

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Boos Recreation Center

March 15, 2000

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gilbert Blanks

Bescye Burnett

Teresa Delph

Rosemarie Herbert

Ed Peterson arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Susan Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Harold White, excused

STAFF PRESENT:

Henry Jenkins, Staff

Off. Kevin Hiller, JPD

GUEST:

Herb Howard, Jackson Crossing

Bob Franks, Jackson Crossing

Kathy Byerly, Jackson Crossing

Mike Sims, Community Dev.

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

2. Guest:

Mr. Herb Howard, Manager at Jackson Crossing, spoke to the HRC about some disruption at the Mall by some minority youths. On occasion there are 30-40 black youths who lock arms and interrupt shopping in the mall. On three occasions merchants have closed their gates because of the disruption by the youth. Police have had to be called in several times. The kids yell and scream at people using profanity. Currently, vandalism to the mall has cost approximately \$20,000. Another incident included the youths causing enough of a disruption at the Jackson 10 Theaters one evening that they had to be closed down causing a large loss of revenue. Mr. Howard expressed willingness to treat everyone fairly and wanting to work out a solution to this problem. A lengthy discussion took place following Mr. Howard's presentation. Suggestions discussed were as follows:

- a. Go to area high schools and Junior High Schools to talk to the student council,
- b. Go to churches and talk to Pastors,
- c. Talk to the Junior HRC being staffed by Bobby Thompkins,
- d. Have the NAACP and HRC have a meeting to help ease the tension at the Mall.
- e. Talk with the Southeast Ministerial Alliance,
- f. Talk with Tom Stobie, Jackson Public Schools.

Michael Sims, Community Development Department, spoke to the Commission about Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds—what they are used for, the screening, the five year strategies and one-year action plan. The HRC asked Mr. Sims how they can help him. Mr. Sims answered questions that the HRC had. The City Council decides where the funds are allocated to. Ms. Herbert complimented Mr. Sims on a job well done for compiling all of the CDBG information. Mr. Sims stated that this was due to the expertise of his secretarial staff Sandy Sykes and Dorinda Cox.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Susan Smith to approve the meeting minutes of January 19, and February 16, 2000, and the special meeting minutes for February 9, 2000. Bescye Burnett supported the motion to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

4. Police Liaison's Report:

Officer Kevin Hiller explained the seatbelt law. He further reported that there have been 43 violations of which two were minorities.

He further reported that a policy will be put together that will combat the Driving While Black issue.

Officer Hiller reported that the Police Department has received Local Block Grant funding to use towards purchase of new video equipment to be used in patrol cars as a way of tracking activity. Twenty-one patrol cars will be equipped with video cameras. He answered questions regarding this issue.

Officer Hiller gave each commissioner a copy of the form that will be filled out by officers for every search of a citizen that is conducted. The process will be in place by May.

Officer Hiller requested that he be added to the HRC mailing list.

5. Chairman's Correspondence/Community Update -

Vice Chairman Herbert read a letter from a Jackson High School student who was disappointed that the Oratorical Contest was cancelled. Chairwoman Herbert congratulated Teresa Delph on such an impact the contest had on the students.

A motion was made by Gilbert Blanks and supported by Ed Peterson to send a letter to reach out and open the baccalaureate event from Jackson High School to go to different churches. Dr. Blanks withdrew the motion and support was withdrawn.

There was discussion about a letter sent to HRC requesting support to ask the interim principal to consider holding the baccalaureate services at Black churches as well as White. The letter was from Tyrone Wilson, representative for Concerned Citizens.

6. Staff Report:

The financial report was reviewed by Henry Jenkins. A motion was made by Susan Smith and supported by Bescye Burnett to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

7. Committee Reports:
Community Needs Committee - Gilbert Blanks, Chairman
Gilbert Blanks reported that he was invited to a Black History Forum at Jackson High School. He reported on the forum.

Conflict management was discussed. Bescye volunteered to look into this project patterned after a program in Cleveland Heights and was very successful. There were several ideas and discussions that followed the report. Gilbert expressed that he hopes that the forum next year will be run more smoothly than this year's.

Labor and Industry Committee: Rosemarie Herbert, Chairman
Rosemarie and Henry Jenkins reported on two mediation sessions held involving city residents, Larry Dixon and Tammy Spencer. The complaint was some of their property was taken by the City in a cleanup, and they would like reimbursement. The City did not agree to reimbursement and the Labor and Industry Committee recommendation was that the City waive cleanup costs. Also, another complaint was awaiting a scheduled meeting date involving alleged unfair termination.

Public Relations Committee: Susan Smith, Chairman
Susan Smith reported that racism seems to be the subject at the Ministerial Association meetings. She mentioned it was that they lost Rev. Harpole.

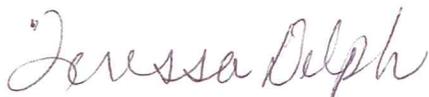
Ad Hoc Committee - Civil Rights Ordinance
The committee met on March 14. Peter Ford from Foote Hospital, Rick Davies from Comerica Bank, Ruth Heuman and Everett Perry met to revise the Draft 1 of the proposed Civil Rights Ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS:

The NAACP and the HRC will meet together to discuss the Driving While Black (DWB) issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Teressa Delph
Secretary