Equity Advisory Committee (“EAC”)  
Minutes from the January 11, 2012 Meeting

Committee members present:  
Commissioner Michael Pappas, Rick Hauptman, Elena Gil, Azalia Merrell, Jane Henzerling, Mollie Ring, Miquel Penn, and Mira Brown,

Committee members absent:  
Commissioner Faye Woo Lee, Grecia Lima, Ophelia Williams, and Susana Rivero

Staff present:  
David Miree

Guests present:  
Angela Jenkins- EAC New Member effective February, 2012  
Stella Kim- EAC New Member effective February, 2012  
Erin Le- EAC New Member effective February, 2012

Call to order, roll call and approval of minutes:  
Staff member David Miree called the meeting to order at 5:40 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 December 14, 2011 meeting of the EAC.

Public comment for items not on the agenda:  
None

Commissioners’ and Staff’s report- Looking toward the future:  
HRC Staff David Miree offered a brief synopsis regarding the main objective of the January meeting was to have a healthy reflection and dialogue on the achievements and challenges faced by the EAC during the 2011 term and how might staff improve the overall EAC membership experience. Commissioner Pappas and HRC staff Miree, offered their vision for the Equity Advisory Committee going forward; including noting that subsequent meeting will be “Chair’d” by the appointed HR Commissioner(s) to the EAC (in some configuration); discussion also included -role of staff related to Advisory Committees, a discussion on updating the EAC mission statement, reviewing policies and managing expectations related to EAC membership “active” participation, code of conduct and allowance for administrative removal where deemed necessary, and the mandatory enforcement of 3-strike rule governing absenteeism.

This discussion and the subsequent membership feedback were conducted in preparation for the new EAC membership orientation that will take place at the February, 2012 meeting.

Commissioner Pappas invited the membership to participate in the (Co-Sponsors) San Francisco Interfaith Council’s Martin Luther King, Jr Day celebration and activities. Commissioner Pappas noted that event organizers anticipate upwards of 10,000 people showing up for the various MLK events and
activities. Commissioner Pappas expressed that these MLK events embody “the dream” and reflect a lot of what the EAC is tasked to do as it relates to human rights advocacy.

For more information on all the activities, Commissioner Pappas invited people to visit SF Interfaith Council’s web page for greater details on all the celebrations happening in San Francisco and around the Bay Area. www.sfinterfaithcouncil.org.

In response to an inquiry regarding the new configuration related to the EAC Chair’s role, Miree expressed that in an effort to make all the HRC’s advisory committees (AC’s) more uniformed, and equally efficient and effective, the full Commission has imposed that all AC’s be chaired by an appointed Commissioner. Presently only the EAC is chaired by a staff member. Miree suggested that this may have been the result of staff changes that occurred mid stream which also resulted in the EAC getting a “late” start in creating and establishing projects and work groups. However, once the EAC “got its bearings” it was able to achieve results as reflected in the success of the Domestic Worker’s Bill of Rights project and presentation as well as the continuing work with the African American Community Empowerment Initiative (aka Out Migration)

Miree explained the role of HRC staff on the ACs to be more related to coordinating and facilitating the “day to day” administrative duties…basically Miree will continue doing the same functions as in the past but will no longer be “chairing” the EAC meetings.

Commissioner Pappas noted that the full HR Commission has filled all vacancies for the 11 member panel.

- **Miree reiterated that the work projects of the Equity Advisory Committee should be MEMBERSHIP DRIVEN!**

- **Going forward the rules governing absenteeism will be strictly enforced-3 absences will result in the termination of membership**

- **The full Commission has adopted in the by-laws giving the Commission Chair discretion to remove any member when said member’s behavior is determined to be more “disruptive” rather than “constructive.”**

**EAC Membership Roundtable Discussion- Looking toward the future**

Members were asked to provide their perspective on the Equity Advisory Committee going forward; including any feedback on items previously addressed during the Commissioners’ presentation, discussion regarding establishing an effective methodology and procedure for identifying work group projects for 2012 and other areas where Committee/Membership efficiency, effectiveness and overall membership experience can be improved.

Staff member Miree framed the discussion to address how the membership could more effective and efficient in selecting work projects and creating work groups.

