

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

Commissioners Present: Joyce Abrams, Mary Alcock, Teresa Oyos, Tiffany Harrison, Roberto Shim, Bruce Abrams, Mark Dillon, Gary Lynn, Nicole Murray Ramirez

Excused: Mitz Lee, Shonee Henry, Nicole Murray Ramirez, George Mitrovich

Absent: Susan Hawk, Gracia Molina de Pick

Staff: Danell Scarborough, Executive Director (ED); Lori Thacker, Deputy City Attorney

Chair Abrams called the 215th meeting of the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission (HRC) to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Roll Call: 9 Commissioners were present, 4 excused, and 2 absent.

Approval of Minutes – The January 20, 2010 and February 6, 2010 minutes were approved.

Guests from San Diego Unified School District Student Learning Center introduced themselves - Rougenia Harrison, Cyndi Cavanagh, Carolyn Carterette, Sophie Brabury, Emily Spillman, Serena Revoredo, Angela Swift, and Jill Perlman.

II. NEW BUSINESS

San Diego Unified School District actions regarding the Student Learning Center – Representatives from the San Diego Unified School District Student Learning Center provided information to the Commissioners on the history, background, activities, and accomplishments of the Student Learning Center. The Center started 10 years ago when the District found itself funding many private placements for students who were having learning difficulties. The first facility was opened at Whittier, which was modeled after private facilities. The District's Student Learning Centers help special education students with learning disabilities and significant interferences in learning. Students are referred to the Student Learning Center by their teachers. They provide one-on-one instruction 2 hours a day, 5 days a week. Due to the success of the first Learning Center, others were opened and they now have 3 identical centers in different parts of the city – Wangenheim Middle School, Chollas Elementary and Whittier in Clairemont. The students have made great progress. The goal is to get the

students back to the regular classrooms with fundamental skills necessary to become successful in the classrooms. Specific examples of student progress were provided. Due to the current budget crisis, the District is proposing to cut the Student Learning Centers. They received no notice of the proposal. The budget numbers did not contain an explanation or breakdown of where the numbers came from. Closure of the Centers would greatly impact students with learning disabilities as well as students of color, who compose 84% of the students at the Centers.

Commissioner Lynn made a motion to draft a letter to the SDUSD Board of Education regarding the Commission's concern over the possible closing of the Student Learning Centers, focusing on (1) the impact upon an at-risk group of students composed disproportionately of students of color, (2) the lack of budget details and justifications, and (3) the risk of not meeting statewide education goals. Commissioner Alcock seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Commissioner Dillon will draft the letter. The Commissioners asked the Student Learning Center representatives to provide ED Scarborough with information on hearing dates and other relevant information.

Use of Food Stamp Program in the San Diego Area – will be put on next month's agenda.

III. OLD BUSINESS

Next steps regarding County HRC Request – will be put on next month's agenda.

SDSU Local Students Admissions Policy – will be put on next month's agenda.

2010 Priorities from Annual Review and Planning Session – ED Scarborough passed out the Annual Review and Planning Retreat meeting notes. Chair Abrams reported that the retreat, and facilitator Morris Spier, was inspirational and wonderful, and expressed gratitude to the facilitator for dedicating his time for the Commission. ED Scarborough reported that Committee Reports have been taken off and would be replaced by immigration, census, and hate crimes, as the major projects for 2010. Chair Abrams suggested identifying issues you would like to pursue, and perhaps discussing those issues at the next meeting. For example, for immigration, they are conducting DNA testing with the African community, which is the only race that is DNA tested. ED Scarborough suggested that a Commissioner take the lead on each of the projects. Commissioner Dillon will start organizing those interested in immigration. Commissioner Oyos expressed interest in attending IRC meetings. For the 2010 Census, Commissioner Alcock reported that she, Commissioner Abrams and ED Scarborough will be meeting with the Director of the Census, and reported that

the City did not accept \$17k in grants that were available that they are looking into. The census will come out mid-March, and are due mid-April. Chair Abrams suggested discussion of the Parking Lot items. For dinners, Chair Abrams suggested that they be paid for quarterly or yearly. Let him know what you prefer, and your food preferences. Chair Abrams emphasized the importance of attendance and participation at the meetings. Many Commissioners are up for re-appointment and re-appointment is not guaranteed, so it is important to let your Councilmembers know if you are or are not interested in re-appointment. On July 22, Commissioners Alcock, Harrison, Shim, Mitrovich, de Pick, Dillon, and Ramos come up for renewal. It is important to find Commissioners that can add to our diversity. ED Scarborough stated she will send through informational emails that come to the Commission. Commissioner Dillon requested a separation of emails for calendar events. Commissioner Harrison suggested using a yahoo or other group calendar so Commissioners can post events and can assist with setting one up. Chair Abrams reported that Councilmember Gloria commented on the importance of the Commission. It is important to let people know what the Commission does and suggested all Commissioners take another look at our mission statement.

Co-Sponsoring ADL Cyber-bullying Conference – Commissioner Dillon reported that this is the 2nd yearly Cyber-bullying conference. The goal of the conference is get 200 educators, school administrators, parents, and resource officers to educate on cyberbullying, which is they consider a low grade hate crime. The goal is educate on recognizing cyberbullying and how to respond to it. Any Commissioner who wants to attend is invited. The conference is on the 23rd of April.

IV. CHAIR’S REPORT – None.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – ED Scarborough reported that a new Commissioner, George Mitrovich, was appointed. The Cesar Chavez Breakfast will be held on March 29, 2010 at 7 am. Chair Abrams suggested asking if Commissioner Ramirez will have seats available at his table. Commissioners Dillon, Shim, and Alcock, and Chair Abrams would like to attend. Seats are \$35 per person.

VI. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Oyos suggested having a future educational presentation on HIV and women by Mary Catherine. She passed out information on the 2010 HIV/AIDS Women’s Conference, to be held March 10, 2010, from 2:00 – 8:00, at the San Diego LGBT Center. She is accepting donations for gift baskets.

Commissioner Shim reported that he attended the Linda Vista Collaborative meeting earlier. There is going to be a community outreach group in Linda Vista, to get a more accurate count for the census.

MEETING ADJOURNED: The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Prepared by Lori Thacker, Deputy City Attorney

Approved by Danell Scarborough, Executive Director