



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Commission Meeting of January 3, 2011
Community and Senior Services (CSS)
3175 W. Sixth Street, Room 304 – Teamwork Room
Los Angeles, California 90020

PRESENT:	Michael Gi-Hao Cheung Grandmaster Tong Suk Chun Adrian Dove Lea Ann King	William Lambert Eleanor Montaña Sergio Paz Sandra E. Thomas
ABSENT:	Donna Bojarsky Rev. Zedar E. Broadous Vito Cannella	Mario Ceballos Susanne Cumming Kathay Feng
STAFF:	Cynthia Banks Summer Brown Elena Halpert-Schilt Sikivu Hutchinson	Grace Löwenberg Joshua Parr Robin S. Toma Marshall Wong

- 1. Call to Order/Flag Salute and Moment of Silence:** The executive commission meeting was called to order by President Sandra Thomas at 12:45 p.m. The flag salute and moment of silence were led by Commissioner Cheung.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** It was moved by Commissioner King, and seconded by Commissioner Montano, to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2010 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3. Public Comment:** Cynthia Banks, Director of Community and Senior Services, shared an inspirational quote that read “write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year.”

Both commissioners Montaña and Thomas inquired about prior reimbursements that were due to them. Executive Director Robin Toma said he would inquire as to why they have not been paid, and advise them this week.

- 4. President’s Report:** President Thomas presented the following report:

4.1 Mission Statement of the HRC: President Thomas proposed that the HRC Mission Statement be reviewed at the beginning of every meeting. She also suggested that perhaps

at future meetings, the Mission Statement could be incorporated at the time the pledge of allegiance is performed.

- 4.2 Hate Crime Report Press Conference:** President Thomas gave an overview of the press conference for the Hate Crime Report. She felt that overall the press conference was a success, and thanked HRC and other CSS staff for their hard work and dedication.
 - 4.3 Meeting with Urban Progressives on Diversity in Episodic Television:** An exploratory meeting was held with Mr. Kuti from Urban Progressives, President Thomas, Director Banks, Executive Director Toma, and others to discuss issues regarding diversity and discrimination within the media industry. Future involvement with the work of Urban Progressives will be determined at a later date.
 - 4.4 JAF Trust Fund Guidelines:** Commissioner Cumming was absent, but has been working on funding guidelines for JAF funds to present to the Commission and staff for input. The Youth committee is taking the lead on putting this document together. They will soon present a draft to the Commission for approval.
 - 4.5 Request to use JAF Trust Funds for Homeless Youth Leadership Council:** The HRC staff requested the Youth Committee funding for their Homeless Youth Leadership Council from the JAF Trust fund. President Thomas asked that the Chair of the Homeless Committee present this matter to his committee. Once that Committee makes a recommendation, it can be brought before the full Commission.
- 5. Executive Director's Report:** HRC Executive Director Toma wished the group a happy new year, and reported hate crime numbers are down this year and will hopefully continue at that rate. He then presented the following report:
- 5.1 Calendar of Meetings of Commission and Committees:** Executive Director Toma recommended that we schedule regular meeting times for the Commission and committee meetings. Director Banks then asked staff to talk to each committee chair, and then let HRC staff know what those meeting dates will be, so it could then be put on the on master calendar for all to view.
 - 5.2 Fact Sheet on the Commission and Talking Points:** Executive Director Toma presented an HRC fact sheet that can be used for reference when the public asks commissioners questions. President Thomas suggested that the document Mission Statement be added to the document/ Director Banks suggested the document be two-sided, with the backside containing a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) that will be created with input from the commissioners. Commissioners were asked to submit their input to HRC staff by January 18, 2011 so they may be presented at the February meeting.
 - 5.3 Strategic Plan Implementation:** Executive Director Toma shared a calendar of upcoming events as well as the current strategic goals and activities that are currently in progress. While discussing strategies centered on racialized gang violence, Director Banks asked him to explain the Mark Ridley-Thomas board motion that was introduced. He then explained that Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas has been working with the Empowerment Congress with recommendations of their own, working with

Harvard Kennedy School students, which delineate steps to address re-entry among youth offenders. CSS as a department has also been working on a blueprint that would address those same issues. His motion requested the CEO to consult with departments to report on re-entry.

