



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Commission Meeting of April 4, 2011
Community and Senior Services (CSS)
3175 W. Sixth Street, Room 304 – Teamwork Room
Los Angeles, California 90020

PRESENT: Donna Bojarsky
Rev. Zedar E. Broadous
Susanne Cumming
Adrian Dove
Kathay Feng
Lea Ann King
William Lambert
Eleanor Montaño
Sergio Paz
Sandra E. Thomas

ABSENT: Vito Cannella
Mario Ceballos
Michael Gi-Hao Cheung
Grandmaster Tong Suk Chun

STAFF: Cynthia Banks
Summer Brown
Robin S. Toma
Elena Halpert-Schilt

1. **Call to Order/Flag Salute and Moment of Silence:** The executive committee meeting was called to order by President Sandra Thomas at 12:35 p.m. The flag salute and moment of silence were led by Commissioner Dove.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** It was moved by Commissioner King, and seconded by Commissioner Bojarsky, to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2011 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.
3. **Public Comment:** Commissioner Montaño commended Commissioner King on the great job she did for the recent Martin Luther King Arts contest in Torrance, while she passed out accompanying pictures and an anthology. Commissioner Dove also announced that there would be an event tonight at 5:00 PM in partnership with organized labor, SEIU, and CORE at a local African Methodist church.
4. **President's Report:** President Thomas presented the following report:
 - 4.1 **Mission Statement of the HRC:** President Thomas requested that Commissioner Paz read the mission statement aloud to the group as a constant reminder of the Commission's goals.
 - 4.2 **CAHRO Conference:** President Thomas thanked all commissioners who came to the California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO) conference in

February at the California Endowment Center, where there were over thirteen different organizations represented. She also stated that it was good to see that other organizations were united and working towards some of the same common goals.

4.3 Countywide Summit on Re-Entry: President Thomas thanked Commissioner Montaña and Dove for supporting the event. She reported that many topics were addressed that day, and that when we get the complete blueprint (with comments and additions from the final summit attendees), it will further assist us in our work around re-entry.

4.4 Commissioner Conduct and Attendance: President Thomas mentioned that attendance was addressed in the recent Sunset Review, and that attendance may be the first thing the Board sees when it comes to making cuts on county commissions. She left this topic for further discussion during the ‘discussion/action’ portion of the meeting.

5. Executive Director’s Report: Executive Director Toma presented the following report:

5.1 Calendar of Meetings of Commission and Committees: Executive Director Toma reviewed the calendar of events and summarized upcoming events of interest to the commission.

5.2 Strategic Plan Update: Executive Director Toma provided an update on the Commission’s strategic goal on the homeless, which was detailed in his memo that was included in the agenda packet. He pointed out that two of the major thrusts of this goal are 1) the integration of anti-homeless prejudice work into our programmatic work, and 2) the development of law enforcement tracking of crimes that victimize the homeless, including those motivated by anti-homeless bias. Currently we are unaware of any effort to track these types of crimes on either a local or national level. HRC staff have met with different law enforcement jurisdictions to come up with a standard definition for hate crimes, and working with the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee, are moving forward a pilot project to collect such data

5.3 Corporate Advisory Committee event for May 24, 2011: Executive Director Toma reminded Commissioners of the upcoming interactive multimedia workshop featuring Dr. Freada Kapor Klein, founder of Level Playing Field Institute. She will be sharing some of her findings on the financial cost of losing talented professionals because of hostile or insensitive workplace environments. Executive Director Toma also encouraged Commissioners to sign up for this free workshop which will be held at CSS headquarters on Tuesday, May 24, 2011 from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM.

