

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

January 5, 2010
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Present: JoAnn Engquist
Nancy Gonzalez
James Guerrucci
Judi Huber
Elizabeth Pacheco-Hubertz
Hezzie Mitchell
Faye Moore
Mary Ellen Quinn

Absent: Marty Corley
Martin Hernández
Tyra Robinson-Walker

Staff: Ta-Tanisha Clark Executive Director
Sammie Phillips Assistant Director
Larry Arness Staff Attorney

Others: Andy Steele ALCO T.V. Cameraman

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Quinn asked for the roll to be called. Assistant Director Phillips 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 December meeting minutes. Commissioner Moore motioned to accept. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion. The chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 8 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 3 Vacant: 1
Motion accepted as submitted.

FINANCE REPORT:

Commissioner Mitchell, Treasurer, gave all present the report for the HRC monthly budget. The HRC account beginning balance was \$5,581.37. One deposit was made in the amount of \$144.50 and \$0.48 was earned in interest. This deposit was a reimbursement for the charge-back item on the December statement. Two checks were written one to S. Phillips for EEO Training supplies and the other for the adopt-a-family project. The ending balance is \$5,980.28. A written report was given to all present.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Clark gave all present the director's report. She reported city council members are meeting on February 2, 2010 at 5 pm at City Hall to look at code ordinances' for the city. The HRC was invited to attend due the possibility of some of the changes affecting ordinances' for the department.

Director Clark reported on January 18, 2010 PNC will be hosting its annual MLK Celebration Breakfast. This year's theme: "Wake -Up Martin Luther, Welcome to the Future". The guest speaker will be Dr. Quinton Smith and the M.C. Soul Steppers will perform. Chairperson Quinn inquired if they requested monies from the HRC for this year's breakfast. Director Clark noted no request was made this year. A short discuss was held.

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Director Clark also reported she and Mayor Oberlie held meetings with area construction companies currently doing business with the city in December. These meetings were held to discuss what the city's expectations are regarding the EEO and Hiring portions of their contracts.

Director Clark also noted the department has ordered monogrammed backpacks for the HRC Black History Month contest. She brought a sample of what the bags would look like.

ATTORNEY REPORT:

Staff Attorney Arness just reminded all present that any request for donations must be submitted to the commission three (3) months prior to the date the funds are needed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMUNITY RELATIONS/EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Education Committee:

Commissioner Engquist passed out a timeline for the Black History Month Contest. She noted everything is moving along nicely. She reported the posters, flyers and entry forms have already been distributed to the public schools. She noted the private schools, parochial and etc... still needed their forms. She inquired if anyone was available to distribute those. A sign-up sheet was being passed out for volunteers. She also reported Faith Walkers Screen Printing Service has graciously agreed again to donate 36 t-shirts for the winners of this years contest. A discussion was held regarding what was still needed to be accomplished for the contest. She also wanted the commissions input on the amount the gift cards should be.

Chairperson Quinn feels \$25 sounded much better \$20. Commissioner Engquist motioned the committee will be needed at the most \$160 for the winning prizes. Commissioner Guerrucci seconded. Chairperson Quinn asked for a vote:

Ayes: 8 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent:3 Vacant: 1

Motion carried.

DISABILITY

Disability Task Force Committee:

Commissioner Guerrucci distributed a copy of a more detailed outline for the March Disabilities Awareness Month contest. The theme: "Free Your Mind" is mirroring the Indiana Governors Council for People with Disabilities. He noted meeting with his board will be a difficult task due to poor weather conditions. His board is supposed to meet January 20, 2010 at 3:45 in the East Conference room pending on how the weather conditions are. It is proving to be a lot of work and he suggested a more collaborative effort for with the HRC. He suggested maybe making the Disabilities contest a regular one for the HRC as the Black History Month Contest. Commissioner Guerrucci updated the HRC on some interesting facts he learned of through the monthly newsletter of the Governors Council for People with Disabilities. A brief discussion was held.

Commissioner Guerrucci also inquired if the HRC could give any assistance or advice to disabled person being evicted from their home. He reported this person contacted him and he wanted the HRC advice. Attorney Arness advised him to have this individual contact Legal Services.

HOUSING:

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Commissioner Quinn inquired with the department as to the matter. Assistant Director reported all the housing complaints received have not been related to discrimination, but more towards Landlord/Tenant issues. All of those complaints were referred to Legal Services.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Nominating Committee polled all Human Rights Commissioners regarding their suggestions for the 2010 election of officers. She reported all contacted members were willing to continue on as previously voted. The Nominating Committee recommended the following:

Chairperson - Mary Ellen Quinn

Vice Chairperson- Faye Moore

Treasurer - Hezzie Mitchell

Chairperson Quinn asked for any other nominations from the floor. With none being noted, a voice roll call was taken from all present for the recommendation to the slate of officers.

Ayes: 8 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent:3 Vacant: 1

Motion carried.

Attorney Arness also reported to two members should be added on the Executive Committee. This can be done at next months meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Attorney Arness reported his contract for the HRC was up for renewal and it needed to be approved by the board. He gave a brief explanation on the specifics contained within. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Huber motioned to retain the legal services of Mr. Arness. Commissioner Engquist seconded. Chairperson asked for a motion of acceptance:

Ayes: 8 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent:3 Vacant: 1

Motion carried.

Commissioner Engquist would like to have acknowledgement of those absent members who took the time to report their absence and feels it should be recorded in the record. Commissioner Engquist also noted she would like an updated copy of the current committees for the HRC and reminded all present that a chair should be voted on for said committees. Commissioner Guerrucci reported his committee does have a chairperson. Commissioner Quinn noted at next months meeting all efforts will be made to make sure all committees have voted on a chairperson. Director Clark will send out a current copy and a blank copy for members to decide which committees they would like to serve on.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No comments were made

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Ayes: 9 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 1

Motion carried.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room (WEST).

Meeting adjourned at 5:45p.m.