



COUNTY OF SONOMA
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Commission on Human Rights

June 24, 2008

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

MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Judy Boyce, Krishna Kumar, Chris Rohde, Robert Villegas, Marie Sparks

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jim de Priest (Not Notified)

STAFF PRESENT: Maggie Martin

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS: Boyce called to order at 5:34 PM

II. CONSENT ITEMS: The agenda and minutes of previous meetings were approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

IV. COMMISSION UPDATE:

Swearing in of New Commissioner: Martin swore in Krishna Kumar to represent the 1st District.

Openings and Appointments: Rohde reported that there are nine openings in Districts 1 (2 openings), 2 (2 openings), 3 (3 openings), and 4 (2 openings).

Sparks reported that she has identified a potential Commissioner from the 1st District. Martin reported that Gerry Meyer is interested in applying to represent the 5th District after Sparks' resignation creates an opening in that District and is working to recruit other Commissioners from the faculty of Sonoma State University.

V. SUPERVISOR COMMUNICATION UPDATE: Sparks reported that she would give Supervisor Reilly her resignation when she moves to Redding after the July Commission meeting.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

Human Trafficking: Villegas reported that plans for the upcoming event are proceeding smoothly. The group discussed and decided on specific "assignments" for Commissioners to assist at the event.

Rohde and Boyce shared their impressions of the CARGO after having screened the documentary. Both were impressed by how well the film portrayed the plight of victims of human trafficking.

Education Program Proposals: Martin reported on Sparks' behalf that she and Villegas are working to schedule a meeting with Robert Ochs, Chief Probation Officer, to discuss opportunities for diversity training of the youth in the probation system. She will

also be working to finalize contracts with Listening For A Change for the all phases of the training programs in the upcoming fiscal year.

Strategic Planning Sessions: The group discussed potential dates for strategic planning sessions. The possibilities that emerged were:

- Friday, August 22nd,
- Tuesday, August 26th in the afternoon before the Commission meeting, and/or
- Tuesday, September 23rd, in the afternoon before the Commission meeting.

Martin will identify and reserve a room and report back at the next Commission meeting.

Nominations for Officer Positions: Martin reminded everyone of the nominations made at the May Commission meeting: Boyce for Chair, Rohde for Vice-Chair and Villegas for Officer-At-Large. She then made a final call for nominations from the floor, and none were made.

Commission Group Resume Exercise: The Commissioners shared information on their educational backgrounds. Villegas and Kumar also “caught up” on the previous segments of the exercise by sharing information on places they had lived and/or traveled. Please see attached Group Resume details.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

Election of Officers: Since the three nominees are not opposed for their positions, Martin called for a vote on the candidates (i.e., Boyce for Chair, Rohde for Vice-Chair and Villegas for Officer-at-Large). The nominees were elected unanimously.

Race Equality Week: Rohde asked that a Commissioner to represent CHR at these meetings so that CHR is aware of and can explore ways to support this important event. He went on to ask if any Commissioners were receiving notices of the Race Equality Week planning committee’s meetings, because the office is no longer on the distribution list for meeting notices and minutes.

Sparks replied that she was receiving the notices and would forward them on to the Office so that staff can request an update of the list.

Boyce noted that she had asked de Priest to serve as CHR’s representative to the event planning committee. However, he has not had the information meeting to attend yet.

Martin noted that, that this year’s Race Equality Week will occur from September 14th through September 21st, and the Festival would be held on Sunday, September 21st. However, before submitting the application and fee for having a table at this year’s festival, solicited volunteers to support the display/materials preparation and staff the booth at the Festival. Villegas, Boyce, Rohde and Kumar all volunteered to help.

VIII. STAFF REPORT:

Correspondence: None.

Update on Staff Activities: Martin noted that the staff’s focus has been on the preparations for the upcoming Human Trafficking Awareness event.

IX. ACTIVITY REPORTS:

Awards Event: Sparks reported that she and Martin had met with Phyllis Rosenfield, Executive Director of Listening For A Change, our partner in the event. The initial planning discussion included the following highlights:

- Awards Event Date: Saturday, January 17, 2009 (i.e., during the Martin Luther King weekend).
- Venue: We will hold the event at the Mary Agatha Furth Center in Windsor.
- Keynote Address: We should explore options for substituting the keynote address with videos of the recipients or another format.
- Food: The pasta dinner and simple dessert were well received last year. Sparks has asked the Pasta King for an estimate on providing the dinner.
- Nomination and Selection Process: Martin will coordinate the notices on nominations in August and the selection committee meeting in October.
- Commissioner Support: Sparks noted that, with her pending move and resignation, a Commissioner needs to serve as the event coordinator. Villegas volunteered to take on this role. Rohde and Kumar both offered to assist.

Strengthening the Commission: Boyce noted that she was pleased with the Commissioner Diversity Training held earlier in the month and solicited feedback from other Commissioners. All agreed that the training was valuable and felt the material would be a solid basis for the youth education programs being developed. Kumar remarked that the session made for a great introduction to the Commission and fellow Commissioners.

Communicating with the Public: No report.

Educating the Public: Report covered under the Education Program Proposals item in Old Business.

Developing Ties with Human Rights Organizations & Building Strategic Partnerships: No report. Further developments may occur as a follow-up to the Human Trafficking Awareness Event.

X. DISTRICT REPORT / COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

XI. NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 22, 2008 at 5:30 PM.

XII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.