



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Meeting of January 4, 2010
Community and Senior Services (CSS) Building
3rd Floor Team Room
3175 West Sixth Street, Los Angeles, CA 90020

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| PRESENT: | Vito Cannella Michael Gi-Hao Cheung Susanne Cumming Adrian Dove Lea Ann King | William Lambert Eleanor Montaña Sergio Paz Sandra E. Thomas |
| NOT PRESENT: | Rev. Zedar Broadous Donna Bojarsky Mario Ceballos | Grandmaster Tong Suk Chun Kathay Feng |
| STAFF: | Cynthia Banks, CSS Director Grace Löwenberg Emily M. Pacheco | Robin Toma, HRC Executive Director. Elena Halpert-Schilt, HRC Asst. Exec. Director |

- 1. Call to Order/Flag Salute and Moment of Silence:** The Commission meeting was called to order at 12:35 p.m. The flag salute and moment of silence were led by Commissioner Lambert.
- 2. Approval of Minutes of previous regular and strategic planning meetings:** It was moved by Commissioner Lambert, seconded by Commissioner King, to approve the minutes of the December 2009 and November 2009 Strategic Planning minutes. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3. Public Comment:** None
- 4. President's Report**
 - 4.1 Human Rights Day proclamation on December 8, 2009:** Commission President Sandra E. Thomas informed the Commission of the Human Rights Day proclamation by the Board of Supervisors on December 8, 2009.
 - 4.2 Letter to the Board of Supervisors re: merger with CSS:** President Thomas informed the Commission that her letter to the Board of Supervisors, regarding the merger of HRC into CSS, was included in their agenda packet. She thanked CSS Director Cynthia Banks and HRC Executive Director Robin Toma for providing her with a clear vision of the

- merger. CSS Director Banks shared her appreciation for the letter and concurred with the letter's message and described the merger of the HRC into CSS as a fruitful engagement.
- 4.3 **JAF Awards Event:** President Thomas also reported that a date in October 2010 was being considered for the John Anson Ford (JAF) Awards event. She also emphasized the need to prepare for the event as soon as possible because, due to County budget constraints, the event will require a lot of work from the Commissioners. She requested that the JAF Awards event committee meet to discuss Commissioner assignments and planning.
 - 4.4 **Committee Protocols:** President Thomas informed the Commissioners that several meetings had been held regarding the Commission's committees. She stated that the Commission needed to clarify what each committee should be doing such as posting an agenda, keeping minutes, and providing written reports to the full Commission. A copy of the Commission's committee protocols was part of the agenda packet.
 - 4.5 **Commissioner Endorsements:** President Thomas urged the commissioners to use caution when endorsing any activity that has not been formally endorsed by the Commission. She explained that endorsing activities as an individual is acceptable but not while acting as a representative of the HRC.
 - 4.6 **Sunset Review:** President Thomas reported that the Commission will be going through a 'Sunset Review' and that she has received a letter requesting information regarding the HRC. HRC Executive Director Toma explained that the Sunset Review process was something that nearly all commissions in the County of Los Angeles government go through. CSS Director Cynthia Banks suggested that the Commission point out the uniqueness and value of the Commission.
 - 4.7 **Other:** President Thomas asked CSS Director Banks to give a greeting to the Commission. Director Banks wished all those in attendance a Happy New Year and provided a brief overview of the strategic planning process that the HRC, CSS, and County of Los Angeles are currently going through.
5. **Executive Director's Report:** HRC Executive Director Toma provided an update on the new Commission calendar format. He stated that the information provided in previous versions of the calendar would continue to be included, in addition to a staff telephone number and the Supervisorial District related to the event. He also announced that the Human Relations Mutual Aid Consortium would be invited to meet with the Network Against Hate Crime at its upcoming meeting.
 - 5.1 **Cultural Diversity "Respect" Poster:** HRC Executive Director Toma presented a color version of the Cultural Diversity "Respect" poster and informed the Commission that staff intends to release the poster during Martin Luther King Jr. Day events. He asked Commissioners in attendance to inform staff about events occurring and any possible sponsors of the poster to help in production costs. Commissioner King asked that a request to use funds from JAF to produce the agreed-upon poster size version of the poster be placed on the February agenda as an action item.
 - 5.2 **Budget Update:** Toma informed the commissioners that CSS is being asked to identify how it would reduce its Net County Cost budget by nine percent for FY 2010-2011. This ends up being \$311,000 for HRC. He explained that because of this reduction, three vacancies would less likely be filled which will impact HRC programs. As part of attempts to reduce costs, CSS has a new policy on electronic mail whenever it makes sense. Commissioners were asked to inform us if they would like to continue receiving a hard copy of the agenda packet for Commission meetings, or if they would like to opt to receive it only electronically through email. He also reported that Commissioner Cheung would

like to arrange to donate a meal to the homeless and will have it on the agenda for February.

6. For Discussion/Action:

6.1. Black-Brown Summit on Re-Entry/CSS Re-Entry Jobs Planning Grant

Collaboration: HRC Executive Director Toma reported that CSS has garnered a \$300,000 grant to develop a comprehensive master plan for re-entry. He reported that the Commission's interest in the Black-Brown Summit on Re-entry has similar aims as the grant, and we would like to see a re-entry collaborative emerge from the Summit for each of the four County gang violence reduction demonstration sites, in accordance with our Racialized Gang Violence Prevention Initiative's strategies. It was noted that state prisons are likely to release additional inmates due to court orders. CSS Director Banks requested that President Thomas, Executive Director Toma, and Josie Marquez meet to discuss whether or not such an infusion is achievable.

6.2 Review/Approval of Commission Committees for FY 2009-2010: President Thomas asked that a motion be made to approve the Commission Committees for this current fiscal year (a list of committees with their corresponding members was attached to the meeting agenda). Following discussion and questions regarding the committees, their membership and chairs, it was moved by Commissioner Dove, seconded by Commissioner Cumming, to table this agenda item. The motion carried with Commissioner King and Commissioner Paz opposing.

6.3 Requests to Endorse "An Uncommon Journey To Diversity:" Commissioner Lambert presented on an artist whose artwork has inspired a diversity art project for students of Taft High School, Fremont High School, and West Valley Middle School. The project is to have students paint pictures of their family's migration to Los Angeles or immigration to the United States, and after sharing their painting with another student they in turn paint another student's family history. Commissioner Lambert also shared a video clip on the project. He informed commissioners that the artist's artwork is going to be displayed at the West Valley Community Center and would like the Commission to endorse this project.

It was moved by Commissioner Cumming, seconded by Commissioner Dove, to endorse this project. The motion carried unanimously.

It was also noted that Commissioner Lambert will be presenting on an eye disability in youth at a detention center during next month's Commission meeting. It will be included in the agenda.

7. Committee Reports: Tabled

8. Commissioner's Comments/Announcements: Commissioner Dove informed the Commission that the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade, in collaboration with the Congress of Racial Equality, will be held on Monday January 18, 2010 at 11:00 a.m. He requested that the Commission have a booth at the festival to follow the parade and invited everyone to attend. He will provide more information through email and also reported that coverage of the parade would be provided on channel 7.

HRC Assistant Executive Director Elena Halpert-Schilt informed the commissioners that staff member Ray Regalado has contacted commissioners to offer them a tour of the Harbor Gateway GRACE project. Confirmation letters for those who expressed interest were distributed.

- 9. Adjournment:** It was moved by Commissioner Lambert, seconded by Commissioner Dove, to adjourn at 2:00 p.m. in memory and honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathay Feng, Esq.
Vice-President/Secretary