

**MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2010**

Commissioners Present: Bruce Abrams, Joyce Singer Abrams, Mary Alcock, , Gracia Molina de Pick, Mark Dillon, Tiffany Harrison, Shonee Henry, Mitz Lee, Gary Lynn, George Mitrovich, Teresa Oyos, Carolina Alcoser Ramos, Roberto Shim

Absent: Nicole Murray Ramirez

Staff: Danell Scarborough, Executive Director; Pam Holmberg, Labor Relations

Chair Abrams called the 224th meeting of the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission (HRC) to order at 5:30 PM

- WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Oyos requested a change to the October minutes. She was reported as absent but should have been reported as excused.

A motion was made by Commissioner Oyos to approve the amended October 20, 2010 minutes.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Henry.

The motion passed.

Public Comment

Tom Jensen, former Puppet Theater puppeteer, returned and spoke about abuse and discrimination he experienced at the Puppet Theater in Balboa Park. The Commissioners suggested he work with his Council office to help identify a mediator to help him resolve his conflicts with the theater.

- PRESENTATION

Representatives from UMI Learning Center gave a presentation on their organization. The UMI Learning Center was started in 1997 by a group of concerned Somali community members to address the needs of school age children in their challenges in adapting to resettlement into American culture. The Center's program provides services such as advocacy, protection, mentorship, afterschool homework clubs, one-on-one tutoring, English lessons and supplemental group activities for as many as 286 students a day. They strive to help students learn and treasure their cultural history while embracing their new home. The students are primarily immigrants and refugees from Somalia but any child that can benefit from their services is welcome.

The UMI Learning Center is struggling financially. Most of the families of the students are not in a position to donate funds and they are looking for some guidance. The Commissioners had many suggestions of areas they may be able to seek assistance, either through donations from private companies, foundations,

grants, or working with their Councilmember or San Diego City schools. Executive Director Scarborough will collect the names and contact information from the Commissioners and forward the information to the UMI Learning Center.

Chair Abrams and Commissioners Henry and Shim said they had used computer equipment they would like to donate to the Center. Executive Director Scarborough will also coordinate a convenient pick up location and time.

- **BUSINESS**

Old Business

- **HRC Statement Urging Tolerance and Inclusion**

Commissioner Dillon has finalized his statement and will distribute it to the Commissioners for their review. Commissioner Dillon is unsure how the statement should be used; as a resolution from the Commission, as a resolution from the Commission and sister organization, or as a letter to the editor. The use of the statement can be discussed after everyone has had a chance to review it. There was no motion.

- **Update on progress regarding reestablishing a County HRC**

There was no update available.

- **Discussion and planning for HRC Annual Awards and Commendations**

Executive Director Scarborough reported the sub-committee has reviewed the nominations for the Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award, the Ashley L. Walker Social Justice Award and HRC Commendations. The sub-committee recommended Ben Dillingham for the Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award, Morris Casuto for the Ashley L. Walker Humanitarian Award and HRC Commendations for Urban Performing and Creative Arts Center, Christie's Place, and The Student Learning Center-San Diego City Schools. Commissioner Abrams advocated for Jared Wells and Jonathan Ton for consideration for a Commendation.

There was a motion to accept the sub-committees recommendation along with the addition of a commendation for Jonathan Ton.

The motion was seconded.

The motion passed.

The awards ceremony will be held on Wednesday, December 8 at the Balboa Park Club. Barona Resort and Casino has generously donated funds for the ceremony and gift certificates for the award winner.

New Business

- **Consider a motion authorizing HRC to sign Border Coalition agreement**

Commissioner Dillon said he was in favor of the Commission signing the memorandum of agreement but felt the Commission needed the document

to have a legal review to assure there were no barriers to the Commission entering into the agreement. Executive Director Scarborough will ask the City Attorney's Office to review the document.

A motion was made by Commissioner de Pick to sign the agreement as long as it meets the legal review.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lynn.

The motion passed.

- **CHAIR'S REPORT**

- **Commission Strategic Planning Retreat – select a date**

The Strategic Planning Retreat will take place Saturday, March 12, 2011

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- **CAHRO Training Conference**

Executive Director Scarborough reported some details of the CAHRO State-wide training conference on Monday, February 7, 2011 in Los Angeles. She would like all the Commissioners to attend and encouraged all to commit on their calendars.

- **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

- **Task Force Update**

No reports.

- **Events Updates**

- Hispanic Heritage Month Local Heroes Celebration

- ICWJ Breakfast – December 2, 2010

- MLK All People's Breakfast – January 17, 2011

- Jackie Robinson YMCA – MLK Human Dignity Award Breakfast – January 14 at Town and Country Convention Center

- UAAMAC MLK Breakfast – January 17, 2011

Commissioners Ramos and de Pick were honored at the KPBS/Union Bank Hispanic Heritage Month Local Heroes Celebration. Executive Director Scarborough was able to attend the event and reported on the wonderful reception.

The Commissioners reported on various upcoming events. The dates of upcoming events are included on the agenda to help facilitate planning on the Commissioner's part. All are encouraged to participate and represent the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.