



Gavin Newsom
Mayor

Theresa Sparks
Executive Director

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES OF September 24, 2009 MEETING

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Chung called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

Commissioners Present:

Cecilia Chung, Chair
Douglas Chan
Faye Woo Lee
August J.P. Longo
Linda Fadeke Richardson
Victoria Ruiz
Michael Sweet, Vice Chair
Julius Turman

Commissioners Not Present:

Jamal Dajani
Nazly Mohajer

Staff Present:

Lupe Arreola, Larry Brinkin, Bayard Fong, Linda Janourova, Melinda Kanios, Veronica Ng, Masood Ordikhani, Janel Wong

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Mr. Al Jones made a public comment expressing his continued dissatisfaction with how the City of San Francisco is handling issues of discrimination with regard to entering into a contract with a Canadian company that does not meet the HRC equal benefit requirements. This company claims that since same sex marriage is legal in Canada, they do not have to honor the equal benefits ordinance. He stated that whether or not you can marry is irrelevant and that the City ordinance clearly indicates that you do not have to be married and that this applies to people who are registered domestic partners.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Adoption of Minutes dated September 10, 2009



Approval to adopt the September 10, 2009 minutes was moved (Commissioner Long), seconded (Commissioner Sweet) and passed with the following vote:

Ayes: 7 - Chan, Chung, Dajani, Longo, Richardson, Ruiz, Sweet

Abstain: 1 - Turman

3. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

A. Commissioners Activities in the Community

Chair Chung reported that the kick off celebration of Filipino American History Month is scheduled for Wednesday, September 30, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the California Academy of Science in Golden Gate Park. Reservations are required. In addition, an invitation was sent to all commissioners from the Mayor and the San Francisco Arab Heritage Month Committee to celebrate the 2009 Arab Heritage Month on Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. at the Rotunda in City Hall. Reservations can be made online.

B. Discussion of Future Community Meeting Frequency and Locations

A list of possible community meeting locations was distributed to commissioners for their input. Director Sparks stated that every fourth commission meeting is scheduled to be held out in the community thereby providing the prospect of visiting a number of districts every year. Commissioner Longo requested that that he have an opportunity to attend site visits of the school buildings to ensure they are ADA accessible. Commissioner Turman suggested holding the community meetings later in the day to allow more people to attend. Chair Chung requested that the commission secretary collect each commissioner's input to see which location they would like to assist and then a 2010 calendar will be prepared. Director Sparks thanked Commissioner Richardson and the commission secretary for securing the Bayview Opera House for the next meeting.

C. Presentation of Resolution Honoring Chris Iglesias

Chair Chung expressed gratitude to outgoing HRC Executive Director, Chris Iglesias, for his hard work for the Commission, particularly with contract compliance and local business enterprise issues. She then read a resolution commending his excellent leadership and service both at the HRC and in the community where he advocated for equal opportunities for minority and women owned businesses, initiated a comprehensive planning process, enacted legislations and policies, etc. Individual commissioners and staff expressed their personal words of appreciation for Director Iglesias stating that he left the HRC better than he found it. They congratulated him on his new appointment and shared warm wishes for his continued success in all his future pursuits. Director Iglesias thanked the Commission and HRC staff for their support.

4. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

A. Report of Current Activities of the Director

Director Sparks reported that she has been scheduling meetings with the directors of a number of city agencies that share common goals with the HRC to see what type of partnership the HRC might establish with them. In addition, she has held meetings with the various city department heads and partners, supervisors, commissioners and staff. Much time continues to be spent on finalizing the strategic plan and she gave an update on that progress. In addition, HRC personnel functions will be reassigned to assist with backlogs. The HRC newsletter will be distributed electronically within the next week and the new HRC website will be launched in the next day or two. Commissioners asked questions and expressed appreciation for all the work Director Sparks has accomplished so far. Commissioner Sweet requested that each commissioner be provided opportunity to view the new website and newsletter before being released to the public.

B. Introduction of Fall Interns: Karen Doherty, Matthew Harris, Sonia Sachdeva and Jeanne Tadeusz

Director Sparks stated that the HRC is very fortunate to have four interns working on various elements of the agency. Lupe Arreola next introduced each intern to the Commission, stating that they are making valuable contributions at the HRC. Each intern shared background information and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to work at the HRC. Commissioners warmly welcomed the interns.

C. Significant Items of Interest to the Community Within the Jurisdiction of the Commission Identified After the Publication of the Agenda

There were no items to report.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Update on Sanctuary City Project and Update of Presentation for the October 5, 2009 Public Safety Committee of the Board of Supervisors
Presenter: Lupe Arreola

Lupe Arreola gave an update on the Sanctuary City project stating that the current issue at hand is the legislation from Supervisor David Campos regarding the confidentiality status of juvenile immigrants upon arrest. Because this is a change to the Sanctuary City ordinance, the HRC is not taking a position on this legislation but rather are looking into making a statement of possible impact on the immigrant community, the undocumented community and the community at large. To create this statement the committee is collecting information from reports, legal memos, resolutions, etc.

Ms. Arreola next gave an update on the timeline for the completion of the IRC/HRC joint hearing report. She stated that a draft copy of public assertions and recommendations was reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Immigrant Rights Commission and the HRC is expecting their feedback within the next few days. The Committee is on track with the report but is still nowhere near completing the final draft. They are hoping to present a draft report to commissioners at the October 22 meeting.

6. MATTERS OF INTEREST FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA

Director Sparks stated that a list of previous recommended agenda items has been compiled with the request that the commissioners prioritize these items. The intent is to include a minimum of one significant issue to every commission meeting agenda thereby adding substance to the meetings.

Commissioner Chan requested information concerning a telecommunications procurement waiver where no notice was given by DPW to the HRC regarding a specific RFP.

Commissioner Chan raised concern regarding non-compliant or defiant companies with respect to the equal benefits ordinance and the idea of beginning of an inquiry into a system whereby such companies would be required to pay into a fund that would compensate the public for engaging in such behavior.

Commissioner Chan discussed communication of the HRCs position with respect to the JOC and as-needed contracts as raised in the context of the various legislative proposals before the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Chan raised the matter of a pre-certification process utilizing the opportunity to capture data from the tax collector's business registration procedure and determining if this idea is feasible.

Commissioner Ruiz suggested that each time a matter of interest is recommended for possible future agenda, these items would automatically be added to the next agenda and a report be made determining either that the item continue as old business or the issue has been resolved.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Richardson recommended that a letter of commendation be sent to the family of Mrs. Elizabeth G. Jamerson, an African American community leader of San Francisco's Western Addition and a member of the oldest African American Baptist Church who was laid rest today. Mrs. Jamerson was a philanthropist and entrepreneur who donated generously to various educational and religious programs, helping youths, adults and businesses in the African American community in the City and County of San Francisco and beyond. Commissioner Richardson further requested that this commission meeting be adjourned in honor of her memory.

Chair Chung adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m. in memory and honor of Mrs. Elizabeth Jamerson.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY: Doreen Arevalo