

**Human Right Commission  
March 2, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Scott Dean, Jessica Macy, Mark Thomas, Marissa Todd

**Members Excused:** Mary Bixby, Thomas O'Toole

**Staff Present:** Steve Hollis, Marie Glaze, Fred Boeckmann

**Others Present:** Don Love, MASW

- I. **Call to Order/Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Thomas introduced and welcomed new commissioner, Scott Dean.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Macy moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Todd and passed unanimously.
- III. **Approval of February 2, 2010 meeting minutes:** Thomas requested a correction to the last sentence in the first paragraph on Page 3. Staff noted the correction and will make the change in the final draft of the February minutes. Todd made a motion to approve the amended February 2, 2010 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Macy and passed unanimously.
- IV. **Election of Officers:** The commission agreed to table election of officers to the April meeting to allow all commissioners to be present.
- V. **Old Business**
  - a. **Revision of the Human Rights Enhancement Program Funding RFP:** Hollis said he has not had an opportunity to complete the revision. He has reviewed the application and the policy is included in the application. He believes the policy should be removed from the application in order to have a free-standing policy. This will also make the application simpler. After the revisions, the funding process should be much simpler, more timely, and more accessible.
  - b. **Refugee Issues:** Macy reported that she will circulate information from the Love, Inc. newsletter. Hollis mentioned that he has been in communication with two local non-profits regarding the possibility of pursuing CDBG funding to conduct micro-enterprise training with refugees around gardening. Mr. Musik, with Refugee Services, will be invited to the next meeting.

VI. **New Business:** There was no new business.

VII. **Staff Reports:**

- a. **Manager of Human Services:** Hollis reported that the two FY2010 Human Rights Enhancement Program funded programs took place. The Center Project's presentation of the Heartland's Men's Chorus was February 10<sup>th</sup> and was attended by staff and a commissioner. Parkade Elementary "Celebrate the Dream" luncheon was on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Hollis is also working on local capacity building entity which could serve the organizations funded through the HREP as well as the commission itself..

**Law Department:** No Report

**c. Human Rights Specialist:** On Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> staff attended the regular monthly meeting of Boone County Related Agencies and shared information about the Columbia Values Diversity Celebration and the Columbia Human Rights Ordinance.

On Wednesday evening, February 10<sup>th</sup> staff attended the Reception for and Performance of the Heartland Men's Chorus from Kansas City. The performance titled "And Justice for All" examined issues of civil rights through the music of the movement. The struggles of African-Americans, women, gays and lesbians came to life in what has been described as a "musical documentary." Glaze reported that it was a remarkable performance on many levels and one that everyone should see. Glaze reiterated that the Commission provided funding from the Human Rights Enhancement Program budget to make it possible for Columbia students to attend.

Glaze reported that there is currently a bill in the Missouri House and Senate that could profoundly change Human Rights in the State of Missouri. Staff attended and gave testimony at the hearing on Senate Bill 852 on Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> in Jefferson City. The bill received strong testimony both for and against. The concern of Missouri Commission on Human Rights staff is that there is wording in the current version of the bill that could cause a loss of \$978,862 in federal funds. If the Missouri Human Rights Act is amended and found not to be substantially equivalent to the federal anti-discrimination laws, then MCHR could lose its federal funding from EEOC and HUD contracts. These federal funds pay for 60% of MCHR personnel and 87% of its equipment and expenses. Glaze reported that at that time, there has been no additional action on the bill.

Glaze stated that on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup> staff was privileged to have a student from Parkade Elementary School spend time as part of the "Celebrate the Dream" program that has received Human Rights Enhancement funding for a number of years. The mentor/mentee luncheon was held on February 24<sup>th</sup> with a special performance by the Mid-Missouri Highsteppers. There are currently over 60 mentors involved in the program with some of us having been involved for more than 10 years. Dr. Ellis Ingram has been a mentor for 16 years, the entire life of the program. (Enclosed is a Columbia Daily Tribune article about preparation for the luncheon).

Senate Bill 852 has been voted out of committee and placed on the Perfection Calendar, position 12. House Bill 1488 will not be heard until after Spring Break according to information received from MCHR via e-mail February 25<sup>th</sup>.

Staff attended the "Stop Traffic Now" conference on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Conference activities included panel discussions, speeches followed by question and answer periods, films and workshops. Highlighted speakers were Dr. Mark Rodgers, Dean of the School of Social Work at Dominican University and Mimi Chakarova, a documentary photographer and lecturer at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. Both of these individuals are experts in the field of human trafficking.

## **VIII. Commission Reports**

- b.** Boeckmann shared information regarding the Citizens Review Board in the absence of commissioner Bixby. The CRB is continuing training and development of a brochure. They have developed forms and they are in the process of adopting by-laws, but have not yet had their first case.

## **IX. Public Comment**

Don Love, volunteer chair of MASW Human Rights Task Force commented that MASW takes a broad view of social justice issues. They are looking at diversity training in regard to issues such as bullying and unconscious bias among police. He also stated that CPD chief Ken Burton has expressed an interest in exploring diversity training for CPD officers. Burton is interested in trainings which address unconscious bias among officers rather than the mechanics of problems. They have considered working with academic resources at MU and Lincoln University. They are also considering a broader approach involving neighborhood and preventive policing. They are exploring the possibility of bringing author David Harris to Columbia for a presentation regarding preventive policing. Love presented a summary document of his conversation with Burton to the commission.

There was discussion regarding the need for and capacity to deliver diversity training. Staff is in discussions with MU staff regarding this issue.

Macy shared that a coalition around disability is forming.

- b. Closed Session to Discuss Pending Cases Pursuant to Section 610.021 (1) RSMo.:** The commission agreed no closed session was needed this month as there was no new information on the current cases.
- c. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Hollis, Manager of Human Services