

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

*December 1, 2009
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Present: JoAnn Engquist
Nancy Gonzalez
James Guerrucci
Judi Huber
Elizabeth Pacheco-Hubertz
Hezzie Mitchell
Faye Moore
Mary Ellen Quinn
Tyra Robinson-Walker

Absent: Marty Corley
Martin Hernández

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

Others: Andy Steele ALCO T.V. Cameraman
Nora Akins

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 October meeting minutes. Commissioner Mitchell motioned to accept. Commissioner Robinson-Walker seconded the motion. The chairperson asked for a vote.

Ayes: 9 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 1
Motion accepted as submitted.

FINANCE REPORT:

Commissioner Mitchell gave all present the report for the HRC monthly budget. The HRC account beginning balance was \$5,664.69. One deposit was made in the amount of \$520. We had a charge back item and fee in the amount of \$135. The ending balance is \$6,103.37. Commissioner Gonzalez questioned why and what item was charged back. Director Clark gave a brief explanation and noted she is working to correct the matter. A written report was giving to all present.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Clark reported on the case disposition and gave a brief updated report. Case 2008-04 received a NPC ruling and the notice will be sent to the CP. A copy of said report was given to all present.

ATTORNEY REPORT:

Staff Attorney Arness had no report.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMUNITY RELATIONS/EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Education Committee:

Commissioner Engquist reported this committee recently met to discuss the details of the upcoming Black History Month Contest. She noted a small turnout met with the NAACP, Mr. Henry George. Everyone had very positive ideals for the contest and that Mr. George was very excited about the collaboration with the HRC. Commissioner Engquist noted the goal is to eventually have the NAACP take ownership of the annual event. The committee has thus far created a timeline and theme. This year's themes will be: The "Underground Railroad; Climb aboard and take a trip through history." The contest will mirror previous year's participation rules and guidelines. A deadline has been set for 2/1/10. She reported MCAS once again has generously donated making and distributing the posters and entry forms for the public schools. Commissioner Engquist noted the committee is open for new and interesting ideas for the contest. Anyone wanting to discuss the contest may contact any of the Committee Members. Chairperson Quinn thanked Commissioner Engquist for all her hard work for the contest.

DISABILITY

Disability Task Force Committee:

Commissioner Guerrucci reported March 2010 is Disability Awareness Month. He presented all present with an outline requesting the HRC co-sponsorship for a contest celebrating people with disabilities. He gave a report on the matter. He is requesting the assistance of the HRC with sponsoring a contest for children to create either a poem, essay or art project. He suggested having a winner in three (3) categories; (1) elementary, (1) middle school and (1) high school. He suggested just awarding the winner a small plaque. He asked that the HRC purchase the (3) plaque's. He doesn't have a theme yet, but plans on making it the same as the Indiana Council for People with Disabilities. A discussion was held regarding the matter. Chairperson Quinn asked for discussion; Commissioner Engquist was concerned with the vague outline and suggested a more detailed one. Commissioner Guerrucci reiterated he knows this is new but feels strongly about moving forward. Commissioner Huber motioned to assist the Disabilities Task Force and purchase the (3) award plaques up to \$100. Commissioner Robinson-Walker seconded the motioned. Chairperson Quinn asked for a vote:

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

Motion carried.

Commissioner Guerrucci also reported the task force will be meeting for its quarterly meeting on January 20, 2010 at 3:45 pm in the East Conference room. The guest speaker will be Ellen Sharp.

HOUSING:

Chairperson Quinn briefly apprised all present, even though there are not any formal housing complaints for discrimination, the department still receives numerous complaints for other matters. Issues such as land-lord tenant issues, tenant rights etc...

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Engquist reported the nominating committee was unable to contact everyone regarding the 2010 election for the HRC; therefore, there was no recommendation at this time. She does plan to have a recommendation for the January meeting.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Gonzalez inquired if the HRC was going to sponsor a family in need for the 2009 holiday. Director Clark noted she has not received any information from any social service agencies. The staff will contact previous agencies to inquire if our donation could be utilized. The staff will work with commissioners' in making this happen. A report will be given at the January meeting on the outcome. A discussion followed regarding what the commission had done in past years. Chairperson Quinn asked for a motion. Commissioner Guerrucci motioned to allow the staff to contact social service agencies and select a family in need and provide them with up to \$250. Commissioner Moore seconded. Chairperson Quinn asked for discussion. Commissioner Robinson-Walker inquired how the families are selected for this donation. Director Clark noted in the past the commission has worked with the VNA and will most-likely work with them again. With no other discussions on the floor, Chairperson Quinn asked for a vote:

Ayes: 9 Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Absent: 2 Vacant: 1
Motion carried.

Commissioner Moore reported the NAACP has created newsletter for the LaPorte area. She passed a copy of the newsletter to all present. She also reported she is a member of the Indiana National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice. The association has a very detailed reported on Juvenile Disproportionality Study available and she has copies if anyone would like one.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Akins thanked Director Clark for attending the seminar she conducted in November at the Entrepreneurial Center.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Quinn asked for a motion of adjournment. Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Robinson-Walker 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, January 4, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room (WEST).

Meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.