6. For Discussion/Action

6.1 Form for use of JAF Trust Fund: Commissioner Cumming presented the revised JAF Trust Fund form. It was moved by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Bojarsky to accept the revised JAF Trust Fund form as the official commission document to be used when requesting JAF Funds. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

6.2 Code of Conduct: Commissioner Paz presented the continuing matter of the revised Code of Conduct for Human Relations Commissioners. Commissioner Paz had given

fellow members time to submit additional feedback and commentary before finalizing. It was moved by Commissioner Feng, and seconded by Commissioner King to adopt the Code of Conduct for Human Relations Commissioners. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

- 6.3 Commissioner Meeting Attendance:** Commissioner Paz and the rest of the commissioners discussed several options for creating better attendance at the Commission meetings. Some of those ideas are reducing membership from fifteen to ten members, elevating some members to honorary status, and meeting with certain members to create a three step plan to address those members attendance who habitually do not attend meetings for a variety of reasons. Recommendations would be then brought to the Commission and/or their respective appointing Supervisor. Commissioner Paz closed by stating that he would meet with the Leadership committee to discuss the matter further and report back to the entire Commission at the May meeting.
- 6.4 Election of the Nominations Committee:** President Thomas read excerpts from the current bylaws with regards to nominations. Commissioner Feng then suggested that those sitting on the nomination committee should not also be running for a particular position, as that would cause a conflict of interest. After discussion, it was proposed that the nominations committee would be comprised of Commissioner Ceballos (First District), Commissioner Dove (Second District), Commissioner Bojarsky (Third District), Commissioner King (Fourth District), , and Commissioner Cheung (Fifth District), with Commissioner King and Dove as co-chairs. Therefore it was moved by Commissioner Feng, and seconded by Commissioner Paz to approve the above 2011 nomination committee. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions. The committee will meet in April in order to present at the May meeting.
- 6.5 Communication from LAUSD Superintendent to Elementary Schools re Bias and Harassment:** Executive Director Toma reported on a letter that was created by LAUSD Superintendent Cortines, which stemmed from an incident in which they believe LAUSD teachers were insensitive to a certain openly gay celebrity who was unfairly put in the same category of a known murderer during African American History Month. As such, a meeting took place to discuss the matter, and as a result, a letter was drafted from LAUSD officials condemning the actions of those teachers and offered information to address bullying and harassment among other issues. Executive Director Toma also stated that this letter was intended for elementary schools. Lastly, Commissioner Lambert asked that such anti-bullying actions be added to school safety plans and to the L.A. County Human Relations Commission's strategic plan. After discussion and input for additional changes, it was moved by Commissioner King, and seconded by Commissioner Montano to approve the letter as written with additional commentary. The motion carried unanimously, with no abstentions.
- 6.6 Membership in IAOHRA and IAOHRA Conference:** Executive Director Toma informed the group that it was time to pay the annual dues for membership in the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA). President Thomas pointed out that Toma was reelected to the IAOHRA Board of Directors, and the upcoming annual IAOHRA conference on August 28 in Austin, Texas was referenced. After discussion, Commissioner Bojarsky moved, seconded by

Commissioner Lambert, to continue membership with IAOHRA. The motion carried unanimously, with no abstentions.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Ad Hoc Leadership Committee: Tabled.

7.2 Homeless Committee: Tabled.

7.3 Youth Committee: Commissioner King passed out a written report, and announced an upcoming retreat at Lake Arrowhead for LAUSD students that are part of our W.I.N. project will be taking place this month. She also stated that they will continue looking at opportunities for youth to receive funding for work they do. She would like to compensate them for all of their positive contributions to the commission's work. In closing, she mentioned that they are still trying to find ways to pay for food at events they host, and welcomes ideas to achieve that goal. Commissioner Feng offered to give up her lunch at Commission meetings, if it would aid in their efforts.

7.4 Racialized Gang Violence Prevention Committee: Commissioner Paz will submit a written report for the May meeting.

7.5 Crisis Response Committee: Tabled.

7.6 John Anson Ford Human Relations Award Committee: Commissioner Cumming announced that nomination forms will be brought to the Committee for review and recommendation on Tuesday, April 26, 2011 at 2:00 pm.

8. Commissioner's Comments/Announcements: Commissioner Feng stated that she appreciates the page numbers placed at the bottom of the handouts, which aid the group in following along with the discussion.

9. Adjournment: It was moved by President Thomas, and seconded by Commissioner Feng, and approved unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 2:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathay Feng, Esq.
Vice-President/Secretary