt County Human Rights Commission