



## Equity Advisory Committee (“EAC”) Minutes from the December 14, 2011 Meeting

### Committee members present:

Commissioner Faye Woo Lee, Commissioner Mark Kelleher, Commissioner Michael Pappas, Rick Hauptman, Elena Gil, Azalia Merrell, Jane Henzlerling, Ophelia Williams, Mollie Ring, and Susana Rivero.

### Committee members absent:

Grecia Lima, Mira Browne, Miquel Penn, Monali Sheth, and Dena Wurmen,

### Staff present:

David Miree

### Guests present:

**Sharen Hewitt**, Founder and Executive Director of the Community Leadership Academy and Emergency Response Project (CLEAR) and Civic and Community Activist

**Michael L. Brown**, Executive Director, Inter-City Youth

### Call to order, roll call and approval of minutes:

Staff member David Miree called the meeting to order at 5:42 pm and called the roll. A quorum of the EAC was present at the meeting. A motion was made and second to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2011 meeting of the EAC.

### Public comment for items not on the agenda:

None

### Commissioners' and Staff Report:

Commissioner Lee noted that there have been two new Commissioners appointed to the HRC. Commissioners Richard Pio Roda and Susan Christian.

**Commissioner Richard Pio Roda** is a Principal of the Meyers Nave law firm in its San Francisco office. Richard advises private entities and public agencies on public contracting, construction, and municipal law matters. Before joining Meyers Nave, Richard was a Deputy General Counsel for the San Francisco Unified School District.

**Commissioner Susan Christian** is an Assistant District Attorney in San Francisco specializing in criminal law and appellate practice. She received her B.A. and J.D. from Yale, and has been a member of the California Bar since 1992.

Commissioner Kelleher noted that he is continuing to assist in the effort to “reconstitute” the “Friends of the HRC” including working with the City Attorney’s Office toward getting the group’s 513c status “re-instituted” as well as making sure the group is meeting all compliance, ethical and standard regulations.



The next meeting of the "Friends" will be the first week of January 2012 where they will discuss "next steps" and organizing by-laws.

Commissioner Michael Pappas (recently appointed to the EAC), introduced himself as having now been a HR Commissioner for approximately three months but outside of that role he is the **Executive Director of the [San Francisco Interfaith Council](#)** which primarily got its start working with the City's homeless community and now services the Winter Shelter Program. The Council, in the wake of the Loma Prieta earthquake, also works with the City's disaster preparedness program. Commissioner Pappas expressed that the "faith based community" has always played a role in the same objectives of the Human Rights Commission and he believes his role on the Commission will serve as a voice and a conduit b/w the HRC the faith community. Pappas is also working with Commissioner Chair Sweet and Kelleher on the HRC "working group."

HRC Staff member, **David Miree** gave an update on the status of the review of the advisory committees (ACs) by-laws by the full Commission. Miree noted that there were one or two items relative to the by-laws that needed to be finalized but he (Miree) noted that he hoped that new members would be identified and seated (if at all possible) by the first meeting in January 2012? Miree noted that although the by-laws were still under review, his understanding is that current members who wished to remain on the EAC should notify him accordingly as a matter of record and that should suffice in terms of any membership consideration for existing members.

Miree also noted that he had forwarded to EAC members the ***HRC's Equity and Diversity Reports Comparative Analysis Flow Chart*** that he (Miree) created. Miree expressed that his vision was that the African American Community would embrace this "organic" document and view it as a "road map" toward self-empowerment. Additionally Miree stated that this flow chart also presents a much more succinct and concise picture of the various findings, recommendations, and common themes/trends found through out all the reports which will hopefully allow for easier digestion toward a more comprehensive look into this continuing issue affecting the African American community in San Francisco. This flow-chart is important because it outlines and notes that the key to any victory(ies) in this challenge or **effective implementation** can only be accomplished through a realistic **"buy-in" from City Leadership.**

Commissioner Kelleher went on to add that he and his fellow Commissioners felt that the meeting in the Western Addition was a complete success-also noting that the message given by District 5 Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi was well received.

#### **Brief Update and Status re Out Migration Implementation Strategy and Minority Youth Civic and Economic Empowerment Internship and Mentorship Program (aka African American Community Empowerment Initiative.)**

HRC Staff member Miree noted that as a result of the community meeting in the Western Addition and the Equity and Diversity Reports Comparative Analysis Chart that he and the HRC Office had been contacted by a number of people and organizations who wanted to work with the HRC/ EAC toward implementing this project. (OSIRIS and SF Youth Works).

EAC member Azalia Merrell reported that the work group has a "profile" that is presently being tweaked and that the work group is moving forward toward getting this project off and running. Merrell reminded the EAC body that the next work group meeting for this project was December 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 at Momby Toby? Merrell noted that she would send out an e-mail reminder to the group.

Merrell noted that the group has created an "action plan" toward implementation and is continuing to tweak it as the work group moves toward ultimately working with the Board of Supervisors to implement some form of city sanctioned incentives for id'd tech companies to provide this opportunity for youth in the affected communities.

**Michael Brown** with Inner-City Youth expressed that there is dire need for a project of this nature to help the youth in **all** the affected communities in the City and that he and his organization really wanted to

work with the EAC to help make this project a realistic effort toward enhancing the quality of life these youths and for the African American community at large in San Francisco.

Brown referenced the historical significance of the various equity reports (in particular **The Unfinished Agenda**) and how these reports recognized and highlighted the continued injustice and oppression of the African American community but **nothing** really happened to address the issues. Brown expressed great concern that there would be more reports and more groups formed that will simply do the same thing as in the past-**NOTHING**. Brown went on to say that there has been **no action as a result of these past reports** and that he would like to see the city take serious action akin to the level of activism related to “animal rights- it’s like the City is almost giving more respect to animals over humans.”

