

## HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

City Hall

September 15, 1999

Minutes

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gilbert Blanks  
Ben Chamberlain  
Teresa Delph  
Rosemarie Herbert  
Ed Peterson  
Pauline Stokes  
Susan Smith  
Shawn White  
Harold White

### MEMBERS ABSENT:

### STAFF PRESENT:

Henry Jenkins, Staff  
Lt. Matt Heins, JPD

### GUEST:

Dan Evans, JPS Supt.  
Wilmern Griffin, Community  
Development Dept.

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

2. Guest:

Lt. Heins introduced himself to the HRC and guests in attendance. He answered questions from the HRC and stated that the police have received some training in ethics. He also advised the HRC of changes to take place regarding the resident officers.

Dan Evans, Jackson Public Schools Superintendent, spoke to the HRC about the goals of Jackson Public Schools. He has established five areas to focus on. They are:

1. First grade readiness - all day kindergarten.
2. Curriculum alignment
3. MEAP scores - All K-5 building and All K-6 building
4. Standard neighborhood schools for citizenships
5. Competition - Staff development

October 8, the football team plays Grand Ledge. The Middle and High Schools bands will play with fireworks going off. The Eighth Grade Jazz band was chosen for the kick-off performance of the Montrose Jazz Festival. He also reported that he met with the liaison officer regarding a procedure that will be put in place in case an emergency occurs. They hope to put in new technology to monitor schools and make them a safe place for children.

Wilmern Griffin, Community Development Department, spoke to the HRC about a program held last year called the First Annual King Day (We Love Our Children). The reason for this program is twofold; National Community Service had a grant for the Martin Luther King Day, A Day On...Not A Day Off. The program was a series of public service activities such as musical/mathematical chairs, and a conflict resolution workshop. The second reason for the program was due to a tragedy that happened in the community two years ago. They felt that because there are a lot of children growing up without interaction with adults. This

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program would fill that need. The program took place at the Martin Luther King Center for children. They served pizza and pop. The total cost of the program was \$500. Mr. Griffin welcomed any assistance the HRC could provide towards this program. Chairman White requested that the Community Needs Committee work with Mr. Griffin in assisting him with the program.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Gilbert Blanks to approve the meeting minutes of August 18, 1999. Teresa Delph supported the motion. Motion carried.

4. Chairman's Correspondence/Community Update -

Chairman White welcomed Mr. Edward Peterson to the HRC. Each commissioner introduced themselves.

Chairman White asked staff to set up a meeting with Police Chief Portis. He also asked if Representative Mortimer had been contacted regarding attending an HRC meeting. Staff stated that he will be attending in October.

5. Staff Report:

Staff reviewed the Financial Report. Staff reported that \$100 was donated to the Southeast Dispute Resolution Association. Staff also reported on the continuation of the Institutes for the Healing of Racism. He has been working with Flamingo Brown and Jackson Community College on behalf of the HRC on a conference to be held in October at JCC. This will be a continuation of the President's Race Initiative.

Staff has been working with the Chamber of Commerce to see what their problems with the Civil Rights Ordinance. Rosemarie Herbert suggest that each City Councilmember and Mayoral candidate be invited to sit down with the HRC to go over the Civil Rights Ordinance line by line so that they might better understand the ordinance. Chairman White asked the HRC what their feelings were on this suggestion. Everyone felt this was a good idea. Staff stated that he would set up the meetings and let HRC know when the meetings will be held so HRC can attend. Discussion followed regarding how the ordinance would be presented at the meetings. Chairman White suggested that the Ad Hoc Committee - Rosemarie Herbert, Ben Chamberlain and Gilbert Blanks meet to further discuss this.

Susan Smith arrived at the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Staff reported that a Representative from the Civil Rights Department indicated that they would be getting back with the City Manager to get his feelings and concerns about what the major issues facing the Jackson community. One of the issues were the civil rights issues. Staff asked for some input from the HRC. Chairman White stated that the hiring and firing policies were one of the issues, racial profiling, disparity in economics and the health care field. Discussion followed regarding other issues.

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A motion was made by Rosemarie Herbert to approve the Financial Report, and was supported by Susan Smith. The motion carried.

6. Committee Reports:

Community Needs Committee - Gilbert Blanks and Shawn White, Co-Chairmen

Shawn White reported that the committee is working on trying to get the Cluster groups going regarding the Institutes for the Healing of Racism. He also reported that they are continuing to work on the Student Human Relations Commission. Gilbert Blanks stated that he had contacted several schools and got a very chilly response from one of them.

Labor and Industry - Rosemarie Herbert, Chairman

Rosemarie Herbert reported that a complaint was received. She further reported that she received a letter from the Sheriff's department regarding the overcrowding of the Jail. Teresa stated that she plans to attend the meeting on September 22, 1999, from 9 a.m. - 12:00 noon.

Public Relations & Information Committee - Susan Smith, Chairman

Susan Smith reported that Shawn White, Gilbert Blanks and she had attended a meeting between the NAACP and the Superintendent of Jackson Public Schools. Ed Peterson was also there.

She also reported that Gilbert Blanks and she had taken shifts at the New City Resources Open House. She felt that they were very well received.

Susan Smith also reported that the Summerfest booth went well. She suggested that if the HRC does have a booth at Summerfest in the future, perhaps they should invite the Mayor and City Council to participate also. Rosemarie Herbert stated that the Mayor had been at her shift for a while and that people seemed to like that. Teresa Delph stated that the new members didn't have name tags for the Summerfest.

NEW BUSINESS:

Gilbert Blanks invited the HRC to his house for a Bar-B-Que to welcome Ed Peterson to the HRC. The Bar-B-Que will be held on October 3, 1999, at 3:00 p.m.

Chairman White asked Ben Chamberlain to serve on the Community Needs Committee. Also, he asked Ed Peterson to serve on the Community Needs Committee. The Committee would then consist of Shawn White, Gilbert Blanks, Ben Chamberlain and Ed Peterson.

Rosemarie Herbert asked who would be attending the NAHRW Conference. Staff stated that Harold White and Shawn White had expressed an interest in attending. After discussion Shawn White stated that he did not want to attend the conference. Rosemarie Herbert stated that she would be interested.

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teressa Delph". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Teressa Delph  
Secretary