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Mayor

Contract Compliance
Dispute Resolution/Fair Housing
Local Business Enterprise
Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender & HIV Discrimination

Theresa Sparks
Executive Director

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Draft Minutes – Special Retreat Meeting
Saturday, January 28, 2012
United Religions Initiative
1009 General Kennedy Drive
San Francisco, CA 94129

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1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Chair Michael Sweet, Vice-Chair Douglas Chan, Susan Christian, Cecilia Chung, Sheryl Evans Davis, Mark Kelleher, Nazly Mohajer, Faye Woo Lee, Todd Mavis, Michael Pappas, Richard Pio Roda

Staff Present: Director Theresa Sparks, Boris Delepine, Sheryl Cowan, Nadia Babella, Zoe Polk, David Miree, Zula Jones, Beverly Popek, Tamra Winchester, Romulus Asenloo, Mullane Ahern,

Commission Chair Sweet states appreciation for Commissioner Pappas securing venue at the United Religions Initiative in the San Francisco Presidio; Commissioner Pappas welcomes HRC to the Presidio.

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda – No public comment.

2. Overview of Commissioner, Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Director Sparks thanks everyone for attending on a Saturday. Brief overview of HRC:

Founded in 1964 it is one of oldest commission of its type in the United States and. The only agency in US that continues to have a business component. HRC will celebrate the 50th anniversary next year; Staff is present to discuss what the Commissioners want to do over the next 12-months; staff here to answer questions about the functions or specifics about the agency. A binder is distributed with reference information about the Human Rights Commission; essentially a “bible” of the Human Rights Commission. This should act as the reference source as far as anything to do with the Commission.

Difference between Agency and Commission: Commission is appointed oversight organization; core function is to set core policy for the agency; and to oversee how that policy is being implemented. One of reasons for retreat is to get Commission thoughts on what issues we should pursue this year. We'll then come back with a work plan for your approval and suggestions.

Agency: structure in City and County; Commission selects three candidates to be Director; Mayor then selects from these candidates. If the Mayor doesn't choose one of these the candidates, then the Commission will select 3 more for his approval.

The Director is the sole staff person for the Commission and the Commission is authorized to work with the Director and the Commission Secretary. However, the rest of the staff works for the agency itself and they



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report per the organizational structure of the agency. Please copy the Director on all correspondence with the agency staff in order for her to properly direct and plan staff time and resources.

As of next Tuesday, HRC will have the lowest employee count in the last 26 years; about 29-30; we are currently asking the Mayor's office to try to unfreeze some positions; we are at the point of not being able to perform our charter responsibilities without staff. For comparison, the Director stated that when she joined the agency there were 47 employees. Today, most requisitions for staff are frozen citywide. Currently, both HRC Manager positions are vacant; Director is performing the functions along with the unit staff.

Please go through the HRC Reference Binder. Please keep these and updates will be distributed.

3. HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Guest Speaker: Founding Member and First Commission Chair, Mr. Ed Osgood

Mr. Osgood comments that the Commission has grown from the original 1-2 people! He particularly thanks his family for coming and introduces his wife, "JoJo," his son, James, and his grandson, Erin. At 93-years old, he has been around for a long time. He was born 1918 in San Francisco. Grandfather owned about a hundred warehouses. Served five years in Navy during WWII, and then returned to SF to work in warehousing, trucking and containers for 50-years. He was a member of Young Republicans of CA, campaigned against capital punishment, served as Counsel General of the Ivory Coast in San Francisco, received awards from the French Government and has helped CIA over the years. He was part of the founding committee which formed the Human Rights Commission 48-years ago.

