

# Orange County Human Relations Commission Minutes

**Monday, September 10, 2012**  
**Orange County Animal Services Building Conference Room**

M E M B E R S P R E S E N T			STAFF
Colin Austin	Richard Perry	Cynthia Stubbs	Tara Fikes
Shannon Jackson	Christine Kelly-Kleese	Joseph Polich	
Joyce Preslar	James D. Anderson	Lori Schweickert	
Matthew Hughes			
G U E S T S			
Stephanie Perry	Li-Chen Chin	Robert Ireland	
<i>Absent: Preston Scott Phillips, Rollin Russell, and Annette Uhlenberg;</i>			

Human Relations Commission (HRC) Chair Colin Austin called the meeting to order. Shannon Jackson introduced two recent applicants for the Commission – Li-Chen Chin and Robert Ireland.

## **I. Minutes**

The minutes of the August 13, 2012 were approved unanimously on a motion by Richard Perry seconded by James Anderson.

## **II. Emancipation Proclamation Subcommittee Update**

Joyce Preslar shared a letter she drafted addressed to the Curriculum Coordinator for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools asking if they would include topics related to the Emancipation Proclamation in their curriculum this year. It was suggested that the letter be also sent to the Curriculum Coordinator for Social Studies and English in the Orange County Schools as well. Some edits were suggested and commission members were asked to provide any other edits by Friday. The Executive Committee will provide final approval of the letter before dissemination.

The written report of the Emancipation Proclamation Committee prepared by Rollin Russell was reviewed including the proposed event timeline. Colin Austin asked if the Human Relations Month Forum (kick-off) and the Pauli Murray awards should be combined given staff changes and the current, reduced membership of the HRC. There was consensus that the two events should remain separate since there is a subcommittee for each event and there is staff support. Colin will confirm member participation on these subcommittees by email.

On a motion by Cynthia Stubbs seconded by Joyce Preslar, the HRC unanimously approved the proposed event timeline.

## **III. Justice United Presentation**

Stephanie Perry of Justice United was present to discuss her organization and its activities. The organization was founded in 2009 as an “organization of organizations” committed to working on social justice issues in Orange County. Their current priority areas are: jobs/wages, environmental justice, foreclosures, seniors, and affordable housing. Each area has an action team.

She then talked about the affordable housing priority and their work with affordable rentals in Chapel Hill and Carrboro as well as their work with a community in Efland regarding their sewer bills. Justice United is interested in a vehicle for informing tenants of their rights in the future known as a Tenants Bill of Rights. There is not one currently in North Carolina but they are in states such as Missouri and Pennsylvania.

On a motion by Lori Schweickert seconded by Joyce Preslar the HRC agreed unanimously to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to partner with Justice United to develop a Tenants Bill of Rights. Those volunteering for the committee included: Joseph Polich, Joyce Preslar, Bob Ireland and Lori Schweickert. Lori has agreed to schedule the first meeting.

#### **IV. HRC Membership, Size and Composition**

Shannon Jackson recommended the following applicants for membership on the HRC: Tiki Windley, Dr. Li Chen-Chin, Scott Phillips and Bob Ireland. On a motion by Christine Kelly-Kleese seconded by Colin Austin the recommendation was approved unanimously.

Additionally, Tara Fikes reported that at the August 21<sup>st</sup> Commissioners meeting the Board of County Commissioners asked again for a recommendation from the HRC regarding its size. There is general thought that the current size – 24 members – is too large. After some discussion regarding the need for diversity and geographic representation in addition to acknowledgement of the Commission's current work with the immigrant community, the HRC agreed that 18 members on the Commission would be a sufficient number. Christine Kelley-Kleese made a formal motion to recommend a total HRC membership of 18 and Richard Perry seconded the motion which passed unanimously. [There are 12 current members and with the addition of the three new members the total would be 15 members.]

#### **V. County Updates**

Lori Schweickert reported that she attended the October 21<sup>st</sup> Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting. She asked for clarification on the action taken regarding the BOCC's Advisory Board Policy. Tara agreed to seek clarity and share the response with HRC members.

#### **VI. New Business**

Colin Austin presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Richard Perry upon the occasion of his resignation from the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Richard Perry, seconded by James Anderson.

Respectfully Submitted:  
Shannon Jackson, Secretary  
Tara L. Fikes, Director