



COUNTY OF SONOMA
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Commission on Human Rights

June 26, 2006

**Permit & Resource Management Department
2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95404**

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Juanita Ashe, Judy Boyce, Reece Foxen, Herb Genelly, Dalia Goldschmidt-Sheff, Sally Miller, Marie Sparks

Commissioners Absent: Catherine Andrade (Not Notified), Abigail Barajas (Not Notified), Linda Kelley (Notified), Chris Rohde (Notified), Anne-Jeanne Rothchild (Not Notified), David Wilson (Not Notified)

Community Members Present: Steve Bown, Oralee Anderson-Francois

Staff Present: Dawn Matheny, Maggie Martin

I. Call to Order/Introductions: Sparks called to order at 5:44 PM.

II. Consent Items:

Approval of Agenda: The Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of April 24, 2006 Minutes: The Minutes were reviewed and revisions were noted. Motion by Genelly: *Approve the Minutes as drafted.* Seconded by Foxen. Unanimously approved.

Approval of May 22, 2006 Minutes: The Minutes were reviewed and revisions were noted. Motion by Miller: *Approve the Minutes as drafted.* Seconded by Boyce. Unanimously approved.

III. Public Comment: Ms. Anderson-Francois, a resident of Santa Rosa, spoke to the Commission about her recent experiences as a foster parent. Two of the young children in her charge had been removed during from her household while an investigation was conducted into her ability to serve as a foster parent for her two teen-aged sons. She expressed her concerns about how the system negatively affected all her children because by preventing/restricting visitation and placing the children in overcrowded facilities during the lengthy investigation period. In conclusion she called for a Grand Jury investigation into the process.

IV. Staff Report: Matheny reported that the Commission meeting location will change in the near future. The Human Resources Training Department will have a space in their new facilities (located on Fiscal Drive) that will accommodate the meetings.

Teresa Guisto has left her support position in the office, and the position will not be filled on a regular basis because the position will be eliminated in the FY 06-07 budget. One quarter of this position supported CHR. Because this cut reduces office coverage, Commissioners are encouraged to call before coming to the office (except for scheduled

meetings). Our standard office hours are from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, but the office may be closed (particularly during mid-day lunch times). The budget does have a provision for temporary help to provide assistance with special projects.

Martin reported that the Community Involvement Division's website is being revised. We hope to have this operational in the near future. The site will allow "e-visitors" to access information on the Commission as well as various informational pieces that the Commission has developed. The site will also allow Commissioners to subscribe to receive automatic updates of Agendas and Minutes for Commission meetings.

V. Old Business: None.

VI. New Business:

Commission Membership Updates: Sparks made the following announcements regarding Commission Membership:

1. Troutt (5th District) is on a 3-month leave of absence for health reasons.
2. Ashe (2nd District) was reappointed.
3. Rohde (2nd District) may miss some meeting (including tonight) because he has accepted a new job and is in training.
4. There is one opening (4th District) remaining.

Ad Hoc Bylaw Review Committee: Sparks reported that the next step in the restructuring of the Commission is to revise the Bylaws. She asked that the Commission consider approving the appointment of the Executive Committee serving as an "Ad Hoc Bylaw Review) Committee.

Miller inquired about how the review/approval process can be designed to be both expedient and compliant with Brown Act requirements. A lengthy discussion ensued. During the discussion, Matheny explained that the Bylaw amendment process will involve the review/approval by County Administration (Human Resources Director), County Counsel, the Commission (for a vote at either the July or August regular meeting) and the Board of Supervisors.

The result was that Sparks, appointed Boyce, Foxen, Genelly, Miller, Rohde and herself to serve as the Ad Hoc Bylaw Review Committee.

Nominations for Elected Positions: Sparks directed the Commissioners' attention to the updated list of nominations for elected offices and potential appointed positions. (The nomination for Chair is Sparks, and the nominations for Vice-Chair are Rohde and Miller.) She encouraged further nominations from anyone interested in serving in or nominating a colleague for a position.

Elections: Sparks announced that, pending the revision on the Bylaws, the elections of Commission officers be postponed, pending the Board's approval of the revised Bylaws.

Resource Referral Project: Martin reported that staff is undertaking a new project as the result of Genelly's request for a referral resource for Commissioners to use when addressing concerns/issues raised by members of the public. She will be working with Nadine Jaillet, who handles the majority of the calls from the public, to develop an annotated list of the "top" agencies/organizations/service providers to which the office makes referrals.

VII. Committee Reports:

Executive Committee: Sparks stated that the activities of the Executive Committee have been covered previously in the meeting.

Education Committee: Foxen reported that Windsor High School has agreed to support a full-blown Hate Free Campus training effort in the fall. This will involve full-day training for teachers to be held on August 11th as well as separate training sessions for both students and parents. In her dealings with the School, she has learned that they have a number of campus resources to support diversity activities/initiatives on campus (e.g., an elected Student Diversity Commissioner and student diversity clubs).

Events Committee: Martin reported for Troutt. Plans for the event are moving forward. We are still waiting to get a formal contract drawn and approved for the rental and are exploring alternatives for catering the reception.

The primary initiative of importance at this point is the “sponsorship solicitation campaign.” Rothchild has accepted the Co-Chair for Publicity position and is developing a new packet to send to prospective sponsors. Once the packet is finalized, the Committee will be asking some Commissioners to make follow-up calls to help with the fund raising effort.

Public Relations & Marketing:

- *Current Committee Projects:* Sparks complimented Rothchild and Foxen on their efforts to finalize the Pyramid of Hate in both English and Spanish versions. Other projects, including the brochures and speech templates are moving forward.
- *Race Equality Week:* Ashe reported that the planning committee is undergoing leadership changes. However, the plans are moving forward. Currently, efforts are focused on soliciting sponsorships for activities involving children and art projects.
- *North Bay Pride Music Festival:* Genelly and Goldschmidt-Sheff had staffed the booth early in the day (before the formal start of the festivities). Therefore, they did not have a lot of traffic by the booth. Andrade, the Troutts and Rothchild had also tabled at the event. All had considered that the booth was located out of the “mainstream” of traffic. Foxen thanked all those that helped “cover” the booth that day to help cover when she couldn’t table that day.

Criminal Justice: No report. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 20, 2006 at 2:00 PM.

VIII. District Report / Commissioner Announcements:

- Boyce announced that the Cloverdale CAC had tabled at a garden tour sponsored by the local Historical Society. Approximately 20 people visited the booth, and the response from everyone was favorable.

IX. Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Monday, July 24, 2006 at 5:30 PM.

X. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 PM.