

**Human Right Commission
February 2, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mary Bixby, Negar Jackson, Jessica Macy, Thomas O'Toole, Mark Thomas

Members Excused: Marissa Todd

Staff Present: Steve Hollis, Marie Glaze, Shawna Victor

Others Present: Tom Lata, City of Columbia Community Development Coordinator

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. **Approval of Agenda:** Thomas said Refugee and Immigration Services had to cancel their presentation.

Jackson moved to approve the revised agenda. The motion was seconded by Bixby and passed unanimously.

III. **Approval of January 5, 2010 meeting minutes:** O'Toole moved to approve the January 5, 2010 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Jackson and passed unanimously.

IV. **Old Business**

a. **FY2010 Boards and Commissions City Council Questionnaire:** Thomas drafted answer for the commission's consideration.

1. Does this accurately identify what your board or commission does on a regular basis? If not, please explain any differences. Yes. The commission agreed to this answer.
2. What other items does your board or commission work on regularly? Section 12-18 describing the functions, powers, and duties of the Human Rights Commission accurately summarizes the mission and work of the Commission. The commission agreed to this answer.
3. What more would you like your board or commission to do and should those items be included as part of the duties identified in establishing legislation for your board or commission? As part of our educational mission, the Commission provides a small amount of Human Rights Enhancement Program funding for deserving groups. During the past Fiscal year, the Commission's budget for this program was cut by more than 50% (from \$5,300 to \$2,500). These reductions have negatively impacted the Commission's educational funding for youth programs in Columbia. It is the Commission's desire that the City Council restore Human Rights Enhancement Funding to previous levels.

Macy asked if there should be mention of the revisions the commission is working on for the RFP process. After discussion, the commission agreed to the following answer: *In order to be more responsive to community requests, the commission is reworking the RFP for the Human Rights Enhancement Program funding so funds are available on a monthly basis as opposed to a call for proposals once a year, which some organizations can find difficult to access.*

4. How often does your board or commission meet? Do you think this is adequate, too much or too little? *The Commission meets on a monthly basis*

and occasionally more often for special sessions. We think this is adequate. The commission agreed to this answer.

5. Do you believe your current membership requirements are adequate? If not, what changes would you suggest? Yes. The commission agreed with this answer.
6. Are there any other policy changes and/or issues in your board or commission's area that you feel needs attention? No. The commission agreed with this answer.
1. What projects/issues will this board or commission work on for the balance of this fiscal year and next fiscal year and what results/end products do you plan to achieve? *Receive monthly reports from our representative on the Citizen's Police Review Board to gain a better understanding of their new training process and work, continue sponsorship of the Columbia Values Diversity Celebration, continue local human rights investigation services, continue promotion of human rights education including the issuance of a RFP to dispense Human Rights Enhancement Funding.* The commission agreed with this answer.
2. Will any of these projects/issues require funding? If so, please provide a detailed explanation and suggested ways to fund them. *As mentioned in Question 3 above, it is the wish of the commission that Council fund the Human Rights Enhancement Program at FY2009 levels (approximately \$5,300) vs. the severe cuts that the program received (down \$2,500) in the current budget.*

There was discussion amongst the commission whether the Council truly understands the HREP funding process and the programs that receive funding. The commission has historically spent the funds allotted by Council. In recent years, there have been proposals that have not been funded because they did not meet the funding guidelines; therefore, not all of the funding was allocated. By changing the funding process, this may help spend all of the funds as volunteer organizations may have difficulty in setting up a program a year in advance.

O'Toole asked if this funding is specifically designated for Human Rights Enhancement programs. Hollis said the funding is in a miscellaneous contractual account. It is a small amount of money so technically a RFP does not have to be issued but this process has been used for the purposes of transparency and openness. If there was a project the commission was interested in funding, they could do so. If the commission wanted to move the funding to do something else, then the commission would have to receive Council's approval through a budget amendment.

Hollis said the commission could also contract for training to be provided.

O'Toole suggested letting Council know that all projects the commission is involved with require some level of funding. He asked if the HREP funding wording has been included with previous questionnaires like this. He believes this answer should include information about the changes being made to make the funds more accessible to the community. The commission agreed to the following answer: *As mentioned in Question 3 above, it is the wish of the*

commission that Council fund the Human Rights Enhancement Program at FY2009 levels (approximately \$5,300) vs. the severe cuts that the program received (down \$2,500) in the current budget. The commission is working on making changes to the RFP process for the Human Rights Enhancement Program so funds can be made more accessible throughout the year, which the commission would anticipate will cause a return to previous funding levels.

Do you have any other comments or suggestions for the Council? The Commission thanks the Council for creating the Citizen's Police Review Board and appointing a member of the Human Rights Commission to the board. We would like to formally acknowledge the outstanding work of the staff that supports the commission: Steve Hollis, Manager of Human Services; Marie Glaze, Human Rights Specialist; Shawna Victor, ASA III; Fred Boeckmann, City Counselor. The commission thanks the Council for their support of human rights and for the Council's voluntary service to our community. The commission agreed with this answer

- b. Revision of the Human Rights Enhancement Program Funding RFP:** Hollis said he has received the language from Office of Cultural Affairs for their funding process. He would like to have a meeting with Marie Hunter, Manager of Office of Cultural Affairs, about their funding process. Also, he would like to review the application. He believes there is a lot of unnecessary information that is provided and the application could be simpler.

