

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
320 W. Temple Street, Suite 1184
Los Angeles, California 90012
February 22, 2005

PRESENT: Mr. Ray Bartlett Mr. Adrian Dove
 Mr. Mario Ceballos Ms. Kathay Feng
 Ms. Judy Coffman Ms. Eleanor Montañó
 Ms. Susanne Cumming Mr. Thomas Saenz

EXCUSED: Ms. Donna Bojarsky Mr. Albert DeBlanc
 Rev. Zedar Broadous Ms. Rebecca Isaacs
 Mr. Vito Cannella Ms. Lea Ann King
 Grand Master Tong Suk Chun

Staff Present: Ms. Ava Gutierrez Mr. Eugene Stevenson
 Ms. Grace Löwenberg Mr. Robin Toma
 Mr. Ray Regalado

Guest: Ms. Wendy Gladney-Brooks, President, Personal Services Plus

I. INFORMAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2005

At 12:47 p.m., in the absence of a quorum, Commission President Saenz, called the informal meeting to order.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Toma reported on the following items:

1. National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) Survey – Commissioners were referred to copies of NCCJ's National Survey of Intergroup Relations and Attitudes contained in their packets. The survey is a template of the type of survey that Mr. Toma would like to develop for Los Angeles County. Mr. Toma discussed this matter with the Chief Administrative Officer, at the Commission's budget hearing, and was put in contact with Mark Baldessare of the Public Policy Institute. As the Institute is regularly involved in conducting surveys, this contact might facilitate moving this matter forward. Budget funding has been requested as the survey will have broad application for developing a better picture of intergroup relations beyond that available through the Annual Hate Crime Report data.
2. L.A. Time Article on Santa Clarita Hate Incident – Commissioners were also referred to an article appearing in the Los Angeles Times on February 17th that highlighted racial incidents

in the Santa Clarita Valley. The specific incident referenced in the article was the assault on African-Asian American teens by a group of white power advocates. At the time it took place, Sr. Intergroup Relations Specialist, Mary Louise Longoria, the Commission's contract consultant, Riku Matsuda, and James Williams III of the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service were meeting with parents in the area, and were able to be on the scene soon after the incident occurred. Mr. Toma and staff were involved in a meeting held by Supervisor Antonovich, his Chief of Staff and two Senior Deputies with the Superintendent of the Hart School District and their top staff. Calls have been received from individuals and agencies and individuals that want to be involved in bringing about resolution of the problems. There are a number of challenges in the area, including those posed by public agencies.

Ms. Longoria informed that, in light of the impending retirement of Hart's Superintendent, Commission staff has addressed the Hart School Board to request that the work of its Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity be continued. She indicated that the problems being experienced encompasses other parts of the Santa Clarita Valley.

Mr. Toma informed that Mr. Williams and Commission staff has met with the Sheriff's Station staff concerning focused efforts in the area. Staff is also working on this issue with the City of Santa Clarita's Human Relations Forum, which is a signatory to a Mutual Assistance Agreement with the Commission,.

3. Anti-Stereotyping Education – The FBI is interested in conducting anti-stereotyping education for middle-school and high school students, with a focus upon attitudes towards American Muslims. Representatives of EdVenture, the organization working directly with the FBI on this matter, sought out the Commission to be consultants in developing the anti-prejudice program and to identify school targets. EdVenture expects to receive the FBI's decision at the end of this month.
4. Human Relations Training at Parent Conferences - Commission staff will be participating in doing a human relations workshop at two different conferences for parents, one by the ABC Unified School District, and one by the Los Angeles Unified School District.
5. Meeting with DA Staff - Staff efforts are continuing in its efforts to facilitate effective dialogue and communication between the District Attorney's Office and community interests concerning the Stanley Miller and Devin Brown incidents involving the LAPD.
6. Climate of Trust – The Commission has been asked to be a part of Climate of Trust, a Northern California-based program that has been operating in San Francisco for some years. Its focus has been to work with representatives from various Russian cities on ways of developing effective police-community relations. They are bringing the program to Southern California in an exchange with the city of Stavropol, and the Commission will be involved in providing a number of sessions with them in March.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. John Anson Ford Awards (JAF) Event – Commissioner Cumming announced that the John Anson Ford Awards Event will be held on October 6, 2005 at the Los Angeles Music Center, and introduced Wendy Gladney-Brooks, President, Personal Services Plus. The JAF Committee and Commission Staff recommended that she be hired as Fundraiser and Event Planner for this year's event. Nomination forms were provided to Commissioners and Staff to be returned by March 14, 2005.

President Saenz asked that Commissioners formally submit their recommendations regarding themes for the Awards Event by the next Commission meeting.