San Francisco is forward thinking now about many issues, but it was "pathetic" many years ago. When he returned from WWII, he was very idealistic. There were horrible situations with segregation and the Black community. Mayor Shelley, in 1964, approached him to start committee surrounding equal rights. Went to newspapers to talk about the Black situation in San Francisco and asked them not to do racial profiling in their reporting. The first commission hired some people to do outreach in the black community, particularly Hunter's Point area. At one point, he went to Yellow Cab; asked why there were no black drivers if they were supposedly hiring on merit. Ed Housen, then the Director of HRC, pursued the issue and got a law passed through the Board of Supervisors. It's marvelous that people could advocate something and make change. He congratulates the current staff and Commission on their work.

Questions:

Commissioner Chair Sweet thanks Mr. Osgood for reminding Commission of the roots of the organization and Chair Sweet looks forward to ideas regarding how to celebrate the work Mr. Osgood did for the 50th Anniversary. Asks: What trends do you see internationally and what can we do to continue to be at the forefront of human rights in San Francisco?

Mr. Osgood says to continue as they have been doing. He believes it is important to "get the word" out to people about issues and thinks that getting issues into legislation is a key; once there is a law, people will follow. Also it is important to get people in power that are more understanding of the issues.

Commissioner Chan: States that it is an honor to have Mr. Osgood at the retreat and asks about how Mr. Osgood and others worked when the HRC started. Mr. Osgood reminds them he only had a couple people and not the same organization as it is now. Commissioner Chan thought there was more personal advocacy within the Commission.

Commissioner Mavis: Co-chairs the LGBT Advisory Committee now. In 1964, what were some of the issues the LGBT community faced? How often were these issues dealt with? Mr. Osgood states at the beginning, the black community was the only issue.

Commissioner Davis: Works with service providers in the Fillmore area; appreciates your work and mentions that Espanola Jackson has stated that the HRC was indeed started to help the black community.

Mr. Osgood mentions that Harvey Milk was a very active leader when he was working; did good work and helped make changes.

Commissioner Kelleher: What inspired you?

Mr. Osgood: WWII. He thought deeply about it to make the people of America understand that war is not on the table anymore; believed in United Nations; was inspired by what he learned. His education included time in Europe; they were a "raw bunch of guys" who came back from WWII but with the belief that the "law of guns" had to be overcome.

Mr. Osgood states that Mayor Shelley appointed him. One thing, they people to think differently. He got the Chronicle to stop identifying people by race; they had to teach people to think differently.

Director: Currently we have eleven Commissioners and thirty staff.

Commissioner Christian: Thanks Mr. Osgood for coming. Asks if Mr. Osgood knew Bayard Rustin?

Mr. Osgood had heard of him but did not know him.

Commission Chair thanks Mr. Osgood for the presentation.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2012

Chair Sweet: Wants to use the day for goal-setting and benchmarking opportunity for the Advisory Committees. He has asked staff who interface more directly with the Commission, i.e., the Advisory Committees, to participate today. If Commissioners are going to give 100-hours of their time, he asks them to decide what they wish to accomplish, i.e. to determine goals for 2012.

Director Sparks: Reminds Commissioners about the technology upgrades to the HRC, Open Air, Elations and new real time databases for units, which are all going forward. This will allow for much greater ability to report back to the commission. At any point, we'll be able to give real time data. However, due to the smaller size of the agency, we need to limit the number of issues. 1 - Each committee should have one prime issue and 2. What would Commissioners like to focus on as an agency? HRC primary issues are:

1. Legislation for Local Business Enterprise ("LBE") and getting more efficient in the LBE division;
2. Policy Division – Looking at the African American Initiative as a primary directive this year includes out-migration and those previously incarcerated, war on drugs issue with our interns; appropriate that HRC ends our 50-years focusing on these issues.

There is follow-up on:

3. AMENSA will be producing report shortly with a summary on where the city is with this issue.
4. Discrimination Division is integrating new database; staff discussing how this can be integrated with state and federal agencies.

Director: Asks Commissioners for guidance about HRC future endeavors.

Commissioner Mavis:

How many LGBT-owned businesses is HRC tracking? Are we successful here in certifying new businesses? Are LBE's getting work? Right now, he can't say whether or not the program is successful.

