

**Human Right Commission  
July 1, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mary Bixby, Randy Cole, Glenn Glasgow, Marie Glaze, Oona Paredes, Mark Thomas

**Members Excused:** Valeta Snell

**Staff Present:** Steve Hollis, Shawna Victor, Nanette Ward

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Bixby made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Cole and passed unanimously.
- III. **Approval of June 3, 2008 Meeting Minutes:** Glasgow made a motion to approve the June 3, 2008 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Bixby and passed unanimously.
- IV. **Old Business**
  - A. **Increased partnerships with the University of Missouri:** Thomas said he has not had time to meeting with Roger Worthington, Chief Diversity Officer for the University of Missouri-Columbia, but plans to have a meeting before the next meeting. Bixby will also attend the meeting.

Thomas noted the University is currently reapplying for the Ford Foundation grant for Difficult Dialogues. This grant does not have a community component. Bixby said she believes it would be beneficial for the University to have a community collaboration project for future grant applications.

- V. **New Business:** Thomas submitted a letter for the commission's consideration to send to the Citizen Oversight Committee and City Council regarding the inclusion of the commission during the process of establishing a Citizen Review Board.

Cole moved to send the letter, as written by Thomas, to the Columbia Citizen Oversight Committee and the Columbia City Council. The motion was seconded by Bixby and passed unanimously.

Bixby moved to have all commissioner names included on the letter. The motion was seconded by Paredes and passed unanimously.

Paredes noted she previously spoke about Ishmael Beah, author of "A Long Way Gone", coming to Columbia in spring 2009. She spoke with the group that will be sponsoring Beah's trip to Columbia, and they will be applying for Human Rights Enhancement funds.

There have also been discussions about having a community circle while Beah is in Columbia. Since Beah was a child soldier in Sierra Leone, Hollis noted there is a possibility of Beah speaking about the similarities between recruiting child soldiers and gang members.

**VI. Staff Reports**

- A. **Community Services:** Hollis said he had a meeting with Tom Lata, Community Development Coordinator for the City, and Alisa Warren, new Executive Director of Missouri Commission on Human Rights. Warren has proposed to write a grant for

education about predatory lending. The Office of Community Services would be involved by handing out educational materials and outreach to consumers. The City Manager signed a letter of support for this grant. Also, Warren would like to attend a commission meeting. The commission agreed to have Hollis ask Warren to attend a meeting when she is available.

Hollis said he will be working on the Human Rights Enhancement Request for Proposals.

**B. Law Department:** No report at this time.

**C. Human Rights staff:** Ward discussed the following educational activities:

1. May 7 – Missouri Civil Rights Initiative
2. May 8 – “TEEN SPEAK!” at the Artisan
3. June 10 – Stop Human Trafficking Task Force
4. June 23 – 5<sup>th</sup> Annual “TEEN SPEAK!”
5. June 25 – “Watching the Watchdog”

Ward said there will be two more “Watching the Watchdog” events, July 14 and August 6. She has been impressed with Tom Warhover’s handling of this as there is no set model or format for this program. Also, there are eight to 12 journalism students who have been assigned to cover the outcomes of the events instead of the event itself.

The July community circle will be on the 21<sup>st</sup> and will be a discussion on healthcare issues. This is a collaboration effort with several partners including the Health Department.

**VII. Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**VIII. Commissioner Comment:** Bixby said it is to her understanding that the University will soon consider having domestic partner benefits.

Cole said there was a meeting a few days ago regarding the police department’s future purchase of Taser guns organized by Grass Roots Organizing. There will be additional meetings in the future. Paredes asked if this commission should be involved in these meetings. Cole suggested that if someone wanted to attend, they should as a concerned citizen as he does not believe everyone on the commission has the same views on the use of Tasers.

**IX. Closed Session to Discuss Pending Cases Pursuant to Section 610.021 (1) RSMo.:** Paredes made a motion to move to closed session to discuss pending cases pursuant to Section 610.021 (1) RSMo. The motion was seconded by Thomas and a roll call vote was taken. Thomas called the roll with the following vote: Glasgow – Aye, Paredes – Aye, Glaze – Aye, Bixby – Aye, Thomas – Aye, Cole – Aye.

**X. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Hollis, Manager  
Office of Community Services