

**URBANA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 10, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Resnick, Marion Knight, Carol Bradford, Daniel Larson, Fran Baker, Rizwan Uddin

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Aisha Lamb, Lisa Mosley

STAFF PRESENT: Todd Rent

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Larson called the meeting of the Urbana Human Relations Commission to order at 5:32 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes made to the agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of August 13, 2008 were reviewed. A motion was made by Commissioner Resnick to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Knight. All voted aye. The minutes of the meeting of August 13, 2008 were approved.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. HRC Statement

The revised HRC statement for controversial programming on UPTV was reviewed. It was agreed that a couple of changes would be made to the statement.

Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the statement with the corrections made and that this statement will be adopted and released as the Commission's stand on this issue. Motion seconded by Commissioner Resnick. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. All voted aye. Motion passed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Ordinance Revisions

Mr. Rent reported that he has had an opportunity to meet with Commissioner Resnick, Mayor Prussing and the City Attorney to discuss the major changes to the Ordinance, i.e., including the City of Urbana in definition of persons which would make the City subject to the rules; question of whether individuals who have served on three-person panel on “no probable cause” cases could also sit on completion of a public hearing in the same case; whether the Commission would adopt an ALJ for holding public hearings.

Mr. Rent indicated that rather than moving forward with either decision, that he would strongly recommend making a temporary change to the rules and adopting the ALJ model for one (1) public hearing. This would provide an opportunity to get a first hand perspective on how it would work and allow the commission to see the advantages and disadvantages as opposed to the current system. The Commission could then come back and decide which method to use permanently.

Commissioner Resnick asked about the change of making the City subject to the Ordinance.

Mr. Rent reported that Mayor Prussing proposed writing ourselves into the ordinance, however, for adjudication where the Mayor has made a recommendation that the complainant is not pleased with would need to be sent to an ALJ for final determination, to which the City would be bound by. This model is currently used by the Civil Service Commission.

A discussion followed regarding the complaint structure that is used by Civil Service.

Commissioner Resnick indicated that he wants it to be possible for commissioners to be present for ALJ hearings during evidence collection and to be able to ask questions at least through the ALJ. He would also like the ability to recall witnesses.

Mr. Rent reported that hearings would be public and the commissioners could be present. He stated that the ALJ would be a person who has presided over discrimination cases for 15 to 20 years. He indicated that he will check with the Legal Department to see if it would be possible for the commissioners to ask questions.

Mr. Rent stated that using the ALJ model is different than using a hearing officer or a regular judge. The ALJ is much more likely to ask questions even if the attorneys do not.

Mr. Rent indicated that he thinks he will be able to work out the conditions that Commissioner Resnick has asked for, however, he would recommend that Commissioners not be present for the pilot hearing.

The consensus of the Commission was to move forward with the ALJ pilot, assuming that their concerns can be addressed.

VII. OFFICER’S REPORT

A. HRO Activity Report

Todd Rent distributed a Monthly Complaint Activity Report which was reviewed.

B. Budget Report

The Budget Report was reviewed.

C. EEO Workforce Statistics

VIII. STUDENT REPORT

There was no student report this month. HRO office will be contacting a student recommend by Jeniece Mitchell to serve on the Commission.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Bradford reported that the Commission will be moving forward on the billboard and it is ready for application.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jolinda Ross
Recording Secretary