V. New Business

- a. Discussion regarding *City of Columbia Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (2010 Update)* document:** Lata reviewed the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice document.

The commission discussed the following changes:

- Addition of "Percent of Median Family Income, Average \$58,000" to Figure 2.
- Chapter III, 1. 2010: Craft RFP to include targeted request for Fair Housing Education proposals. In order to facilitate other activities, the Human Rights Commission and staff will expand educational and outreach efforts to promote fair housing.
- Chapter III, 1. 2011: CDBG funding becomes available for fair housing and education for public and private organizations; including seminars and one-on-one counseling.
- Chapter III, 1. 2012: Potential utilization of not-for-profit organization for the purpose of taking advantage of Fair Housing funding available from FHIP or FHAP.
- Chapter III, 1. 2013: Correct year from 2113 to 2013
- Chapter III, 1. 2014: Correct year from 2114 to 2014.
- Changes from Chapter III, 1 will be made to Chapter III, 3.
- Chapter III, 3: Include "disability" to read "Discrimination in the rental market based on disability or race as an impediment based upon complaints."
- Add Services for Independent Living and Central Missouri Area Agency on Aging to transportation opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- Map 16 will include Moser's on Rangeline, Hy-Vee and Wal-Mart on Grindstone Parkway.
- Include Housing Complaints to the Missouri Commission on Human Rights.

Macy moved to accept the City of Columbia Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (2010 Update) with modifications discussed during this meeting. The motion was seconded by Jackson and passed unanimously.

- b. Refugee issues:** Macy said she spoke with Jane Williams of Love, Inc. There is a network of those who already work with refugees in the community and this group is being called The Columbia Refugee Network. She has a list of those people, which includes names and what services they are providing, and will share this list with the commission.

Hollis said Love, Inc. is a non-profit organization with evangelical ties but this network appears to be relatively secular in nature. Macy said she asked about that issue. While the majority volunteers are Christian, there have been volunteers from other faiths involved such as members of the Islamic faith.

Hollis said Human Rights and DPHHS Community Health staff would be interested in attending these meetings. DPHHS Community Health staff does the majority of refugee exams in the community.

VI. Staff Reports

- a. Manager of Human Services:** Hollis said the two FY2010 Human Rights Enhancement Program funded programs will be taking place this month: Parkade Elementary Celebrate the Dream and The Center Project presenting Heartland Men's Chorus' "And Justice for All".

Amnesty International and Services for Independent Living submitted their final reports for FY2009 HREP funding programs. Hollis forwarded these reports to the commission.

Thomas noted the SIL program was very well put together. Macy said SIL promoted this program and the HRC funding very well.

A number of years ago, City Council approved a resolution to establish a Fair Housing Committee but this committee was never populated. It is Hollis's opinion that this commission's duty is to investigate impediments to fair housing and it is unnecessary to have another committee to do this work. He had spoken with Tom Lata and Tim Teddy about this issue and they will continue to discuss the relationship between the two City divisions as it pertains to the issue of fair housing.

Hollis said there seems to be a lack of access to affordable diversity training for local businesses and organizations. There has been discussion in the past about establishing an enterprise that would pay for itself to do these trainings in the community. It will take a lot of research and study. Staff will be meeting with a University employee who does training on campus to discuss this.

Macy asked if this commission can apply for communications funds through the City. Hollis said he was not sure.

Macy believes the funding could be used for printing anti-discrimination flyers for trainings. Hollis said he does not know the policy for applying for funds. Macy said she has someone helping her that could also look into this.

- b. Law Department:** No report at this time.

- c. **Human Rights Specialist:** On Thursday, January 14, staff along with approximately 1,100 citizens took part in the 17th Annual Columbia Values Diversity Celebration. This year's theme "Everyone Counts" was selected because 2010 is a census year. Nearly 600 essays and poems were written by Columbia school children with roughly 50 selected to be printed in the Student Writings booklet distributed at the event. Several schools brought their selected essay and poem writers to the event. The Diversity Award Winners for 2010 were Individual/Family winners Bill & Dolores Clark and Group winner Centro Latino. The Artistic Program was written and directed by Dan Schultz, a faculty member at Stephens College, with various performers from throughout the community. Leading up to the celebration staff did radio interviews on KFRU and KBIA and KOMU TV 8's caring community segment.

On Monday, January 18, staff attended the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Program hosted by the Columbia NAACP at Second Baptist Church. Staff also attended the evening celebration at St. Paul Church hosted by the Dr. Martin Luther King Committee. The latter event was broadcast live via KOPN. There were over 200 people at each event.

Glaze copied an article from the Sunday paper regarding benefits for same sex partners.

Missouri Non-Discrimination Act (MONA), Senate Bill 626, will have a senate hearing at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday February 3. Hollis noted there is similar bill going through the House of Representatives also.

Victor noted there has been an increase in the number of inquiries for the Domestic Partnership Registration from those living outside of Columbia.

VII. Commission Reports

- a. **Columbia Citizen Police Review Board:** Bixby said the board is currently working on training. They are working on a flyer and their statement of purpose.

VIII. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

IX. **Commissioner Comment:** There were no commissioner comments.

X. **Closed Session to Discuss Pending Cases Pursuant to Section 610.021 (1) RSMo.:** The commission agreed no closed session was needed this month as there was no new information on the current cases.

XI. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Hollis, Manager of Human Services