

**MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2011**

Commissioners Present: Bruce Abrams, Joyce Singer Abrams, Mary Alcock, Mark Dillon, Tiffany Harrison, Gary Lynn

Excused:, Gracia Molina de Pick, Shonee Henry, Teresa Oyos, Roberto Shim

Absent: Mitz Lee, George Mitrovich, Nicole Murray Ramirez

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

Chair Abrams called the 235th meeting of the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission (HRC) to order at 5:45 PM

- **WELCOME**

Roll Call

Public Comment

There was no non-agenda public comment.

- **PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION**

HATE CRIMES: FOCUSING COMMUNITY ATTENTION ON STATISTICS, CASES AND CURRENT CONCERNS

Statistics: Rudolph Tai, Lieutenant, San Diego Police Department

Cases and Hate Groups in our Region: James McElroy, Southern Poverty Law Center

Campus Climate: UCSD Black Student Association Representatives

SDPD Lieutenant Rudolph Tai presented information on hate crimes in San Diego. He has been on the Police force for 22 years and is the Hate Crime Liaison. Hate crime statistics in the City of San Diego have been fairly steady the last 3 years with approximately 45 crimes reported each year. Hate crime numbers in most areas of the country are on the rise. Lt. Tai spoke of the challenge of determining if a crime meets the threshold of a hate crime and also of crimes that go unreported. He said that statistics don't really show any trends in types of crimes, victims, areas of the City, or perpetrators. The City of San Diego provides Hate Crime training for all police officers. He believes education is the biggest help to ending these types of crimes.

Attorney James McElroy discussed the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and their missions. The SPLC tracks the activities of hate groups and domestic terrorists across America, uses the courts and other forms of advocacy to win systemic reforms on behalf of victims of bigotry and discrimination, and provide educators with free resources that teach school children to reject hate, embrace diversity and respect differences. They publish Intelligence Report, a quarterly publication with comprehensive updates on hate crimes and hate group activities. Over 100,000 copies of Intelligence Report are distributed annually to law enforcement agencies throughout the United States. The SPLC documented over 1,000 hate groups in the United States in 2010. California has the most active hate groups with 68,

the majority of which are in Southern California. Mr. McElroy discussed some of the difficulties in prosecuting hate crimes in the criminal system and how the SPLC uses the civil system to force individuals and groups out of the hate business. He reviewed some of the cases, both nationally and locally, that the SPLC has been involved in. They are concerned about the mainstreaming of hate with words and ideologies passed on by television and radio programs that seem to make it okay to hate. Education is one of the best ways to combat hate.

Allyssa Villanueva, Chair and Benyam Mulugeta, External Vice-Chair from the UCSD Black Student Union addressed the Commission. They were asked to update the Commission on the current atmosphere on the UCSD campus for minority students and give a progress report on their demands to the UCSD administration. They feel that seven of their nineteen demands have been completed. They are frustrated with the school's administration complacency and still feel that minority students are isolated on campus. Administration has formed committees to investigate their concerns but there are a lot of meetings and little forward movement. They have been given an area on campus for a resource center but no funding for supplies to keep the center running. The only option they were given for funding was to get approval from their fellow students for a fee to fund the center, something they don't feel is a realistic request in the current economic atmosphere. Although they are sometimes discouraged that will keep moving forward in an effort to make UCSD a welcoming environment for all.

- **INFORMATION AGENDA**

Chair's Report

Chair Abrams went on the Anti Defamation League tour of the border region. He thought it was a wonderful learning experience and recommended that the full Commission attend a tour.

The approval of five new Commissioners and one returning Commission will go before Council in early November. The new Commissioners are:

Monica Bauer-Federman – Mayoral appointment
Lorena Slomanson – Mayoral appointment
Gagandeep Kaur – Mayoral appointment
Joel Tramley – District 6 appointment
Patricia Washington – District 7 appointment

Tiffany Harrison will be reconfirmed for a second term. Gary Lynn, Nicole Murray Ramirez and Teresa Oyos will be retired from the Commission.

Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Lynn attended a screening of Not in Our Town at USD. The documentary detailed the events of a hate crime in a small town in Pennsylvania and how the community reacted and changed because of it. There was a panel discussion that followed. He said it was a good reminder of how much needs to be done and the value of education.

Commissioner Harrison helped organize a Child Welfare Convening. The event went well and she felt that it was a good source of information for the attendees.

Commissioner Harrison also participated in Listening When It's Most Difficult: Youth Conflict Resolution Day at ARC Conference. There was good participation and she is encouraged to hold similar events for schools.

The Commissioners reviewed the submission for the new HRC logo and provided ideas and comments. Executive Director Scarborough will provide the feedback to the designer.

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Scarborough attended the NAACP dinner along with Commissioner Abrams. It was a great community and relationship building event

She reported the Hate Crimes Forum at the Islamic Center was very well attended and well received. The Commission will continue to support these events.

The Commission was asked to review the draft letter to the County Board of Supervisors regarding the CalFresh Program and to please email her any comments.

Ms. Scarborough reminded the Commissioners that the Awards Committee will be meeting on Monday, October 24 at 3:30 in her office.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.