Merrell responded that she understands and empathizes with Mr. Brown’s sentiment and that the goal of this work group is to take the **first step** toward demanding that the City take action and show leadership on this issue and that the work group understands that this project (in its implementation) only scratches the surface but it is a genuine start toward implementation of something **realistic** and **achievable**.

Both Commissioner Kelleher and HRC staff member Miree reiterated that the HRC was committed to there being **no more reports** but was dedicated to advancing action in whatever “small” part toward **implementation** of the findings and recommendations of the various equity reports.

Merrell stated for the record that this youth internship program would embrace youth from all marginalized communities and not just one ethnic community. The affected beneficiaries of this program would not offend compliance to Prop 209 but because this issue disproportionately affects the African American community, this community may experience a greater involvement.

HRC staff member Miree noted again in an effort to be clear to those who had questions about the EAC’s efforts including some of the EAC members....that this effort was about **advancing action!** There are to be no more **false promises** made or additional reports. The purpose of the equity and diversity analysis flow chart is to provide the community with a resource or tool by which to highlight the vital and essential requirement for City Leaders to take this matter seriously and commit to taking **real, tangible, and substantive** action to address the out migration issue that is and has been disproportionately impacting the African American community in San Francisco. Our goal is to note that after all the reports have been conducted, reviewed, compiled and digested...or task forces have been created...that the one component still missing from the equation has been effective City Leadership toward addressing the matter from a realistic perspective resulting in achievable outcomes/results. The youth internship project as it is being created by the EAC work group is just **one possible method** that City Leaders should support as a way to advance implementation/action of the equity reports’ recommendations-which has been lacking over two decades- and to demonstrate that they are taking this matter seriously and are committed to action. Furthermore the objective of this youth internship project allows for the City to invest in its youth by giving them the self empowerment and both practical job experience and “soft-skills” so that these youth may in turn (re) invest (rebuild and flourish) in, and take greater ownership of, their communities via social, civic, cultural, and economic self-empowerment resulting not only in the retention of the African American community but also attract other African Americans to a city when there exist opportunities for advancement and to improve one’s quality of life.

**Sharen Hewitt**, Founder and Executive Director of the Community Leadership Academy and Emergency Response Project (CLEAR) and **Civic** and Community Activist offered comment on this issue by reflecting the on-going **perilous plight** of the African American community in San Francisco. Hewitt analogized that she was like a “Grandmother” who understood there are “hungry kids” and there are “starving” kids noting that both required attention. However, it is the “starving kids” (i.e. the African-American Community in San Francisco) that are experiencing the greatest impact as a result of **poverty, sickness, crime, education disparities, higher levels of incarceration, unemployment, homicide, lack of affordable housing, etc** and if these issues are not addressed it is a **critical failure** on the part of the City of San Francisco to sit idle and allow this situation to continue and exist for this long.

Hewitt went on to recognize the contribution(s) of HRC Staff member **David Miree (noting that he has raised the bar) on this issue** with his efforts related to the “historic” flow chart document (equity and diversity report comparative analysis) that Miree created and for the presentation Miree conducted at the HRC meeting in the Western Addition. Hewitt noted that as one of the **founders** of this movement to address the issue of out migration, she knows first hand how the city has yet to show **a real commitment to this problem** outside of conducting these past reports which sit on the shelves collecting dust OR convene an ineffective task force or committee with no further movement after. While she (Hewitt) appreciates that Miree’s efforts reflect “**a more modern or 21<sup>st</sup> century approach**” to a problem spanning 40 years, she does not believe that the Human Rights Commission is the right place to effectuate this much needed change.

Hewitt spoke about the **changing demographics** in San Francisco and noted that **oppression, inequity and injustice** is not limited to the African American community. However it is the African American community, that due to a variety of overwhelming (historical) social and economic barriers--- which are manifested by this out migration---stands (arguably) in the greatest need for the City of San Francisco to create vital baseline policies and programs designed to position this community to be and become more self-sustaining.

Ms. Hewitt concluded by again recognizing the efforts of HRC staff Miree for drafting **a 21<sup>st</sup> century response** to a 40 year old problem but echoed that in order for the issue of out migration to be fully realized and addressed, it demands that City Leadership, along with those people in key positions with DHP, HSA, DA’s Office etc step up and tackle this issue head-on.....

**Brief Update on “HRC Hero Awards” Recognizing Students, Individuals and Community Organizations for their outstanding contributions to Human Rights Advocacy in San Francisco - Nomination and Selection process**

EAC member Jane Henzerling who has been working to coordinate this event had to leave but HRC staff Miree shared the following information and proposed timeline relative to this item:

<b>HRC Recognition Awards Proposed Timeline 2012</b>	
<i>December 14:</i>	Solicit organizations for outreach from EAC members and HRC staff
<i>January 6:</i>	Revise application to be more expansive/inclusive; Update rubric
<i>January 11:</i>	EAC members provide organizations for outreach; Press release draft for EAC/HRC review; Application for EAC/HRC review
<i>January 24:</i>	Finalize and distribute application and press release; begin outreach for applications
<i>February 29:</i>	Check in to see how many applications we’ve received (goal is at least 20 for each award); do a second press release/advertising blast and/or mailing if necessary
<i>March 30:</i>	Application deadline
<i>April 2-13:</i>	Evaluate submissions
<i>May:</i>	Awards Ceremony

### **Announcements**

Azalia Merrell asked that the EAC be able to submit nominations for the HRC's Fair Housing Award. HRC staff Miree noted that the award did not come out of the EAC but he would check with his colleagues to get more information regarding the nomination process.

Commissioner Lee noted that the Fair Housing Award Program is governed by the HRC.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 pm. Holiday gathering started.