

Humboldt County Human Rights Commission
Meeting of June 4, 2009
5:00 pm, Conference Room A
Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, California

A. Attendance and Introductions

- a. Present: Altschuler, Aronoff, Brake-Mills, Farber-Bush, Lochtie, Miller, Munsee, Pereira, Sanders, Shelter
- b. Absent: Herbelin, Holt
- c. Guests: There were five guests present.

B. Minutes

- a. The minutes were approved as presented.

C. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment.

D. Telephone Calls, Correspondence, and E-mail Reports

a. Telephone Calls

1. Brake-Mills reported on seven phone calls. One was from a woman who said she had been abused in jail. This call was referred to Miller. The woman is filing a formal complaint, but Miller offered further help if needed. Another caller left a message about being harassed by police but could not be reached on call-back. A woman complained about the managers in RCAA housing. Brake-Mills followed up with RCAA and learned that the woman had been evicted. A senior citizen who felt victimized by her son was referred to Senior Services. A person recently evicted asked for a resource card which was sent.
2. Holt was not present at the meeting but had submitted report forms to Miller who reported on some of the calls handled by Holt during the month. A quadriplegic man complained of having been robbed and abandoned by his caregivers. This call was referred to Miller who followed through with conversations with the alleged victim and a caregiver. Miller reported the situation to Adult Services. A local attorney in a wheelchair complained about an injury and was referred by Sanders to The Public Guardian's Office and Adult Services.
3. Lochtie reported a call from a woman in an unpleasant work situation. She was counseled by Lochtie who discussed the grievance policy and its ramifications. A case of elder abuse was reported by a family friend of the alleged victim and was referred to Adult Protective Services and The Senior Resource Center.

4. It was suggested that the message on the answering machine be reviewed and updated. Miller will review the message, and Sanders will record an updated one.

1. Telephone Assignments

- a. Loctie (June 1-15)
- b. Munsee (June 16-31)
- c. Miller (July 1-15)

- b. Correspondence

1. Letters were received from CSU Channel Islands from someone conducting a survey of human rights organizations. Sanders and Miller will complete the survey forms and submit them.
2. A couple of letters were received from people in jail. Sanders checked with jail personnel to determine that one inmate was okay. Another inmate who wrote to say that he had concerns about his representation had been released from jail and was unable to be contacted because of lack of information regarding his whereabouts.

- c. E-Mail Contacts

1. There were no e-mail contacts.

E. Committee, Liaison, and Contact Reports

- a. Finance (Loctie)

1. Loctie reported a balance of \$831.40 in the HRC account.

- b. Outreach and Education (Altschuler)

1. Altschuler had nothing new to report.
2. Sanders reported having visited a class at Arcata High School to discuss human rights.
3. Farber-Bush announced that there is space available for a table at the Oyster Festival on Saturday, June 20. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to have a booth at the festival if the cost is no more than \$25. Participants will be organized by e-mail. If not enough people can attend, our participation will be canceled. Pereira, Brake-Mills, and Munsee will be in charge of this project. We will need materials to distribute at this event. A motion was made and passed to authorize an expenditure of \$250 - \$300 if necessary to print more resource cards. Farber-Bush said she may be able to have cards printed. Munsee reported having 600 cards available.

- c. Website (Munsee)

1. Brake-Mills reported that the list of commissioners needs to be updated. Munsee will have this done.

- d. Recognition (Sanders)

1. Sanders had nothing to report.

F. Unfinished Business

- a. Law Enforcement Advisory Committee (Sanders)
 - 1. Sanders reported that our representatives have met with representatives of the county. It is expected that this issue will be dealt with within the next month by The Board of Supervisors.
- b. Homelessness in Humboldt County (Shelter, Brake-Mills, Munsee)
 - 1. John Shelter reviewed his New Directions Program which is designed to help homeless residents of local forests to become stewards of the land. It is a plan in which homeless mentor homeless. This is a program to help the homeless to be clean and healthy where they are, as there is no other place for them to be in the community. He reported that The board of Supervisors has written a letter of approval of this program and asked for support from The Human Rights Commission. Altschuler moved, and Lochtie seconded a motion that The Commission draw up a set of recommendations regarding provision for the homeless in the community to be submitted to The Board of Supervisors as soon as possible. The motion passed unanimously, and a committee was formed to accomplish the task. Committee members are Shelter, Miller, Pereira, and Brake-Mills. The committee will submit their proposal for approval to The Commission on July 2.
- c. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Altschuler)
 - 1. Altschuler reported that Ms Linnea of The County Office of Education will distribute the list of 60 project ideas to faculty throughout the county for use in the fall. Altschuler will distribute the list to members of the faculty at College of the Redwoods, and Aronoff will distribute it to appropriate people at Humboldt State. Aronoff suggested the possibility of having a human rights film festival at the new dinner theater in Arcata. It was agreed that this is a good idea and one to explore at a later date.
- d. ADA Celebration at Redwood Acres on July 24 (Miller)
 - 1. A motion was made by Miller and seconded by Altschuler to authorize a check for \$25 to pay for a table at this event. The motion passed unanimously. Miller, Sanders, and Brake-Mills will attend this event.
- e. Jail Liaison (Miller)
 - 1. Miller reviewed the history of Commission involvement with inmates in the jail and expressed the hope that the new law review committee will include practices in the jail. This issue will be discussed again next month.

G. New Business

- a. Brake-Mills initiated a discussion of our role in helping the citizens of the county. Lochtie pointed out that our charge is to give advice to The Board of Supervisors regarding issues of human rights. A discussion followed

regarding how we meet our charge and how we help those who call or come to us with grievances.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10.

Jean Munsee, Secretary
Humboldt County Human Rights Commission