

**Human Right Commission
August 25, 2004 Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: David Finke, Dee Campbell-Carter, Glenn Glasgow, Marie Glaze, Lawrence Morganfield III

Members Excused: Randy Cole

Members Absent: Valeta Snell

Staff Present: Phil Steinhaus, Fred Boeckmann, Nanette C.M. Ward, Yasmin Cline

- I. **Call to Order/Introductions:** Finke called the meeting to order.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Glaze moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Glasgow and passed by a unanimous vote.
- III. **Approval of 7/28/04 Meeting Minutes:** Campbell-Carter moved to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Glasgow and passed by a unanimous vote.
- IV. **Old Business**

- A. **Study Circles Report:** Ward reported that the next Community Circle is tomorrow, August 26 at the library from 6:45 – 8:30. Ward handed out flyers about the Community Circle as well as a community health flyer which will be shared at the Community Circle.

Ward gave an update on the Hickman Study Circle, saying there are no trained students available this semester during 5th hour. In addition, there is no space available to meet due to construction but the students are still interested in conducting the program next semester. She is looking at targeting the sophomore advisory program for participants and conducting the program during 5th hour from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. for 6 – 8 sessions in the spring.

Ward also will be following up with Rock Bridge High School students. She hopes to work with their sophomore advisory program as well. Campbell-Carter said she would help with the Rock Bridge High School program.

Finally, Ward reported that her activities this fall will also include planning and training for the "Let's Talk, Columbia!" program scheduled for February 2005. She added that upcoming Community Circles are scheduled for September 27 and October 25. Finke suggested contacting the Voluntary Action Center for meeting space for the Hickman High School program.

- B. **Roots of Racism III Conference Reports from Commissioners:** Finke reported he, Morganfield, Campbell-Carter and Ward attended. Campbell-Carter said it was the first time she had attended. She struggled on the first day because it was heavy on statistics which included a lot of information about Columbia. She said the discussion was not hopeful. She added that Dr. Gary Kremer helped facilitate sessions and he said we must talk about the issues. She met wonderful people who are active in their communities. She shared a

video from Sister Antona Ebo, an African-American Catholic nun that joined the march in Selma. It was very inspirational and she was touched emotionally.

Ward said she appreciated the conference as well.

Finke said it was his second year to attend and that there was good leadership for the conference: Rev. Dawson and Dr. Kremer. Dr. Kremer has a specialty in Missouri Black History. It helped Finke get a better sense of the peculiar racial history of Missouri. The conference helped him process his feelings about Missouri. Sixty – seventy people attended the conference. It was a very diverse group with great discussions during dinner and social times as well as during the sessions. Finke said it helped him put things into perspective.

He shared that the group took a trip to a farm south of Fulton where a man named Newsome had purchased a 14 year old slave, “Celia” from Mexico, MO and then sexually abused her. She bore two children from this repeated abuse and was pregnant again when Newsome sexually assaulted her again. She struck back and killed him. She was later hung to death for killing him. Many members of the group were very moved by this trip and there was much reflection and prayer. Finke said it was a very worthwhile program and he highly recommended it.

Morganfield said it was more spiritual than he thought it would be and the program got at deep feelings. He thought Dr. Kremer was very good and articulated very well how blacks feel about racism. He reiterated that Dr. Kremer and Rev. Dawson were very good presenters. Morganfield would like to see how racism affects other minorities as well. It caused him to reflect more deeply about racism and the fact that there is still a need to stand up and be counted.

- C. Human Rights Enhancement Program Update:** Steinhaus reported that the request for proposals is on the commission’s web site and has been advertised in the newspaper, in the City Source, on the Columbia Channel as well as a direct mailing about the program. The information session is scheduled for September 8 at 3:30 p.m. in the mezzanine conference room.

V. New Business

- A. Changes in the Missouri Sunshine Law:** Boeckmann reported that there are many changes to the Missouri Sunshine Law. A memo was mailed to the commission regarding these changes. Boeckmann reviewed the revised provisions related to commissions having meetings via e-mail. He does not recommend it at this time as the city does not have the capacity to allow the public to view e-mail or electronic meetings as they occur. He said that if an e-mail is sent out to commission members, it must be copied to custodian of records which is Steinhaus. He added that the new revisions require that minutes be kept for all closed meetings and that all votes during a closed meeting must be by roll call. He said that closed meeting minutes are closed to the public.

Finke clarified that the commission and staff might legally share with each other items that can be discussed in subsequent commission meetings, but commissioners

and staff should avoid any e-mail discussion of such items. Boeckmann agreed with this analysis.

B. Other Business: None.

VI. Staff Reports

A. Community Services: Steinhaus reviewed the 2005 commission meeting calendar. Campbell-Carter moved to accept. The motion was seconded by Glasgow and passed by a unanimous vote.

B. Law Department: No report.

C. Investigator/Community Educator: Ward reported she helped a person who contacted the commission regarding applying for hospital jobs. The person received a letter saying the hospital would no longer accept any applications from her. Ward spoke to the Human Resources Department at the hospital and they indicated that several others also received similar letters. They said they had received repeat applications from some people and had asked not to reapply. Ward was able to help with the situation. The hospital erred in sending out the letter. It was not discriminatory but bad practice.

Cline shared she had a brief hiatus over the summer but is back working with the commission. She took her bar exam this summer and is waiting for the results. She said there are many cases in process that will take time to resolve but that things are progressing nicely.

Ward complimented Boeckmann for his support. Boeckmann reciprocated the compliment.

VII. Closed Session: Campbell-Carter **moved** to go into closed session to discuss pending cases. Motion was seconded by Morganfield and a roll-call vote was taken. Campbell-Carter called the roll with the following vote: Finke; yes; Glasgow, yes; Glaze, yes; Campbell-Carter, yes; Morganfield, yes.

During the closed session Campbell-Carter moved for Administrative Closure of the complaint filed by Chi Collins against the Quality Inn (File# PA-02/04-CC) based on satisfactory early resolution. Motion was seconded by Morganfield. Campbell-Carter called the roll with the following vote: Finke; yes; Glasgow, yes; Glaze, yes; Campbell-Carter, yes; Morganfield, yes. Motion passed.

The commission went back into open session.

VII. Public Comment: Bruce Alspaugh from the Mid-Missouri LGBT Coalition wanted to follow up on an issue he brought up at the last commission meeting regarding the city's prohibition against their coalition selling food and concessions at their Pride Day event which was held in a city park. The group planned to use this as a way to cover the cost of their event.

Boeckmann reported that there has been no official action yet. Parks and Recreation will be submitting a report to the City Council some time in October on this issue and it may take additional City Council meetings to resolve.

Alspaugh had a question about the jurisdiction of the commission. He wanted to know if it applied to Stephens College and Columbia College but not to the University of Missouri or the Columbia Public Schools. Boeckmann said that was correct.

Alspaugh noted that Columbia College did not list sexual orientation as a protected class. Finke urged that he contact them in person, as he has discovered that websites are not always up to date.

Justin O'Neil, a student-journalist from the *Maneater*, wondered if commissioners learned anything at the Roots of Racism Conference that they did not know about the city. Finke said he made good contacts with others at the conference. Morganfield agreed.

VIII. Commissioner Comment: None.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phil Steinhaus, Manager
Office of Community Services