

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall
January 17, 2001
Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gilbert Blanks
Teresa Delph
Frederic Goff
Rosemarie Herbert
Alice Lewis
Ed Peterson
Will D. Riley
Harold White

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Henry Jenkins, Staff

GUEST:

Jerry Ludwig, 6th Ward
Councilmember
Frances Reeves
Bescye Burnett
Derry Sims, Principal
Samella Kendrick
Susan Smith

1. Call to order: Meeting was called to order by Chairman White at 6:30 p.m. Chairman

2. Guest:

Chairman White recognized Susan Smith with a plaque honoring her for her dedicated service to the Human Relations Commission.

Frances Reeves, Principal at Sharp Park School, addressed the Commission regarding a complaint she has about some problems with the teacher's union vs. Black Administrators at Jackson Public Schools. Mr. Derry Sims, Principal of Northeast Elementary School also spoke about the same complaint. Chairman White appointed an ad hoc committee to work with Mrs. Reeves and Mr. Sims regarding their complaints. The following HRC members will work on the committee: Will Riley, Rosemarie Herbert and Alice Lewis.

Bescye Burnett, Director of the Jackson District Library, gave an update on the Healing Racism Cluster Group that has been meeting for the past year. A lengthy discussion took place about where to go from here and how to follow up. Fred Goff volunteered to look into the Cluster Groups, and to organize a way of following up on the Healing Racism workshops.

Samella Kendrick, Teacher at Parkside Middle School, had previously filed a complaint with the HRC regarding alleged discrimination at Jackson Public Schools. A committee

had been appointed to work with Mrs. Kendrick regarding her complaint, and the committee will be getting in touch with Mrs. Kendrick to follow up.

3. Police Liaison's Report:
No Police Report.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes:
A motion was made by Will Riley and supported by Alice Lewis to approve the minutes of November 15, 2000. Motion carried.

5. Chairman's Correspondence/Community Update -
Chairman White stated that he was glad to see the reactivation of the Healing of Racism discussions, because it seems the issues of racial profiling and hate crimes are very prevalent today.

6. Staff Report:
Staff reviewed the financial report.

Staff reported that on February 17, 2001, there will be a hispanic conference at the Kellogg Center at Michigan State University from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Intermediate School District is having a learning center showcase which deals with youth problems from birth to grade school. It also deals with showing youth how to be successful in life.

The Jackson District Library is having a workshop to help students on Tuesday, February 20, 2001.

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 on the Gay Straight Alliance Club at Jackson High School. He also reported that the Junior Human Relations Commission is up and running at Jackson High School.

Gilbert reported that he will be attending more Jackson Public School Board meetings. He also reported that there has not been any progress for the mentoring at risk minority students program. Mr. Graham had stated that he would like to have the program up and running by January 21, 2001. Staff also reported that he had contacted JPS administration, but they had not returned his calls.

Rosemarie Herbert suggested that Gilbert contact school board members by telephone to get their support.

Racism in the schools was briefly discussed. It was decided that the Healing Racism in schools will be put into the HRC goals for new business.

Labor and Industry Committee: Rosemarie Herbert, Chairman

Staff reported that a complainant came into the office and indicated that some of the things agreed upon at the mediation meeting were not being adhered to. Staff has contacted the respondent to investigate.

Public Relations Committee:

Rosemarie Herbert and Henry Jenkins will be talking about the Civil Rights Ordinance at a class at Jackson Community College on March 28, 2001.

Ad Hoc Committee - Civil Rights Ordinance

Rosemarie Herbert reported that a meeting was held on January 17, 2001, regarding the Civil Rights Ordinance. Henry Jenkins, Rosemarie Herbert and Susan Smith will be discussing the proposed Civil Rights Ordinance at the Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee meeting on Friday, January 19, 2001. She said that she feels that the Ordinance can be presented as a business issue.

Ad Hoc Committee - Nominating

Rosemarie Herbert stated that she would like to nominate Robert Whitman. She reviewed his background with the HRC and stated that he is well connected with the media and is a writer.

It was agreed that a decision on a nominee will be made at the next regular HRC meeting in February.

NEW BUSINESS:

Henry Jenkins reported that Janice Fairley, President of the Jackson County Branch NAACP requested to have a joint meeting with the HRC, regarding Driving While Black and Profiling as well as some other issues. She will get back to schedule a meeting date.

A motion was made by Will Riley and supported by Rosemarie Herbert to approve the 2001 HRC Meeting Dates Schedule. The motion carried.

The HRC unanimously voted Harold White as Chairman, Gilbert Blanks as Vice Chairman and Teresa Delph as Secretary for 2001.

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The following committee assignments were also made:

Gilbert Blanks, Chairman of the Community Needs Committee

Rosemarie Herbert, Chairman of the Labor and Industry Committee

Ed Peterson, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teresa T. Delph".

Teresa Delph
Secretary