Some members expressed that they believed there was a bit of a “disconnect” between how projects were developed and the creation of the associated work groups. Miree responded again that he believed that any “disconnect” was the result of mid-way staff changes and other fiscal constraints which limited staff time/involvement and the number of projects the EAC could try and take on.

Miree asked membership to offer feedback on the POP (Project-Objective-Process) selection process for picking work projects going forward. Some members believed that process to still be an effective way to choose work projects..others suggested that the EAC membership go beyond the confines of the HRC and do more “field work” (i.e. having more meetings at selected places “off campus”). One of the expressed concerns with this suggestion was the “public notice” requirement.
In a way to be more efficient and effective, EAC member Elena Gil offered that we should utilize more of the “expertise” that exist amongst the members to identify projects or have members identify other experts in a particular field and coordinate a work project. HRC staff Miree noted that he was certainly on board with Ms. Gil’s suggestion but reminded the body that the purpose of the EAC Speaker Series and/or the EAC Membership Presentations were intended to effectuate the same outcome…however, it took a while before members provided suggestions for speakers and there seemed to be some hesitation by membership to participate in the EAC Membership Presentation. Hence Miree reminded the body that the EAC was intended to be more membership driven more so than HRC Staff directing all the projects—including setting/creating all the agenda items.

Miree noted that the mainstay purpose of the EAC was to advise the HRC Director and Commission on equity-related and quality of life issues affecting the City’s diverse communities. Miree pointed out that it was beholding of the EAC membership (who represent the “community”) to help identify those “salient” equity issues that may be good for the EAC to take on as a work project(s). Miree expressed that it is the “passion” or those issues close to the hearts of individual members that should dictate projects, action items and membership activity.

- Miree also went on to give an overview as to how the EAC adopted the work projects for the 2011 term including the challenges related to the selection, procedure and process of creating a work projects. EAC member Azalia Merrell again suggested that the EAC’s method for selecting and identifying projects be revisited to make the process more effective and efficient.

- EAC Member Jane Henzerling suggested that the EAC’s “mission statement” also be reviewed and perhaps reconfigured in order to provide the EAC with a greater foundation for selecting work projects and action items.

- There was a question from the floor as to the “potential” number of EAC members and what makes a quorum. Miree responded that as of the January meeting, Miree anticipated a full EAC membership of 14 w/ a quorum being 7.

- Miree also expressed his appreciation for the caliber of EAC members and noted the success of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and the on-going Out Migration Project (aka African-American Community Empowerment Initiative.

- Jane Henzerling expressed that the EAC should also consider those matters or issues that are offered (to the Commission and/or the Director) to be more “advisory” in nature that our goal toward being more effective does not have to demand the project to be an “action item.”

- Echoing the above sentiments, Miree noted that the collective goal should also be indentifying projects that are achievable in short order (i.e. short term projects that would allow for immediate real and tangible achievable results.)

*****Introduction of new members (although later on the agenda…the new EAC members in attendance were provided an opportunity to introduce themselves.)

- Erin Le- EAC New Member effective February, 2012- Legal Professional and former HRC Intern
- Stella Kim- EAC New Member effective February, 2012- Has great passion for Human Rights Advocacy
- Angela Jenkins- EAC New Member effective February, 2012-Very interested in “unconscious basis (good intentions vs. pro-active efforts)

****EAC Member Gil suggested that the EAC look at projects that can be created and done within the confines of our monthly meetings to foster a greater sense of “inclusiveness” and group
participation, this would also foster a greater sense of committee accomplishment—all in an effort to make the committee more efficient and effective.

- Miree reiterated that membership time commitment is still a very important component toward the efficiency and effectiveness of the EAC.

EAC Member Mollie Ring, suggested that another way toward making the EAC more effective and efficient is to have members draft a "work plan" for potential projects which would foster greater ownership and accountability.

Commissioner Pappas give a summation of what he had been “hearing” from the group which included:

1. Creating a methodology toward building consensus
2. Look to revising or clarifying the mission statement
3. Selecting topic/projects around member’s expertise or experience
4. Look at other possible venues to conduct meetings which may also serve as a source for identifying work projects for the EAC
5. Setting aside some time in the regular meeting to work on group/committee projects
6. The importance of “active participation”
7. Having members develop “work plans” to advance greater accountability.

