

**Human Right Commission
November 4, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mary Bixby, Randy Cole, Marie Glaze, Oona Paredes, Valeta Snell, Mark Thomas

Members Excused: Glenn Glasgow

Staff Present: Steve Hollis, Shawna Victor, Fred Boeckmann

Others Present: Mark Ohrenberg, Services for Independent Living

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Paredes made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Bixby and passed as follows: Bixby – Aye, Cole, Aye, and Glaze – Aye, Paredes – Aye, Snell – Absent for vote, Thomas – Aye.
- III. **Approval of September 2, 2008 meeting and October 28, 2008 work session minutes:** Thomas made a motion to approve the September 2, 2008 meeting minutes and October 28, 2008 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Cole and passed as follows: Bixby – Aye, Cole – Aye, Glaze – Aye, Paredes – Aye, Snell – Absent for vote, Thomas – Aye.
- IV. **Public Hearing: FY2008 Human Rights Enhancement Program Funding Recommendations:** Glaze thanked the commission for their work on being prepared for the hearings last week. It made the evening run more smoothly.
 - A. *Appeals:* There were no appeals.
 - B. *Public Comment:* There was no public comment.
 - C. *Discussion and finalization of recommendations:* Glaze said all the documents and revisions the commission requested were submitted before the deadline.

Cole made a motion to approve the following FY2009 Human Rights Enhancement Program funding:

Organization	Program	Funding Requested
Amnesty International Club Hickman High School	The Human Rights Crisis in Tibet – Venerable Champe Lhumpo	\$350.00
Apoyo A Locubano	Language and Cultural Exchange	\$0
Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center	Yan-koloba: Cultural Competency Workshops	\$733.00
Parkade Elementary School	“Celebrate the Dream” (Black History Month Job Shadowing Program)	\$600.00
Ragtag Cinema	Telling Stories, Changing Lives – Resilience in War-Torn Africa	\$500.00
Services for Independent Living (Committee for Sibling Supports in Mid-Missouri)	Sibshop Facilitator Training	\$1,000.00
Stephens College	Intercultural Conflict Resolution Training Pilot Program	\$0

The motion was seconded by Paredes and passed unanimously.

- D. *Discussion regarding the presentation of recommendations to City Council:* Hollis noted the Council requested no formal presentation last year. He has put on the agenda to discuss later in the meeting the possibility of having a December meeting since there will be no presentation to Council.

V. Old Business

A. *Increased partnerships with the University of Missouri*

- *Mizzou Human Rights Commission:* Thomas said he would like to invite the Mizzou Human Rights Commission to the next meeting to see what they are working on. There was no objection to this request.
- *Difficult Dialogues:* Thomas suggested having the Stephens College program that applied for HREP funding attend the workshops the University will be hosting over the summer. These workshops are part of the Ford Foundation Grant the University received.

Bixby noted the grant was targeted for teaching religious tolerance but there are many more issues that can be discussed as part of religious diversity discussions.

Glaze asked Bixby and Thomas to discuss this idea with Stephens College. Thomas said he would be happy to do that. He would also like to invite Roger Worthington or another staff member from the University's Diversity program to a future meeting. There was no objection to this request.

VI. New Business

- A. *Discussion regarding a December meeting in lieu of presentation to City Council:* Glaze said the commission has not had a December meeting in the past as they have made their funding recommendation to Council the evening before the normal meeting day.

Bixby asked if there is any pressing business. Hollis said the current cases would need to be discussed.

The commission agreed to have a December meeting. The commission calendar will be updated to reflect this change.

- B. *Review of educational outreach efforts:* Hollis said he believes the Study Circles program has served its purpose in the community and the commission should consider other educational outreach programs. He does not believe the Study Circles program should end permanently but believes the commission should consider other options at this point. The purpose of the City's human rights educational efforts is to prevent acts of discrimination before they happen. Hollis expressed concern that the Study Circles program is not reaching the owners and administrators of the businesses and organizations against which the majority of complaints are filed. Hollis stated he was interested in a new educational approach which would directly reach out to businesses and organizations in the community in order to provide information about local, state and federal human/civil rights laws.

Hollis also said he has considered the idea of actually providing civil rights and diversity training as a City enterprise. When Alisa Warren, Executive Director of Missouri Commission on Human Rights, attended last month's meeting, she discussed the human rights related trainings that the state conducts. Hollis said he has thought about discussing with Warren a possible collaboration to create a City enterprise to provide these trainings locally. If this enterprise program does come to fruition, he would like to offer the trainings on a sliding fee scale basis.

Hollis noted the idea of offering trainings to the community and employers is not a

new concept. He and Glaze pointed out that this idea was discussed years ago with the Chamber of Commerce. Hollis believes discussions regarding these trainings could start again with the Chamber. The commission could do a survey with the Chamber to find out what kind of training businesses and organizations would be interested in. The training program could then be designed based on community needs and interests.

Hollis said he would still like to still use the Study Circles model for issues forums as the need for such arises. He noted the Study Circle facilitators have put a lot of time and effort into this program. He would like to have a discussion with the facilitators about a continuing a relationship with the community education program. He would also like to nominate the Study Circles volunteers for the annual HERO awards for volunteerism.

The commission agreed with this track and will continue to discuss this issue at future meetings.

VII. Staff Reports

- A. *Community Services:* Hollis discussed the current staffing situation and the story in the Columbia Daily Tribune regarding a complaint against Boys and Girls Town of Missouri case that was not properly handled by the previous human rights temporary staff. He added that the newly created, permanent Human Rights Specialist position was opened and reopened. The second set of interviews was conducted on October 31 and he planned to hire from the roster developed from those interviews.

Hollis said the Department's screening of *The Unnatural Causes* film series wrapped up October 22.

- B. *Law Department:* No report at this time.
C. *Investigator:* Not applicable.
D. *Community Educator:* Not applicable.

VIII. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

IX. Commissioner Comment: Thomas suggested the commissioners view the video of the fight a few weeks ago at Hickman High School involving Hickman students and a Columbia Police officer.

X. Closed Session to Discuss Pending Cases Pursuant to Section 610.021 (1) RSMo.: Thomas 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: Bixby – Aye, Cole – Aye, Glaze – Aye, Paredes – Aye, Snell – Aye, Thomas – Aye.

XI. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Hollis, Manager
Office of Community Services