

**MEETING MINUTES FOR
MICHIGAN CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

January 6, 2009
Page 1

Present: Marty Corley
JoAnn Engquist
Nancy Gonzalez
Martin Hernandez
Judi Huber
Pamela Jones
Hezzie Mitchell
Faye Moore
Elizabeth Pacheco-Hubertz
Mary Ellen Quinn
Tyra Robinson-Walker

Absent: James Guerrucci

<u>Staff:</u>	Ta-Tanisha Clark	Executive Director
	Sammie Phillips	Assistant Director
	Sherry Neal	Secretary
	Larry Arness	Staff Attorney

Others: Andy Steele ALCO T.V. Cameraman

Roll Call:

Chairperson Quinn asked for the roll to be called. Director Clark called the roll and it was noted for the record. All attendance is noted above.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairperson Quinn asked for a motion of acceptance for the corrected December minutes. Commissioner Engquist pointed out a correction on page 3 paragraph 7. Commissioner Huber motioned to accept. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion. The chairperson asked for a vote.

Correction: [Chairperson Engquist Neimann Elementary, Boys & Girls Club, Coolspring and Pine Elementary School.]

Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 01 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

FINANCE REPORT:

Commissioner Mitchell distributed a written Treasurer's Report (prepared by Vice Chairperson Moore) for dates 12-09-08 to 01-06-09. The report showed no financial activity for this time period. The banking statement had not been received in-house at the time of this report. The account has an ending balance of \$6,735.66

Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 01 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

**MEETING MINUTES FOR
MICHIGAN CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

*January 6, 2009
Page 2*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Clark gave an update on the current case disposition for the month of December as follows: 2 Filter Specialist cases have been added back to the report, 2 NPC ruling were received and as a result 2 more cases will be removed from the report next month and finally 3 cases have been closed for the month of December.

For the 2008 reporting year a total of 30 cases were sent to EEOC; 2 were sent to I.C.R.C for a total of 32 cases that were forwarded to outside agencies for investigation.

The Commission is still awaiting the approval of Attorney Arness' contract renewal. The request was sent to Attorney John Espar and is awaiting his approval. An e-mail correspondence from Attorney Espar to Director Clark advised that there was a change that needed to be made which is a standard change in all contracts.

ATTORNEY REPORT:

Attorney Arness reported that he met with Commissioner Mitchell regarding the ordinance proposal by Commission Liaison Angie Nelson and Council Member Bob McKee. During the meeting it was determined that there was not enough information present to make any decisions at that time.

A brief discussion followed that further information would need to be provided by Commission Liaison Nelson and Council Member McKee before the February meeting.

Attorney Arness also discussed the proxy voting for the Commission. Attorney Arness stated that he prepared a bylaw change and a proxy sheet for proxy voting.

Highlights of the proxy form discussed:

- The proposed bylaw change would be voting by proxy and permitted at meetings of the board with written notification from the absent board member.
- An appointment of a proxy is effective when received by the secretary, other officer or agent that is authorized to tabulate votes.
- The proxy procedure should be used sparingly.
- No board member present shall hold more than one proxy for any absent member per meeting.
- No absent member shall give their proxy more than two months per calendar year.

The forms issued were tentative and has yet to be approved by the Commission. This issue will be on the agenda for the February 2009 meeting.

A brief discussion followed.

**MEETING MINUTES FOR
MICHIGAN CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

*January 6, 2009
Page 3*

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMUNITY RELATIONS/EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Education Committee

Commissioner Jones stated there was nothing to report regarding the End to Bullying grant. No further updates will be given until May when Michigan City Area School teacher, Sue Vigen, will present her report to the Commission.

Regarding the Black History Month Contest with this years' theme "Yes We Can"; Commissioner Jones stated that it is a slow time presently and also made an announcement that she needed to speak with the people who informed her that they would contact some of the local businesses for donations.

Commissioner Jones appealed to the Commission as a whole for names of judges that are needed to help judge the entries. There are currently 5 judges and the need is for 9 in all. Two judges are specifically for poetry.

A discussion followed with comments from the table that mentioned Ronnie Gaston as a potential judge as well as former Commissioner Ron Strauss.

Also, a discussion about the procedure for cataloging entries followed. Who? Where? When? and How?

Director Clark informed the Commission that John Jones, of The Emergency Management Agency, has allowed the Commission access to use their room for the use of displaying the entries for judging. The Commissioners were asked if they could pitch in a couple of hours a week to help with the contest.

The Black History Month Contest cataloging will be done the week of February 2nd through February 6th.

The Black History Month Contest judging will take place from February 9th through February 13th.

DISABILITY

Commissioner Huber reported that Commissioner Guerrucci asked if she would get in touch with the social worker from St. Anthony Memorial Hospital. While speaking with the social worker who informed her that she did not do informational speeches and thus recommended she contact Real Services of LaPorte County. An alternative speaker that was recommended was Sgt. Chris Yagelski from the MCPD. The focus was to find someone locally without having to go outside of the city.

Commissioner Huber stated that she and Director Clark would speak more regarding the upcoming Disability Taskforce meeting to be held January 21, 2008 at 3:45 p.m. at City Hall.

**MEETING MINUTES FOR
MICHIGAN CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

January 6, 2009
Page 4

Commissioner Huber went on to say that the time of the meeting was chosen due to the bus service and work schedules. She also stated that she and Director Clark will be working on getting information out to individuals to inform them of the committee meetings.

HOUSING:

Chairperson Quinn stated that there were no housing complaints and subsequently no housing report.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Mitchell reiterated that the Adhoc Committee would meet again with Council Member Bob McKee and Commission Liaison Angie Nelson to collect more information regarding the ordinance changes.

Commissioner Mitchell asked for 2-3 commissioners to be on the Adhoc committee and the following commissioners agreed to work on the committee: Commissioners; J. Huber, F. Moore, and J. Engquist.

Commissioner Engquist made a motion to accept the 2008 Executive Director's evaluation and to be included in that motion the acceptance of her goals written by Director Clark. Commissioner Huber seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 10 Nays: 01 Abstained: 0 Absent: 01 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Huber mentioned that there is an overall blood shortage and asked those who were able to donate if they would consider doing so.

Attorney Arness announced that the Michigan City Fire Department has hired an African American firefighter which came in on the heels of the consent decree that was re-discovered by Director Clark. He also added that there is a nice article in the January 6, 2009 News-Dispatch regarding the hiring of David Briggs to the MCFD.

The Commission congratulated Mr. Briggs and thanked Council Member Willie Milsap for his involvement in the process.

Committee Selection sheets were given to the Commissioners. A tentative committee list will be provided at the February meeting to confirm selections.

A reminder from Attorney Arness stated that 2 of the committee members had to be voted in. The commissioners nominated to serve on the Executive Committee are: J. Huber, M. Corley, and J. Engquist.

Commissioner Moore made the motion that Commissioners; Judi Huber, Marty Corley and JoAnn Engquist are placed on the Executive Committee along with the standing members already in place. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 01 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

**MEETING MINUTES FOR
MICHIGAN CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

*January 6, 2009
Page 5*

Commissioner Moore made the motion to combine the Executive Committee and the Personnel Committee into one committee. Commissioner Huber seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 01 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

N/A

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Quinn asked for a motion of adjournment. Commissioner Corley made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Engquist seconded. The Chairperson asked for a vote:

Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 01 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

****The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.