Lastly, Executive Director Toma reminded commissioners of the need to submit their paperwork for their new ID badges. He then introduced HRC staff members Sikivu Hutchinson and Josh Parr, who have been working with homeless youth as part of the Homeless Youth Leadership Council.

6. For Discussion/Action

6.1 Request to use JAF Trust Funds for Homeless Leadership Council: HRC staff members Josh Parr and Sikivu Hutchinson gave brief presentations on their current efforts with homeless youth. Staff member Parr is working with Covenant House in Hollywood and other Community-based organizations to create leaders in the community to make life better for homeless youth. He posed the question “How do we prevent homelessness amongst Youth”? To address this issue, they developed a curriculum created for training youth to become leaders and advocates on the issue. The budget request is for two field trips and three trainings.

Staff member Hutchinson stated that a major concern is sustainability. There is a strong need to obtain a secure funding source to continue the work in an effective manner. These funds will enable them to train a core group on the issues affecting Homeless Youth.

Commissioner Lambert asked why we weren't able to get participants bus money. Staff member Hutchinson mentioned that they had already reached out to Supervisor Yaroslavsky's office, and has yet to get a response. Commissioner Lambert said he would like to set up a meeting with Supervisor Yaroslavsky's office and the HRC staff to get some funds for bus passes. Commissioner King then stated that the JAF Trust Fund could be used as a micro-lender in future. If projects need funds, they can use JAF Funds upfront, and later be reimbursed so projects don't get held up due to the lack of availability of funding. Director Banks then recommended that we obtain narratives of the positive work the Council has done. Commissioner Lambert then asked what the age group the project served, and what their biggest obstacles were. Staff member Hutchinson stated they serve youth 18-24 and their biggest problems are obtaining jobs and education.

6.2 Staff briefing on Response to Annual Hate Crime Report press conference: Staff member Marshall Wong noted that despite many challenges, there was a strong media turnout for the press conference. He also went over the summaries of four important news articles and how they differed in their coverage of the press conference.

6.3 HRC participation in CORE's Kingdom Day MLK parade: Commissioner Dove stated that although the Commission missed the deadline to participate, he wants the commission to attend the event if possible, and consider participating next year. He stated that a historic freedom bus will be featured, followed by a gospel concert sponsored by Councilman Parks. This event sparked an interest to develop ad hoc

committees as issues/events arise, so that they may be addressed in a timely manner. Director Banks suggested that these committees be used when the subject matter fell outside the scope of the existing Committees. Assistant Director Halpert-Schilt suggested that ad hoc committees be set up four months prior to the event to ensure timeliness.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 JAF Human Relations Awards Committee: Commissioner King reported on the balance of the JAF Trust Fund.

7.2 Youth Committee: Commissioner King passed around copies of the draft guidelines for fund usage. She will also add ad-hoc guidelines, and submit to the group for input. Director Banks requested that that input be submitted by January 18, 2011 so that the document may be presented at the February meeting.

Commissioner King also stated that the “No Haters Here” week is coming up the week of January 24, 2011. She invited all commissioners to visit Washington Prep to join in the activities. There will be a lunch, an art show, poetry, and a dance that Friday to wrap the week up.

7.3 Racialized Gang Violence Prevention Committee: Commissioner Montaña suggested that her committee meet at 11:00 a.m. on the first Monday of each month as their suggested meeting time.

7.4 Crisis Response Committee: Commissioner Dove announced the release of Jeremy Marks on Christmas Eve.

7.5 Homeless Committee: Commissioner Cheung plans to give out gift cards to the Midnight Mission in celebration of the Lunar New Year, like they did last year. Commissioners will be advised of the date, and are encouraged to attend the event.

8. Commissioner’s Comments/Announcements: Assistant Director Halpert-Schilt announced she will be making copies of Washington prep calendars for the commissioners. She also announced that staff member Sharon Williams gave birth to a baby girl the day before Thanksgiving.

9. Adjournment: It was moved by Commissioner Dove and seconded by Commissioner Lambert, and approved unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 2:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathay Feng, Esq.
Vice-President/Secretary