

Human Right Commission
September 22, 2004 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: David Finke, Dee Campbell-Carter, Glenn Glasgow, Marie Glaze, Randy Cole

Members Excused: Lawrence Morganfield III, Valeta Snell

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

- I. **Call to Order/Introductions:** Finke called the meeting to order and introductions were made.
- 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 8/25/04 Meeting Minutes:** Glasgow moved to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Glaze and passed by a unanimous vote.
- IV. **Old Business**
 - A. **Study Circles Report:** Ward reported that 28 people attended the August “Community Circle” program. There was a good diversity of attendees including some returning high school students. She passed out a flyer and post card about the upcoming Community Circle program, “Voices of the Hispanic/Latino Community” on September 27. It is expected that there will be a mix of English and Spanish speaking participants as well as bi-lingual participants. The format will be a “listen-in circle” followed by small group dialogue sessions. Future Community Circle programs will be held on October 25 and November 30 at the library.

Finke asked if the library was still a good location. Ward said yes, but other locations were also being considered including Centro Latino. The TRYPS (Theatre Reaching Young People) Program will be providing free child care/theatre activities during the September – November Community Circle programs.

Finke asked if sign language interpretation had ever been requested. Ward responded no, but that a person with a hearing impairment had previously participated with her own interpreter. Wright suggested getting the information out about the program to more media outlets and targeting MU students.
 - B. **Human Rights Enhancement Program Information Session:** Steinhaus reported that the information session on September 8 was attended by ten people and that he had received inquiries from several other organizations which could not attend the information session.
 - C. **Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Report:** Finke stated that he and Steinhaus worked on the committee to prepare and submit the report to

the commission. Steinhaus added that the report is now in its final draft form and is being circulated for public comment prior to final adoption by the City Council.

Finke offered the following comments/corrections to be included in the final document:

1. Page 1: The first paragraph should be revised to make sure it includes all protected classes as stated in the city's human rights ordinance.
2. Page 44: The investigation statistics stated in the report for the City of Columbia and the State of Missouri should be updated through the current time period.
3. Page 12: Information on street standards should be updated per the most recent changes adopted by the City Council.
4. Page 47: The report should be updated to reflect the current status of Columbia Enterlight Ministries here as well as elsewhere in the plan.
5. Page 47: The wording under the section "Local Coordination" should be changed from, "the Columbia commission defers the investigation of complaints," to suspends the investigation of complaints... to more accurately reflect the action of the commission when coordinating with other investigative bodies.

Campbell-Carter made a motion to submit the recommended changes to the report. Second by Cole. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

V. New Business

- A. Complaint Evaluation Form:** Cline reviewed a draft evaluation form she created and shared copies of two other evaluation forms used by the Kansas City Human Rights Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She shared that one issue with the evaluation form is that the outcome of the complaint process can greatly affect how the process is evaluated. It will be difficult to get a fair evaluation of the process itself, separate from the outcome.

Campbell-Carter made a motion that the commission take more time to review the form and discuss it at the next meeting, particularly the length of the form. Second by Glaze. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- B. No Contact Policy:** Cline reviewed the proposed internal "no contact" policy for use when investigators are unable to contact complainants during the investigative process. This policy will be used as a guideline for staff who will use judgment when applying the policy.

Glaze made a motion to approve the policy as presented. Second by Glasgow. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- C. Other Business:** Cline reported that an Assistant Investigator's manual has been created to guide future Assistant Investigators. She also mentioned that staff had been reviewing the complaint form and will be working on a system to visually map complaints that the commission receives. She recommended adding an additional contact person to the complaint form to use when staff are

unable to directly contact the complainant due to change of address, changed/disconnected phone, etc.

VI. Staff Reports

- A. Community Services:** Steinhaus reviewed items included in the commissioner folders including several news articles and an announcement about an upcoming diversity lecture.
- B. Law Department:** Boeckmann shared that the City Council has recently adopted changes to the city's code of ordinances in order to comply with new provisions in the Missouri "Sunshine Law." He shared that Councilperson Ash was interested in making it possible for the City Council and perhaps other boards and commissions to conduct business electronically (on-line) in compliance with new Sunshine Law provisions.
- C. Investigator/Community Educator:** Ward shared information on an upcoming program at the Black Culture Center on the Constitution. The program will be held at the center on October 6 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

- VII. Closed Session:** Campbell-Carter made a motion to go into closed session to discuss pending cases. The motion was seconded by Glaze 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; Cole, yes.

No formal votes were taken during the closed session. The commission went back into open session.

- VIII. Public Comment:** None

- IX. Commissioner Comment:** Campbell-Carter welcomed Wright as the new Assistant Investigator and thanked Cline for her wonderful and thorough work with the commission. Finke expressed his condolences to Ward regarding the passing of her grandmother. Steinhaus expressed his appreciation for Cline's work as well, particularly during the past several weeks. The commission echoed these sentiments.

- X. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phil Steinhaus, Manager
Office of Community Services