2. Legislative Committee - Tabled
3. Youth Campaign - Commissioner Ceballos distributed copies of a draft action plan for the Zerohour Campaign with proposed objectives and indicated that staff would be working on narrowing document into a specific plan with timelines to facilitate a September conference. Mr. Toma informed that major goals for the year are laid out and the status of various aspects of the campaign.

President Saenz requested that the Committee bring the draft action plan back to the Commission next meeting as an action item.

4. Budget/Fiscal Committee – No report.

At 1:34 p.m., with the arrival of Commissioner Dove, a quorum was achieved, and the meeting was officially called to order, followed by the salute to the flag and a moment of silence

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 7, 2005

It was MSC(Bartlett/Cumming) that the minutes of February 7, 2005 be approved.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

VI. FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. Recommendation on AB 19 (Leno Bill) – Commissioner Feng, Chair of the Legislation Committee, requested that the item be tabled, given the absence of Commissioners who are the members of the committee and wished to be present for this discussion. Without objection, the item was ordered tabled.
2. Discussion on CAIR Request for Support On Fox TV's "24"- Mr. Toma referred Commissioners to a draft resolution included in the agenda packet addressing a number of concerns of the California Association for American Islamic Relations (CAIR) relative to Fox TV's "24" series. The network did a disclaimer, featuring Keifer Sutherland, that asked viewers to not assume that Americans Muslims portrayed in the series are representatives of the group as a whole. CAIR has requested that its PSA be shown on Fox network affiliates.

Staff is working with its Fox TV contacts on the Corporate Advisory Committee to ask that Fox TV meet with CAIR and consider its PSA. Staff will come back with further discussion and proposed action.

3. Revision to Moratorium on Executions Resolution- Mr. Toma referred Commissioners to copies of the draft resolution on this item, which had previously been approved by the Commission. Some revisions are proposed after consulting with Board justice deputies and Death Penalty Focus partners. The following changes are being recommended as part of the resolution's approval: (a) Adopt a resolution supporting a moratorium on executions "*until a fair and independent study of capital punishment's implementation has been completed, and there has been an adequate opportunity to evaluate its recommendations* regarding the following issues ... [then referring to the three issues stated in the previous resolution]". The State Senate has in fact established a commission to study the issues and is expected to issue a report in 2007.

It was MSC (Dove/Montañó)/Yeas- 5/Noes- 0/Abstentions- 2) that the Commission adopt the Amended Resolution Calling for A State Moratorium on Executions Pending Study of Its Implementation.

4. LAPD-Community Relations Crisis – Proposed Action- Commissioners were referred to the status report on the Devin Brown LAPD shooting in their packets. Senior Intergroup Relations Specialists Ray Regalado and Borden Olive have been deployed to work on this and ongoing issues concerning the Stanley Miller and Brown incidents. Swift action by Chief Bratton and the Police Commission in changing their shooting-into-vehicles policy mitigated some of the public concern, but the situation is still potentially volatile.

Staff has been working with the DA's Office to enhance the level of communication by that office and the LAPD with community leaders. The Nation of Islam was planning a march that convenes at Parker Center and moves to the DA's Office on February 26th. Mr. Regalado indicated that the march might be moved to Leimert Park. Days of Dialogue are also being proposed to take place at various fire stations in the area.

In reviewing the LAPD new policy, Mr. Toma indicated that it does not seem to address a first step action that officers do not place themselves in harm's way when it is not reasonably necessary. President Saenz requested that Mr. Toma develop a discussion piece on that point and on possible Commission actions regarding the DA and the LAPD.

5. JAF Annual Awards Event Planner- Upon recommendation of the John Anson Ford Committee, it was MSC (Cumming/Dove) that the Commission select the bid of Wendy Gladney-Brooks, President, Personal Services Plus, to serve as JAF Annual Awards Event Planner as had been negotiated by staff.

VII. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Commissioner Dove - Discussed Crenshaw-area community concern regarding the recent opening of an arms dealer on Crenshaw, near Leimert Boulevard. He requested that there be discussion on this issue at next Commission meeting as this might be a flashpoint because of the nature of the business and its being patronized by LAPD officers.

He also informed that the NAACP is considering initiating a request to President Bush that a posthumous pardon be granted to the late World Heavy Champion Jack Johnson for actions taken against him because of his interracial marriage.

2. President Saenz - Commented on his attendance at the screening of the "Voices of Civil Rights," at the California African American Museum, and the warm response given to the segment involving Commissioner Dove and discussing his personal efforts as a young man in challenging racial barriers.
3. Commissioner Montaño – Informed that the City's Human Relations Commission meets tonight regarding the LAPD crisis. Mr. Toma noted that she is featured in the latest edition of the LAPD Relief Association newsletter, The Guardian.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 2:07 p.m., there being no further business, at the request of Commissioner Dove, the Commission meeting was adjourned in memory of renowned actor, director, writer and humanitarian Ossie Davis; and popular actress, Sandra Dee.