Commissioner Pappas suggested that the above items be used as a basis for discussion or creating the agenda for the new member orientation.

Miree stated that members would be well served to read the minutes because they really do contain (almost like a transcript) of all the topics and issues that were discussed and the perspective(s) behind them.

Miree expressed that another important reason for this discussion and feedback was to allow him some ideal about how to enhance the overall EAC membership experience. EAC Member Mira Brown noted that it was the charge of the individual members to “construct” what type of membership experience they wanted to have and that it should not fall to Miree as the HRC Staffer to create that positive membership experience.

HRC member Gil again expressed that she believes that in order for the EAC to move forward as efficiently and effectively as possible that members must be willing to embrace a “new way of doing things (i.e. making meeting more fluid perhaps by the use of technology/computers toward getting projects done faster.) BE OPEN TO NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS!

In response to the question of the number of work groups/projects (Penn), Commissioner Pappas responded that staff time/budgetary constraints will dictate the numbers of work groups.

**Update from work group relative to the African American Community Empowerment Initiative**

HRC Staff Miree expressed to the membership that the Mayor’s office is aware of the EAC’s efforts regarding this project. HRC staff (Miree) has been in communication with (Room 200) updating the Mayor and Deputy Chief of Staff as to the status of this matter. As a result of the community meeting in the Western Addition and also in an effort to re-energize and “re-new” the spirit of this project to afford
greater “synergy”, we are now referring to the “Out Migration” as the **African-American Community Empowerment Initiative.**

EAC member Azalia Merrell gave a brief update on the efforts of the work group for this project. Merrell noted that the work group met at Moby Toby (Momi Toby) on December 28 and suspects that this will be the location for further meetings. Merrell noted that all members are welcome to participate in this project (“Many hands make for light work”)… The group is presently looking at existing “job readiness programs” to ensure that the participating youth are being effectively served.

Commissioner Pappas suggested to the EAC to work with Commissioner Davis who can serve as a valuable resource to advancing this issue and project. Miree noted that Commissioner Davis has addressed the EAC body before on this issue and plans are in the work to have her return.

*Miree again emphasized that members should read the December 2011 meeting minutes where he (Miree) has attempted to succinctly frame and define exactly the intent of the African American Community Empowerment Initiative and the vital role of the Mayor’s office- any questions on this matter-PLEASE REVIEW THE SECTION ON THIS PROJECT!*

Merrell notified the group that the next work group meeting is scheduled for the 18th or 25th of January at the same location as the previous one (Momi Toby) but she would forward a reminder e-mail to the membership.

**Update from work group relative to the “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 reported on the status of this work project. EAC Monali Sheth asked about the protocol for moving forward on this matter since the work group was putting the final touches on the process to identify potential honorees. Miree noted that they are the work group and as such has the authority to go forward as they will but are charged to “report out” to the whole EAC body on how things are moving along.

Henzerling and Sheth invited any EAC member interested in working on this project to contact them accordingly. The main revision currently is making sure that the awards are open to a larger spectrum of potential honorees.

Henzerling asked that the request for more EAC membership participation be agendize for our next meeting so that we can get as many people we can to do out reach for nominations.

**The ultimate goal here is to have the award presentation before the full HR Commission. Perhaps get the “Friends of the HRC” to help financially to get better awards.**

**Discussion regarding current and new member orientation meeting**

New member Stella Kim expressed some concern about the prior discussion and overview from the challenges of the last year and wanted to make sure that new members would not be “bogged down” from any of those challenges—that they will be able to start a new with a fresh perspective.

Miree noted that Kim’s point was well received by him hence it was **optional** for new members to attend this meeting (January) because he knew that a variety of things would be discussed that new members had no awareness or familiarity.

New member Angela Jenkins praised the EAC and HRC for taking on the issue of Out Migration.
Announcements

EAC member Rick Hauptman is working with project organizers to end the death penalty in CA. and invited any interested members to sign his petition to support this cause accordingly.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.