Chair Sweet: This is a data collection issue. Director: We are not currently tracking LGBT LBE's at the moment.

Commissioner Chung:

In the past, committees didn't put time limits on how long to work on an issue; she believes it is very important to deliberate on how to set limits.

Commissioner Kelleher:

Do we have a way to report the impact of our work? Ex: Are the LBE's successful?

Director: We currently track the number of companies, but not the number of people. Mayor Lee talked about his 17-Point Plan, we were directed to go through the points and look at how each agency can impact these points. (We have counted 12-points which the LBE program alone can directly impact.)

Would like to see a bisexuality report. Understands that other cities are contacting us about our reports. He'd like HRC to figure out a way to brainstorm ways to get our reports out to the public more broadly.

Commissioner Davis:

Would like a list to identify the gaps; using recommendations that are specifically in the outmigration report. Using this list to help areas where we know representation is low.

Internship piece, doing a process so people who are funded to do internships have expectations of work product and she would like to see a training pilot created for interns.

LBE recruitment with targeting HRC outreach to different affinity groups and businesses.

Commissioner Pio Roda:

Wants to track success of certified businesses. Are they growing? Are they successful? He'd like to know how this is reported to be sure they are successful.

Also, re: education; he'd like to have ability to know how the internships connect with graduating students; knows that city colleges/high schools have internships which connect to other programs. He mentions various "academies" have been formed trying to combine a trade with education; wants to partner with these other programs.

Commissioner Chan:

Would like a broader conversation re: reasserting HRC jurisdiction over two areas: lease concessions and SF MTA for a mix of federal and local funds. Wants to discuss creation of more quasi-public/private partnerships to do more what they used to do under 12D. There is a whole area of contracting that escapes HRC purview and which has been dropped; discussion needs to take place regarding putting statutory requirements in place; there would be Charter implications.

Commissioner Chung:

Staying on the LBE theme; there are issues we have not discussed. Some nonprofits have gone under; are these organizations being certified? If we do some examination, is this something we need to look at? Perhaps the LBE AC can look at this.

We now have high caliber of staff who are better at communication, we need to have more community communication; how can we create a vigorous community relationship strategy to bring issues to us and to have better audience attendance at commission meetings. We have moved to new millennium, great that we are using Facebook, but HRC needs to increase use of social media.

Charter LGBT AC will have retreat soon; notes that members of the community on the committee actually wrote the reports (i.e. not staff); one unfinished mission, look at ways different advisory committees can work together to combine resources.

Commissioner Pappas

Would like HRC to claim jurisdiction over matters of immigration.

Commissioner Davis:

Wants community meeting with African American Leadership Council. Wants to have a variety of people participating in meetings.

Commissioner Mohajer:

Would like to see HRC actually do the recommendations rather than just making reports. Wants to see Commission work more in education which she feels is the most important; wants to have foundation to work with youth, high school to the youngest level possible. Education should be free for everyone.

Commissioner Lee:

News media is still racist; wants to see HRC respond in timely and strong fashion to stop this; would give HRC higher profile.

Commissioner Chung:

Re: Islamophobia Report: What happened to it?

There was a report on graduation disparity which is worth follow-up on.

Commissioner Christian:

Expresses interest in youth, education and impact of incarceration. Also, study addiction as an issue of public health. LBE part might be interesting as far as increasing education for girls who typically may not see themselves as business owners.

Commissioner Kelleher:

Underscoring human rights as part of education is important.

Would like to see HRC become more pragmatic; wants a defined list of what we are going to accomplish in the year.

Commissioner Chung:

"Education as a Human Right" was actually the title of a report; perhaps "Part II" should be discussed.

Creating "best practices" small white papers could also be started and finished quickly.

Commissioner Kelleher: Perhaps reach out to mentor other groups; Commissioner Davis mentions the Western Addition already has a mentorship program setup.

