



## HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

### MEETING MINUTES

Monday August 22, 2011

REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Council Chambers & Room 1027

First Floor, 301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX 78701

Chair Judy Cortez called the Board Meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

#### Commission Members in Attendance:

Judy Cortez – Chair  
Tom Davis – Vice Chair  
Elizabeth Brenner  
DeWayne Lofton  
Paul Rhea  
L. George Reynolds

#### Human Resources Staff Present:

Yamile M. Ortiz, EE/FHO Staff Liaison  
Tony Robertson, EE/FHO Executive Liaison

#### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the meeting of July 25 were approved - Commissioner Reynolds motion, Commissioner Brenner second on a 6-0 vote.

#### **2. CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS**

None

#### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

None

#### **4. OLD BUSINESS**

For discussion and possible action:

- a. Whether Archived videos of the Human Rights Commission meetings should be made available to the public on demand as are videos of many other citizen board and commission meetings.

Mr. Reynolds mentioned that he looked into the Human Rights Commission website and he noticed that Austin citizens can look into some archived

Board and Commissions meetings at any time but they can not look into ours. Commissioner Reynolds asked Mr. Robertson if he had some information.

Mr. Robertson mentioned he talked to the management of Channel 6 about our commission meetings being accessible on video on demand. They explained that the videos will be available to the public starting on October 1, 2011 because they are getting upgraded equipment starting the new fiscal year.

Mr. Robertson clarified that the past meetings videos will be accessible by request through the library and he believes there is no cost involved for the video request. He said he will bring more information during the next meeting.

b. Updates and revisions of the Human Rights Commission website to make it more understandable and accessible to the public.

[http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/cityclerk/boards\\_commissions/boards/bid33.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/cityclerk/boards_commissions/boards/bid33.htm)

Commissioner Reynolds said he talked about the Commission website during the last meeting and he pointed out there was some factual errors and misinformation to rectify. The website has not been updated recently to reflect more recent council ordinance changes. He suggested improving the Commission's website to provide more accurate information to the public.

Commissioner Reynolds handed out a copy of the draft with corrections and proposed that the Commissioners review and suggest edits to add. The Commissioners commented on the changes and the information appeared to be accurate. They recognized Commissioner Reynolds for the excellent job he did with the website revision.

Commissioner Reynolds asked Mr. Robertson what will be the procedure to submit the new revision of the website before the Boards and Commissions. Mr. Robertson expressed that first he will pass the website revision to the City of Austin Legal department for their review. He will bring more information when he contacts the City Clerk's Boards and Commission Information Center' office (BCIC) and find out the process to update the Commission website.

c. Update or response to issues as presented by Susana Almanza of PODER.

Ms. Scales commented that she personally is working this investigation with the Human Resources Department and they are in the final stages drafting the report. She added the case will be closing in a couple of weeks and she will address the Commissioners during the September meeting to disclose the results of the investigation. She commented that Mr. Washington addressed all questions that the Commissioners asked during the July meeting.

Commissioner Cortez said that she will notify Ms. Almanza to see if she will come to the next meeting.

d. Update on working Committees responsible for the 2011 International Association of Official Human Rights Agency (IAOHRA) - Conference in Austin.

Mr. Robertson handed out the 52 page draft of the IAOHRA conference program; he reviewed with the Commissioners the table of contents which include the welcome letters from Mr. Leon Russell, President of IAOHRA; Ms. Beverly Watts, Chair 2011 IAOHRA conference Planning Committee; City of Austin Human Rights Commissioners; City of Austin Mayor, Lee Leffingwell. Mr. Robertson reviewed IAOHRA Conference Agenda Items, Biographies and Sponsors.

Mr. Robertson thanked each Commissioner for all the hard and efficient work done and their support to make the planning of the conference successful. Commissioners expressed an enormous thank to Mr. Robertson and Carla Scales for all the support and confidence they gave to the team.

## **5. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

- Commissioner Cortez talked about the Boards & Commission Survey done about 2 months ago in which one of the questions they addressed was about if the Commission has sufficient resources to provide the support requested from the Board. Commissioner Cortez mentioned that she disclosed that the Equal Employment Fair Housing Office (EEFHO) had a reduction on staff and because of this reduction; the Commission was unable to assist that Office. She said the Commission wants to Lobby to get funds to hire more staff due to the demand of the business and the population growth.
- Equal Employment Fair Housing Office (EE/FHO) Updates by Tony Robertson, Administrator
  - Mr. Robertson informed the Housing Contract was completed on July 31, 2011. He added that the Fair Housing staff were preparing for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Performance Assessment on August 25, 2011. This assessment is done every year as part of the contract they have with the HUD.

## **6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Discussion of possible agenda items for the next regular HRC meeting.
  - Commissioners will forward information to the support staff on the items to discuss for the next meeting

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Judy Cortez adjourned the meeting at 6:24 pm without objection.