



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

3175 W. Sixth Street, 4th Floor
Los Angeles, California, 90020

(213) 738-2788
<http://www.lahumanrelations.org>

MINUTES

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

Commission Meeting of November 1, 2010

Community and Senior Services (CSS)

3175 W. Sixth Street, Room 304 – Teamwork Room/Ray Bartlett Conference Room
Los Angeles, California 90020

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| PRESENT: | Susanne Cumming Adrian Dove Kathay Feng Lea Ann King | William Lambert Eleanor Montaña Sergio Paz Sandra E. Thomas |
| ABSENT: | Rev. Zedar E. Broadous Donna Bojarsky Vito Cannella | Michael Gi-Hao Cheung Mario Ceballos Grandmaster Tong Suk Chun |
| STAFF: | Cynthia Banks, CSS Director Elena Halpert-Schilt, HRC Asst ED Grace Löwenberg | Robin S. Toma, HRC Executive Director Emily M. Pacheco |

- 1. Call to Order/Flag Salute and Moment of Silence:** The commission meeting was called to order by President Thomas at 12:35 p.m. The flag salute and moment of silence were led by Commissioner Cumming. Quorum was met at 12:45 p.m. with the arrival of Commissioner Dove.
- 2. Approval of Minutes of previous meetings:** It was moved by Commissioner Lambert, seconded by Commissioner King, to approve the summary of the October 4, 2010 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3. Public Comment:** None.
- 4. President's Report:** President Thomas emphasized the importance of commissioners making their best effort to attend all Commission meetings.
 - 4.1 John Anson Ford Human Relations Awards Event of October 12, 2010:** President Thomas thanked the JAF Awards Committee for their work that made the awards event a success. She also gave special thanks to staff member riKu Matsuda, committee chairperson King, and Commissioner Cumming for her donation of flowers to each awardee. She reported that the awardees were recognized twice, once at the reception and again by the Board of Supervisors later the same day. Meeting attendees applauded the organizers of the event.

- 4.2 Talking Points on LACCHR:** President Thomas informed commissioners that the staff have prepared a written document outlining several talking points regarding the Commission. The document aims to assist commissioners in speaking on and about the Commission's mission and activities. She stated that the purpose of the document was to ensure consistency of commissioners' comments to the public or media.
- 4.3 Strategic Plan Progress:** President Thomas reported briefly on the status of the Commission's strategic plan under the area of Goal 4, Strategy 2, Objective 3. She reported that the Department is receiving \$13,000 in funds as part of the Second Chance Re-Entry grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. These funds will be used to support the efforts of the Sixth Youth Offender Reentry Planning Grant Summit in February which will present a blueprint for juvenile reentry services in Los Angeles County. She also reported that Supervisor Antonovich has been invited to speak at the final summit.
- 4.4 Commission Committees Leadership and Staff Orientation:** President Thomas thanked all commissioners who were able to attend the orientation. All meeting times have been set along with policies and procedures, which include the Brown Act and Robert's Rules of Order. She also reported that some of the new committees would be reporting later in the meeting.
- 4.5 Extension of The Meeting Time for Commission Committee Reports:** President Thomas requested that commissioners stay for an additional 15 to 30 minutes to allow for committees' reports and a 30 minute presentation/discussion on the Commissioner Retreat report.

5. Executive Director's Report

- 5.1 LACCHR Youth Band "The Bricks" event of October 20, 2010:** Executive Director Toma thanked all commissioners and staff from the CSS Executive Office for attending the launch of the HRC youth band 'The Bricks.' The event was covered by Channel 7 ABC News and that a video clip is available online at our website. A copy of the link and a description of the event have been sent to the Board of Supervisors. Toma also reported that Cynthia Elmastian, formerly with Fraser, came to the event, and has volunteered to continue to assist with the promotion of the band via social networking internet sites.
- 5.2 Strategic Plan Implementation:** Toma and Assist. Exec. Dir. Halpert-Schilt distributed a newly developed Strategic Plan Progress report to all those in attendance. It is intended to provide a status update on the Strategic Plan but that specific program activity would be covered separately and included in committee reports.
- 5.3 Youth Offender Reentry Planning Grant Summit:** Toma announced that the sixth and final YORPG summit will be held on February 6, 2011. The exact time has not been set and further information will be provided to commissioners as it is confirmed. The purpose of this summit is to present a plan for youth re-entry as developed by a UCLA professor, based upon the results from the first five summits.

