

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

*July 1, 2008
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Present: JoAnn Engquist
Nancy Gonzalez
James Guerrucci
Judi Huber
Pamela Jones
Hezzie Mitchell
Elizabeth Pacheco-Hubertz
Faye Moore
Mary Ellen Quinn
Tyra Robinson-Walker

Absent: Marty Corley
Martin Hernandez

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

Others: Andy Steele ALCO T.V. Cameraman
Angie Nelson Commission Liaison

Roll Call:

Commissioner Engquist asked for the roll to be called. Secretary Neal called the roll and it was noted for the record. All attendance is noted above.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Engquist asked for a motion of acceptance for the June minutes. Commissioner Mitchell motioned to accept. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 10 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

FINANCE REPORT:

Commissioner Moore reported on the ending account balance for the month of May due to the fact that the June banking statement was not available to include in the report. The ending account balance for the month of *May* was \$6,002.34 with a disbursement of \$50.83 (check #1236) written for a flower arrangement and a total of \$1.28 paid in interest.

Commissioner Engquist asked for a motion of acceptance for the *July* financial report. Commissioner Huber motioned to accept. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. The chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 10 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Clark opened her report with the discussion of the increase in office contacts, the number of office contacts increased during the months of April, May and June due to the rise in landlord/tenant issues.

Director Clark reported on the case disposition for the month of June and noted that there were 2 administrative closures, 2 charges that were determined as out of the Commission's jurisdiction and 2 out to Probable Cause Committees. Case movement over the past month has been very active with more in the process of being completed.

Director Clark gave an update on the 2007-2008 construction projects and included a written report outlining the current projects and their individual status as of May 31, 2008.

In addition Director Clark warned that the contributions from companies may decrease for the 2008 HOYA/Annual Dinner celebration. Overall company support is decreasing. One solution is to seek new contributors. Current supporters may be experiencing donation drought possibly due to the current economic climate. She also stated that there will be a forthcoming compiled cost analysis for a cumulative progress report regarding the annual dinner at the end of the year.

Director Clark also asked for confirmation regarding the Annual Dinner tickets regarding the cost for individuals to attend this year's event. It was verified by Commissioner Quinn that the cost for adults will be \$20 and \$12 for students.

ATTORNEY REPORT:

Attorney Arness stated there was no attorney report for the month of June.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMUNITY RELATIONS/EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Education Committee

Commissioner Jones laid out the basics of the "End the Bullies Mini Grant" to the Commission with emphasis on the importance of how the mini grant will serve the Commission's purpose to be more inclusive in the school system. She also stressed the importance of a school project of this nature and how it is needed in today's school climate and that progress will be tracked to monitor the success of the mini grant by the end of the 2009 school year.

Commissioner Jones discussed that the grant is in part a strategy aimed at children attending and completing school successfully and has been modeled based on a previous grant which was written by her a couple of years ago. She added that the committee will meet to discuss the details of the grant.

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Commissioner Jones also discussed funding for the grant in the amount of \$250 and that she found it was better for the teachers to buy what they needed with a limit of \$250 and then be reimbursed for the monies by the Commission. She added the committee would like to see the grant renewed each year with the intended benefits of the recipient receiving the funds rather quickly. The grant would be “cash only”.

Commissioner Engquist asked for a motion of acceptance for the “End the Bullies Mini Grant” in the amount of \$250. Commissioner Moore motioned to accept. Commissioner Huber seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 10 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

M.C.C.S.S.A.A.M.

Commissioner Corley was not present for a report.

Disability Task Force

Commissioner Guerrucci stated that the Disability Taskforce was unable to meet in the month of June and as such did not have a report for the July meeting. He stated that there will be a meeting planned for the month of July to discuss the direction for future plans of the committee.

HOUSING:

No report given.

ANNUAL DINNER REPORT:

Commissioner Quinn stated that the cost per head is \$15 for this year which is an increase up from \$10 a head last year but also noted that there have been some changes to the menu as well. However the costs were still reasonable and are in line with expected ticket sales.

Commissioner Quinn also reported that plans for the Annual Dinner are on target and that everything is in place with the menu and reservations with the Washington Park Senior Center. Commissioner Quinn also commented that she is looking forward to a successful 2008 Annual Dinner.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Moore discussed the Promotional Displays and the costs associated with what is needed to create a nice presentation for the Commission that will be long lasting for extended use.

Asst. Director Phillips added that she researched the various panels and the costs associated with the different types of displays. She explained that costs associated with the displays would be expensive and ranged in price depending on the style of the display. The different choices included: a.) computer generated pre-formatted style b.) blank presentation self-style or c.) tablecloth with a printed logo.

A discussion followed regarding Black History Month and bringing on extra helpers for the event.

Director Clark commented that the Black History Month has now taken on a life of its own and has become bigger than the Commission and extra hands are needed in order to continue the event. She suggested that the Commission should consider bringing in other organizations to help share in the responsibilities that have been gradually increasing over time. Organizations mentioned included the N.A.A.C.P. and the Black Expo sponsors.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Director Clark discussed the possibility of a donation for the upcoming “Shake A Hand, Make A Friend” event. The event is to kick off the new school year and help families with some of the needs that children face when returning to school. She stated that the North Central Action Agency is a big contributor to the event and that it helps to provide much needed school supplies such as book bags, pencils, notebooks and other school items.

Commissioner Guerrucci discussed collaborating with outside sources as well as inviting more professionals to committee meetings in an effort to help harness community resources. He also talked about having more meetings at City Hall as opposed to the Commissioner’s homes for a more professional setting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None noted.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Ayes: 10 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 0
Motion carried.

The next board meeting is scheduled for August 5, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. in the Mayor’s Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.