Commissioner Mohajer: Staff time is limited; we need to work more with external groups who work with our staff to write language and then create reports for presentation. Mentions DUI being put in jail; perhaps they could be forced to go to rehabilitation instead; this is measurable action which could be put into law.

Commissioner Christian:

Wanted to discuss going into jails to make people aware of LBE programs and other city resources. Also would like HRC to go to Police Academy/Police Departments to educate police about new ideas and to try to lessen the number of people who are incarcerated.

Commissioner Pappas:

Would like to develop "post-budget" strategy for the HRC if there are cutbacks.

5. OVERVIEW OF THE CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Chair Sweet: Wants staff and Commissioners to break out to Advisory Committees: LBGT, LBE and Equity. Commissioners and staff discuss work plan for the year, set an agenda for the next year, and set a retreat date (even if regular meeting date used). Commissioner Chung also suggests that other Commissioners may be invited to visit other AC retreats/meetings.

Advisory Committees meet separately and reconvene.

6. DISCUSSION OF 2012 WORK PLANS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

LBE AC, Commissioner Chan reports:

1. Due to pending expiration, Surety Bond program needs legislation adjusted to delete end date;
2. Flushing out what is essentially an escrow or impound account to expedite payment to subcontractors to aid in cash flow for small businesses
3. Clean up of technical changes to ordinance to be addressed separately; committee staff has significant recommendations with respect to certification and how to address large public/private projects
4. How to compile and present new LBE data and how this will be presented to the public;
5. Will continue to invite department heads to come to meetings;
6. Committee will be advising staff how ordinance enforcement relates to larger issue of economic development and opportunities for small businesses

LGBT AC, Commissioner Mavis:

1. Retreat on February 5, 2012
2. They will decide how many topics should we discuss making sure not to overwhelm staff (time)
3. Continue discussions at retreat regarding topics
4. Want to maintain community involvement

Commissioner Chung: Committee has projects from last year being wrapped up:

1. LGBT Senior issues; in process of advocating for LGBT Senior Advisory Committee within Commissioner on Aging and Adult Services;
2. Hope to have follow-up HIV Panel Discussion with Police Department;
3. Held District 10 Meeting to look at LGBT resources "Beyond Castro" – hope to continue this type of community action meeting;
4. Wants to be sure that staff time is taken into consideration while choosing projects.

Director mentions that with the reduced number of employee, staff may only work on committee issues about one day a week.

Equity AC, Commissioner Lee:

1. 17-members
2. Working to come up with agenda.
3. Looking at giving each member a specific task.

Commissioner Pappas:

1. Looking at infrastructure issues in order to be able to approach all the issues they wish to cover.

Commissioner Sweet:

Thank you to all. No more than 5 Commissioners can attend any meeting. He encourages every Commissioner to attend another meeting to get a sense of that committee.

Director also encourages Commissioners and staff to go to informal lunch or meet 15-20 minutes before meetings each month. Commissioner Sweet reminds them to develop agendas with staff; i.e. not the staff's sole responsibility.

7. SCHEDULE OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION 2012 SPECIAL HEARINGS, OFF-SITE MEETINGS AND JOINT MEETINGS

Commissioner Chung has volunteered to set up a Special Meeting in District 6.

Director asks how many should there be?

Commissioner Lee: She has heard Sunset has not had meeting.

Commissioner Kelleher: Meetings should be held quarterly.

Director: Each meeting costs about \$600-\$1000 by the time we hire audio equipment, pay staff, etc.

Commissioner Mohajer offers to arrange a Special Meeting in Hunter's Point.

Commissioner Sweet:

Concludes special meetings should be in District 6, Westside, and somewhere in Supervisor Avalos' District.

Director: Perhaps HRC could do a meeting with the interfaith community. Commissioner Mohajer mentions that HRC must be neutral.

Director mentions February 2, 2012 event regarding the increase of hate violence in the Tenderloin, "Even One is Too Many."

8. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: February 9, 2012.

Minutes prepared by Sheryl Cowan