5.4 Update on LAPD community relations work and Oct 22nd protest: Toma reported that LA City HRC has proposed creating a task force where all interested parties regarding the Westlake incident can come together on a regular basis to form solutions to the tension and discernment between the surrounding community and the LAPD. Three HRC staff members joined the LA City HRC in their effort to monitor the October 22, 2010 Protest Against Police Brutality, which occurred without any major incident. Discussion ensued about how and when a police-involved shooting would be classified as a human relations issue. Given that this shooting was in the City of Los Angeles, we generally defer to the City HRC as to whether it would like the assistance of the County HRC. Additionally, each incident that is brought to the Commission's attention is reviewed individually and should ultimately be reviewed by the Crisis Response Committee.

5.5 Report on 2010 IAOHRA and Human Rights Conferences: Toma reported that he received an invitation from the U.S. Department of State to travel to Geneva, Switzerland to be part of the official U.S. delegation presenting before the United Nations Human Rights Council regarding its human rights record at home and abroad, including the work of state and local human rights/relations agencies like ours. He also reported that this event involved many agencies and individuals who also attended the conferences in Bellagio, Italy and Mobile, Alabama held earlier this year. The other non-U.S. government members of the delegation are from the American Islamic Congress and the U.S. International Council on Disabilities.

6. For Discussion/Action

6.1 Further Commissioner Retreat Follow-Up: President Thomas requested that Commissioner Paz lead this agenda item. Commissioner Paz reviewed the agreement and recommended actions listed in the retreat summary. It was suggested that each commissioner sign on to a code of conduct prescribed by the summary of the commissioners' retreat. It was reported that the commission's bylaws also outline ways to hold commissioners accountable to this code after agreeing to abide by it.

It was moved by Commissioner Lambert, seconded by Commissioner King, to approve the report as written, with addendum, which states that each commissioner will be asked to sign a finalized code of conduct which is submitted to the Commission by the leadership committee as set forth in the report. The motion carried unanimously.

6.2 Annual Hate Crime Report: Toma reported on the status of the report, and that commission staff are aiming to release it in December. He referred to the distributed memo that set forth some different possibilities for its release, and requested input from commissioners, which he received. More information will be provided to commissioners as it becomes available.

6.3 Commission Meetings in August and December: Director Banks suggested to commissioners that meetings be limited to 10 per year, allowing for the commission to

go dark during the months of August and December. After some discussion it was suggested that this schedule be adopted for the coming 2011 calendar year.

It was moved by Commissioner Paz, seconded by Commissioner Lambert, that effective for 2011, during the months of August and December the Commission will not hold its regular monthly meeting unless the chair in her/his discretion decides otherwise. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 JAF Human Relations Awards Committee: Commissioner King reported on the JAF Human Relations Awards event held in mid October. She reported that the event was a success and that many donations to the JAF trust fund were received. She thanked staff members riKu Matsuda and Elena Halpert-Schilt for their work on the project and also thanked the commissioners who donated their time and money to the event and fund. A current JAF trust fund budget spreadsheet was discussed and noted that Lockheed Martin and Kaiser Permanente donated \$2,000 each.

7.2 Youth Committee: Commissioner King distributed the minutes from the Youth Committee's meeting held earlier in the day. She thanked staff for their work and efforts to make the minutes available for today's meeting.

7.3 Racialized Gang Violence Prevention Committee: Commissioner Paz reported that the committee met but did not make any substantial decisions or recommendations. Staff member Tony Massengale was recognized for the award he received from El Centro de Accion Social (Pasadena) in the previous week.

7.4 Crisis Response Committee: Meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2010.

8. Commissioner's Comments/Announcements: President Thomas, on behalf of the full Commission, acknowledged and thanked Toma, Halpert-Schilt, Executive Secretary Grace Löwenberg, and Special Assistant to the Executive Director Emily Pacheco for their work and assistance.

9. Adjournment: It was moved by Commissioner Montano to adjourn the meeting at 2:27 p.m. in memory of Honorary HRC Commissioner Kate Stern who served on the Commission from 1959 through the 1990's. During this time she was active on the commission when many women were not allowed to participate in other areas of government. Commissioner Montano also moved to adjourn in memory of Anthony Viera, the father of The Bricks band member Anthony Viera Jr., who passed away from complications resulting from a car accident. Anthony Viera Jr. dedicated his recent performance at the launch event to his father who was active in supporting his son throughout the audition, selection and recording process.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathay Feng, Esq.
Vice-President/Secretary