

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

City Hall

April 18, 2001

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gilbert Blanks
Teressa Delph
Frederic Goff
Rosemarie Herbert
Ed Peterson
Will D. Riley
Harold White

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Alice Lewis, exc.

STAFF PRESENT:

Henry Jenkins, Staff

GUEST:

John McBain, Jackson
County Prosecutor
Carl Breeding, 1st Ward
Councilmember

1. Call to order: Meeting was called to order by Chairman White at 6:30 p.m.
2. Guest:
John McBain, Jackson County Prosecutor spoke to the Commission regarding minority representation on Jackson County jury's. Mr. McBain reported that some of the positive things happening are that mailings and address changes are being followed up on. Also, some follow up reinforcement is taking place to reach minority jurors. Every effort will be made to select minority jurors. Mr. McBain answered questions the HRC had regarding jury duty.

Mr. McBain also reported on the County's reapportionment project. The next reapportionment meeting will be Thursday, April 26, 5:00 p.m. He invited HRC to attend to comment on the size of County Commission or district size.

Mr. McBain also announced that every Friday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. he is available to talk with citizens. He invited HRC to come in during that time if they wished to do so.
3. Police Liaison's Report:
No Police Report.
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes:
A motion was made by Will Riley and supported by Fred Goff to approve the minutes of March 21, 2001. Motion carried.

5. Chairman's Correspondence/Community Update -

Chairman White spoke about juror compensation. He reported that the legislature seems to have a problem with the increase. They would prefer to have the increase take affect on a gradual basis rather than all at once.

Chairman White suggested that the HRC might want to look at the tenant/landlord rights and laws so that it can be used on some of the HRC complaints. Rosemarie Herbert stated that she would get a copy of the State Supreme Court's book relating to that issue. Chairman White stated that there will be a meeting in Flint on April 20-21 regarding housing, jobs, etc. He would like to attend, but can't until Saturday. He invited other HRC members to go too.

6. Staff Report:

Staff reviewed the financial report.

Gilbert Blanks asked about money that was set aside for the National Conference of Community Justice. Staff responded that they have the funds and they are waiting to hear back from the HRC as to what the HRC wants addressed.

A motion was made by Rosemarie Herbert and supported by Will Riley to accept the Staff Report. The motion carried.

7. Committee Reports:

Community Needs Committee - Gilbert Blanks, Chairman

Gilbert Blanks reported that the academic mentoring program at the High School was not working. Staff suggested that possibly the Superintendent would need to be contacted to schedule a meeting.

Gilbert also reported that he had met with Bescye Burnnett, Jackson District Library, about diversity training. They discussed diversity training for businesses in the City of Jackson.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the need to train people or have a diversity workshop. It was decided that staff would contact a representative at the National Conference of Community Justice to address the HRC and let them know what the HRC would like to do to further diversity training. Staff also suggested that all HRC members be trained so that they can fill in when necessary.

Labor and Industry Committee: Rosemarie Herbert, Chairman

Rosemarie Herbert reported that Robert Whitman and she conducted a presentation at Flamingo Brown's Humanities class at Jackson Community College. The presentation was on the proposed Civil Rights Ordinance. The class indicated that they would support

the Civil Rights Ordinance and did not understand why there was such a problem getting it passed.

Rosemarie Herbert reported about a complaint filed against Rite Aid. Rite Aid officers met with the Labor and Industry Committee and the respondent. The meeting was very successful. An agreement was signed. The agreement includes three steps that Rite Aid will take to keep this type of incident from occurring again.

Public Relations Committee: Ed Peterson, Chairman
No report.

Ad Hoc Committee - Civil Rights Ordinance

Staff reported about the last meeting held with the Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee. He felt that the meeting was a good one. The ad hoc committee is still waiting for the positive response of support from the Chamber of Commerce. Staff also reported that the ad hoc committee had met with Consumers Energy, who had some concerns. The committee addressed those concerns. Consumers Energy has since indicated that they would stay neutral and not take a position. Foote Hospital has also indicated that they also would stay neutral. The next step should be to hold a public hearing.

Ad Hoc Committee - Nominating

Discussion took place regarding the HRC's recommendation of Rev. Thomas Ramundo's name to the Mayor and City Council to fill a current vacancy. Councilmember Breeding was present to participate in the discussion. Councilmember Breeding stated that his concern is that city residents be given consideration when appointed to city boards. Will Riley reviewed the interview process with Councilmember Breeding explaining that all who apply to serve on the HRC are interviewed. Councilmember Breeding encouraged HRC to be active in the County's reapportionment project.

Councilmember Breeding also suggested that the HRC make a recommendation to the Council for their consideration regarding Larry Dixon's complaint.

Gilbert Blanks made a motion to withdraw Rev. Ramundo's name and submit Robert Whitman's name. Discussion followed. Motion failed for lack of support.

Rosemarie Herbert made a motion that Rev. Thomas Ramundo's name be submitted to the Mayor for recommendation to the City Council for their approval. The motion was supported by Ed Peterson. Motion carried.

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NEW BUSINESS:

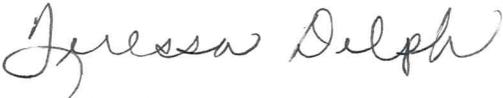
Ed Peterson suggested that the Chairman send a letter on behalf of the HRC in support of the Human Relations Board in Cincinnati, Ohio during their time of unrest. It was the consensus of the HRC that this should be done.

A resolution embracing the "Oneness of Humankind" by acknowledging "There is only one race and that is the Human Race" was considered. Will Riley made a motion that the resolution be adopted. The motion was supported by Teresa Delph. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Fred Goff and supported by Rosemarie Herbert to send the "Oneness of Humankind" resolution to the City Council for their consideration and adoption. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Teresa Delph
Secretary