



Orange County Human Relations Commission
Minutes
Monday, February 10, 2014
Orange County Animal Services Building Conference Room

M E M B E R S P R E S E N T			STAFF
Jamie Paulen	Gerald Ponder	Rollin Russell	James Davis
Dominika Baran	Christine Kelly-Kleese		
Robert Ireland	Matthew Hughes		
Preston Scott Phillips	Cynthia Stubbs		
G U E S T S			
Cheryl Young			
<i>Absent: Li-Chen Chin, Joe Polich, Monica Richard, Marc Xavier, Doris Brunson, Joyce Preslar and Natalie Turner</i>			

I. Call To Order

Chair Christine Kelly-Kleese called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

II. Introductions

The members introduced themselves to new member Dominika Baran. Assistant County Manager, Cheryl Young, also introduced herself.

III. Minutes

The January 2014 minutes were reviewed and accepted on a motion by Rollin Russell. Matt Hughes seconded the motion.

IV. County Updates

Assistant County Manager, Cheryl Young, presented information to the members regarding the upcoming County Commissioner's Work Session. It was stated that the Work Session scheduled for Thursday, February 13, 2014, will include a discussion on the prospect of either re-constituting a Commission for Women or charging the Human Relations Commission with creating a subcommittee to address issues specific to gender inequalities. Ms. Young requested the members to draft a report identifying the activities that addressed the issues of women and equality that the HRC has completed, and describe the activities and events the HRC plans to complete in the future. Such future events may include an educational program addressing gender equality. She requested for this report to be submitted to her prior to the BOCC Work Session scheduled for May 11, 2014. In addition to this report, Ms. Young advised the HRC that the body can request the Commission to conduct a study on gender equality within Orange County. She further advised that the HRC should consider targeting established organizations for women, such as the League of Women Voters, when it advertises events to ensure that the information reaches this demographic.

Christine presented a brief history of the previous Commission for Women based on her experiences. She stated that when the Commission for Women was disbanded, the HRC was identified as the board for citizens to voice their concern regarding gender equality. Christine further stated that the Compass Center for Women and Families was identified as an agency that addresses other women-specific matters.

Jamie Paulen agreed to draft the requested report with the assistance of James Davis. Scott Phillips made a motion for the HRC to: 1.) request the Commission to provide a list of specific gender disparities for the HRC to address, 2.) request the Commission to conduct a study of the impact that these disparities have on women in Orange County, 3.) draft a plan on how the HRC will address these issues, and 4.) make a deliberate effort to reach out to groups that serve women. Robert Ireland seconded the motion which passed on a unanimous vote.

Rollin and Jamie reported that they attended the Commission meeting on Monday, February 3, 2014 as the Commissioners issued the proclamation declaring February 2014 as Human Relations Month. Rollin read the proclamation aloud at the meeting and invited the attendees to the Pauli Murray Awards on February 23 and the Community Read on March 31, 2014.

The members discussed whether the County should include LGBT as a protected class. Matt presented information regarding the State legislative process for a County to add a protected class under its Civil Rights Ordinance. It was also stated that discrimination based on a person's gender identity may be filed with the HRC in accordance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Opportunities' interpretation of "sex or gender" as a protected class.

V. Subcommittee Updates

Executive Committee:

Christine invited the new members to attend an HRC orientation on Monday, March 10, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. All members are invited. Christine recommended that the Executive Director of the Compass Center for Women and Families, Ann Gerhardt, be invited to an HRC meeting to provide an update on the matters that the Center has encountered. James will send an invitation to Ms. Gerhardt.

Building Integrated Communities:

Scott is awaiting a return phone call from the Town of Chapel Hill's Community Services Unit about creating an opportunity for the Police Department to do outreach event catering to the Karen community. He also reported that there has been a staffing change at the Transplanting Traditions Farm and his calls to this agency have not been returned. Scott was successful in contacting the Church World Service's Immigration and Refugee Program and discovered that about 25% of their clientele lives in Orange County. He will continue communication with this agency.

Diversity Matters:

The members conducted a debriefing of the Human Relations Forum that took place on Sunday, January 26, 2014. It was concluded that the Forum was successful and that the format was ideal. Rollin invited the members to attend the Community Read on Monday, March 31, 2014 from

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Orange County Library in Hillsborough. He also recommended that the subcommittee host a future Community Read featuring a book addressing woman equality. Rollin stated that the dramatization written by Joyce Preslar about the life of George Moses Horton received a vote of approval by a professor at the University of North Carolina.

Pauli Murray Awards:

The members were invited to attend the awards program on Sunday, February 23, 2014 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Central Orange Senior Center. It was reported that the entertainment for the program will be provided by Diali Cissokho and his band mate John Westmoreland. It was also reported that Commissioner Barry Jacobs will participate on the program. James will send information about the awardees to the members participating in the program.

Essay Contest:

There was discussion on the award given to the essay winners.

Poster Contest

No Report

Collateral Consequences:

Robert reported that there are non-profit organizations in Wake and Durham Counties that adequately serve felony offenders in their process of obtaining employment. The scope of the subcommittee will be refined and it will be determined whether there is interest in pursuing the issue of collateral consequences to imprisonment. It was recommended that the subcommittee draft a list of resources that could be obtained by the target demographic. Jamie volunteered to join the subcommittee.

VI. Other Business/Announcements

Gerald informed the members that Historic Stagville will host a presentation of “Let Them Be Heard in Winter.” James will send additional information to the members.

VII. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. on a motion by Rollin. Seconded by Matt.

Respectfully Submitted:

James E. Davis, Jr.,
Civil Rights Specialist