

URBANA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES
August 17, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marion Knight, Cope Cumpston, Ivon Ridgeway, Rachael Dietkus, Peter Resnick

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Daniel Larson, Lisa Mosely

STAFF PRESENT: Vacellia Clark

OTHERS PRESENT: Amy Kummerow, Mike Munson, Ruth Fliegel, Lester Pritchard, Barbara Pritchard, Jennifer Knapp

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Knight called the meeting of the Urbana Human Relations Commission to order at 5:35 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Peter Resnick asked to add a discussion under New Business, the letter that was emailed.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of May 11, 2005 and June 8, 2005 were reviewed. A motion was made by Cope Cumpston to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion seconded by Ivon Ridgeway. All voted aye. Motion approved. The minutes of the meetings of May 11, 2005 and June 8, 2005 were approved as submitted.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lester and Barbara Pritchard spoke to the commission about the Campaign for Real Choice. This campaign exists to tackle the issue of discrimination against people with disabilities and the fact that Illinois forces more people with disabilities to live in institutions than all but three other states. Lester provided a tape from the State of Michigan that shows people with significant disabilities living real lives with friends and family and people who love them. (Due to technical difficulties, the tape was not shown.) The cost of providing services to persons with disabilities in Michigan is about \$38,000 per year per person, whereas the average cost for a person to live in an institution is over \$120,000. Lester indicated and he and Barbara are currently advocating for two things 1) passage of legislation that would be a first step in allocating funding and 2)

drumming up statewide support for the Community First Act, a bill that takes the first step in moving Illinois in the right direction.

Lester and Barbara Pritchard would like to invite the Commission to the C-U Stop of Freedom Ride '05 at 9:00 a.m. on October 18.

Scott Dosset, 501 E. High Street, indicated that he understood that the Commission would be dealing with a statement in support of the resolution proposed by Dennis Roberts and he hopes that the commission supports the elimination of the Chief Illiniwek.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Community Forum

Rachael Dietkus reported that she had met with Cope Cumpston and Vacellia Clark and came up with some good ideas for a community forum. They also have a tentative list of speakers. Cope indicated that a tentative date of September 15 or 22nd at 5:30 p.m. has been chosen.

Ms. Clark indicated that the group had discussed having a roundtable and having it be more for informational purposes.

Ms. Cumpston reported that she had attended the forum that was held in Champaign and she was asked to give a brief statement of Urbana's Human Rights Ordinance. She reported that the Governor's Task Force was collecting information about barriers people will face once leaving prison.

Ms. Clark reported that Daniel Larson drafted a letter regarding the Second Chance Act that was emailed to commissioners for their review. She asked that commissioners email any comments that they have in the next week so that this letter can be sent to elected officials.

B. Ordinance Revisions

Peter Resnick reported that he and Marion Knight met with the Mayor on the proposed ordinance revisions. He indicated that this item is currently on hold until a City Attorney is hired who can review the proposed changes and forward them onto the City Council. This would be an open item to be discussed again at some time in the future.

C. Discussion for Commissioner Retreat

Vacellia Clark indicated that the Commission should select a date in the next 30 to 60 days. This item will be placed on the agenda for next month.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. IDOT 2004 Traffic Stop Report

Peter Resnick started off the discussion of this report by saying that he was more concerned about the cover letter written by Chief Adair than he was about the data. He stated that the goal is for race not to be a factor at all. He also stated he would like to know if the police ask for searches from people of color more than non minorities.

Rachael Dietkus indicated that she is getting the impression from the community that people want this body to do something about this issue. She suggested working with the Champaign Human Relations Commission to respond. She also suggested that the information be presented more in layman's terms.

Cope Cumpston stated that she was present at the July 25 City Council meeting where the benchmarks were being questioned. She stated that the community wants more information. Ms. Cumpston stated that she would like to find out how the data is collected and how it can be made more useful to this commission. She thinks it would be appropriate for the Commission to work with the City Council on this reporting. She would also like to know if there is a way for the report to go into greater depth. She suggested that everyone provide their comments to Vacellia to be compiled and sent to the Mayor prior to the September 12th Council meeting.

Marion Knight suggested that the commission should advise the Mayor of their suggestions. Peter Resnick offered to schedule a meeting with the Mayor.

B. Chief Illini Petition

Cope Cumpston reported that the Commissioners should have received a petition from council member Dennis Roberts seeking to pass a resolution on the Chief Illini issue. Ms. Cumpston read the petition into the record (as attached).

It was discussed that this item was not received in time to place on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

After a short discussion, this item will be placed on the agenda for next month's meeting.

VII. OFFICER'S REPORT

Vacellia Clark reported that commissioners should have received copies of CPF that exceeded \$50,000. She indicated that the commission still needs to develop a process for reviewing these. She suggested that the Commission give some thought on what the process should be. She also indicated that a time factor will

be a consideration for the departments. Peter Resnick indicated that he would follow up with Vacellia.

Ms. Clark announced that the HR Training tape has been edited and she distributed a schedule of when it will be airing on UPTV.

Ms. Clark reported that she has been to another planning meeting for the MLK Program and they have some very good ideas for next year's program.

Ms. Clark reported that she has taken one formal complaint this month.

VIII. STUDENT REPORT

There was no student report.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jolinda Ross
Recording Secretary