

MARIN COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MARIN COUNTY CIVIC CENTER, ROOM 410-B, SAN RAFAEL, CA 94903
OCTOBER 12, 2014 - 6:30 – 8:30 P.M.
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – The meeting was called to order at 6:32.

Present: Aref Ahmadia (AA), Danielle Aubin (DA), Andrew Marshall (AM), Daria Sievers (DS), Shelley Scott (SS), Janet Shirley (JS), Raphael Durr (RD)

Absent: Toni Goerss

Before Agenda was approved AM asked Joanne Peterson, the Director of Marin County's Human Resources Department, to stay for the Budget discussion, which would be held immediately. (Originally under Chair's Report/New items-5a.) AM wanted to know when budget information had to be brought before the Board of Supervisors, so the budget could be approved and the Commission funded. Joanne Peterson responded that per the original meeting held between County Administrator Matthew Hymel and Board of Supervisors President Kate Sears, Commissioner Daria Sievers and Commissioner Raphael Durr, a follow up meeting had to be held with Matthew Hymel and Kate Sears before the budget could be brought before the Board of Supervisors for approval. D. Sievers asked Joanne why it wasn't to be brought before the Board on October 28, 2014 and Joanne reiterated that based on County Administrator Mathew Hymel's and Supervisors Sears understanding another meeting to close the loop had to be held before the Commission could ask for money from the Board. AM asked for the Chairs of the Committees to schedule a meeting with Matthew Hymel and Supervisor Sears as soon as possible.

- 1. APPROVAL OF TENTATIVE AGENDA:** AA wants to add a child custody issue to the agenda. Because it wasn't pre-approved it couldn't be voted on. DS raised the issue that there isn't a fundraising or strategic planning committee and there is also an issue with the alphabetic numbering. AA wants to add an issue under COM report. Under the By-laws the MLK Committee requires that a Commissioner from the previous year has to be on it. DA is the only Commissioner that was on the Committee from last year. SS moved to approve the Agenda and the Minutes, JS seconded, all aye.

- 2. SPEAKERS:** LeeLee Thomas: Topics will be Housing in Marin, Housing Needs, Jobs Imbalance, and personal stories about housing in Marin. RD interjected to say that housing issue is also a human rights issue. SS wanted to know where the speaker was gathering her information. Thomas said that it was from the DOF, and the census. DS asked if Thomas had any information on homeless youth. Thomas said that she didn't have a breakdown. AM stated that taxes also impacts senior citizens and they are sometimes forced to move even if their homes are paid off. Thomas said that there is a huge amount of community resistance for affordable housing, which is the crux of the problem. AM said that the voice has to come from the top. DA asked what the HRC could do about the housing issue. Thomas replied that awareness needs to be brought to the issue. DS asked if they could meet with Thomas to develop collaborations with various agencies in the community. JS requested that more dialogue be had with Thomas as well. Power point presentation with various figures was then presented.

Dinah Mayanja: JS introduced 2nd guest speaker, who has international experience with human rights, specifically war torn areas in Uganda. She works primarily with high schools, focusing on diplomatic relations and non-violence. Often the trainings are provided to young people still in school who are more open to new ideas and can have a greater impact on the future. The bulk of her work is mostly concentrated in northern Uganda. The current generation of young people were born and raised during war, therefore it is important to work with the children to educate them that there are other ways. Once you have reached the children, the ideas progress to the mothers and then hopefully the father.

Women's rights in Uganda are also an issue. Women do not have rights to land after father dies. Hearing Aid is a network of organizations that is often used. Under the current Ugandan President there have been more disappearances now than before-she suspects it is because they are executing people behind closed doors, whereas before it was done publicly. There isn't any type of trial or justice system.

3. Public Expression:

AA introduced a woman, Giselle, whose children have been taken away by her husband. She doesn't know where to turn and AA is seeking advice from the Commission. AM recommended Kathleen Russell and Consultants. Another visitor, Mary Luz Arrendono interjected and stated that she could help Giselle.

Sherry Petrakis stated that she was having issues with Shelter Care Plus and Marin Plus. She was evicted and removed from a social services program and doesn't know where to turn for help. She is also unable to get a copy of her file and her appeals have been denied twice. AA stated that this needs immediate attention and that someone from the Commission should be present at the next meeting. Mary Luz Arrendono spoke up again and said that she would assist Petrakis. AM said that the housing portion of the issue could be referred to HUD and that he will deal with that aspect of it.

Frank Barrett wanted to discuss the articles in the Marin Independent Journal about the shooting in Marin City involving the Sheriff's Deputy. He called upon the Commission to find out why the District Attorney dropped the case, and provided a summary of what he thinks the Commission should do. AM said that the Commission wouldn't act because the Officer's Bill of Rights protects information regarding the incident. RD said that this particular case was strange and that it is a personnel issue and that the Commission shouldn't get involved.

4. Treasurer's Report: No updates.

- 5. CHAIR'S REPORT/NEW ITEMS:** RD wanted to clarify the issue with bringing the budget before the Board of Supervisors. He said that the issue has nothing to do with the proposed budget per se, but wanted to clarify that Matthew Hymel and Supervisor Sears wanted the Commission to focus on 2 issues in the upcoming year and then articulate how the money would be spent to help alleviate those concerns. AM said that nothing was put in about MLK, RD said that \$5,000 was left in for MLK, and that the other \$15,000 needs to be planned out and presented to Matthew and Sears. AM said that based on his conversation with Joanne Peterson, he thought she wanted an actual budget. DS said that Joanne wants the ARF, and need to do the plan for Matthew and Supervisor Sears. DS called for budgets to be in before October 28th. SS asked for a meeting w/ AM and RD for a Committee meeting. DS also wanted to meet with Immigration and Human Trafficking.

6. **STAFF REPORT:** Kara Amestoy reiterated that if the Commission wants to go before the board on 11/25 they need to make an appointment with Mathew Hymel and Kate Sears before the ARF can be completed.

7. **COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES:**

- A. **Housing:** RD is the Chair of Housing, SS, AG and AM are members.
- B. **Human Trafficking:** DS Chair, DA, RD members. Provided an update for the Regional meeting held on September 29, 2014. Representatives from five different Commissions came and it was a successful event that facilitated great collaboration. DS thanked AA for providing lunch for everyone. The next gathering will be on 11/17 and held by the Richmond Commission. DS has also been in touch with Emily Simms and District Attorney Ed Berberrian.
- C. **Immigration:** JS, DA, DS Chair-DS said that the Committee needs to meet and identify next steps. JS asked for more Commissioners to join. DA will recruit more people. AA introduced John Ortega.

John Ortega stated that California is taking a leadership role dealing with issues of immigration and that doors are opening for immigration possibilities. Driver's license bill is an example of forward legislation. Examining big picture issues of what can be done, children are in a limbo area, wants to open up other doors, believes system is corrupted. Recommended Public Policy website.

- D. **Law Enforcement:** AA is Chair of Law Enforcement, AM, RD members.
- E. **Fundraising:** Aref and Antonia are members.
- F. **MLK :** AG Chair, JS, DA SS members. DS requested that the Committee consult with people who have previously been on the Committee, instead of having the staff member be on the Committee. KA (staffing) requested that the Commission review Commissioner Goerss' written update.

MOTION: to Adjourn: AA motion to adjourn, 8:43, SS seconded, all in favor.