



Orange County Human Relations Commission

1300 S. Grand, Bldg. B, Santa Ana
7:00 PM, Thursday, April 13, 2017

MINUTES

PRESENT: Becky Esparza, Rabbi Steinberg, Sean Thomas, Dr. Kerry Reynolds, Elliot Singer, Mark Miller, Bekele Demissie

ABSENT: Dr. Chiarina Piazza and Chief Mike Hamel

STAFF: Norma López, Don Han, Joyce Sanchez

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by the Chair.
2. Approve meeting minutes M/S/C approved the minutes
3. Michael Reynolds introduces himself – attorney, Michele Steel appointee. Kim Do, pharmacist 1978 in Orange County – appointed by Supervisor Do. Chair welcomes both to the Human Relations Commission.
4. Commissioner Miller reviewed Commission monthly summary of activities. He highlighted that the list of activities demonstrated the work of only 3 staff members and was astounded. Concerns about staff time and response to community request for outreach and presentations were shared by Commissioner Thomas and Commissioner M. Reynolds. Commission decided this would be a good topic to explore during strategic planning.

OPEN FORUM

The Vice Chair recognized guests, who introduced themselves, and one audience member addressed the Commission.

- Brian Kay stated that in 2013, Michael Acuna, an Anaheim Police Department officer, was patrolling on his bike and stopped to harass Mr. Kay. Mr. Kay claims that the officer turned off his recorder and threatened his life, tackled him, and said, “Now you would find out what Kelly Thomas went through.” Mr. Kay shared that he has filed multiple complaints but all of them have been rejected and claims to have been placed on a “do not assist” list. Rabbi Steinberg suggested to meet with Don Han to file a report.

ACTION ITEMS

5. Becky facilitates City Council Visits agenda Mark Miller contacted Aliso Viejo but has not received a response. Bekele has reached out to Placentia but has not been successful. This activity will be discussed at the Strategic Planning process.
6. Commissioner Demissie shared Commission’s past actions on the issue of homelessness. He proposed for the Commission to craft a letter to support Supervisor Nelson’s position on homelessness issue and affirm the need for more affordable housing for homeless people. M/S/C approved for Commission to draft a support letter to Supervisor Nelson.
7. Commissioner Thomas proposes that the Commission have its own website. He added that the Board of Supervisors has a website that the Commission can use. Commissioner Thomas moves for the Commission to explore options for a Commission website. M/S/C approved the proposal.
8. Commissioner Reynolds spoke about the need to address different Commission strategic planning issues such as engaging the diverse population in Orange County and reach out to populations who may be isolated. Commissioner Reynolds also stated that the Commission needed the “freedom to look at human relations issues in Orange County through an expansive lens, outside the agenda of a single nonprofit organization.” She proposed that individual Commissioners contact their Supervisors to recommend that

the Board not fund the OC Human Relations Council winning bid. After much discussion and considering that many questions remained about the topic, this item was moved to an Informational agenda item for individual Commissioner consideration.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Director's report included an announcement of Commission staff starting Police & Youth dialogues in the City of Tustin, a potential pro bono candidate who has offered to assist the Commission in the strategic planning process, Walk in My Shoes report being included in Commission packet, a condolence letter was sent to Whittier PD in memory of Officer Boyer, and the OC Human Relations Council having sent a Board of Supervisors Special Committee Report outlining the steps taken to "disentangle" the Commission from the nonprofit.
10. Commissioner Demissie offered the Hate Free OC campaign updates including the latest hate crime/incident trends as of March 30, 2017 – 54 hate incidents & 18 hate crimes. Commissioners were informed that about 2/3 of hate crimes/incidents go underreported.
11. Chair opens floor for questions or concerns that Commissioners might have. No questions were posed.
12. Rabbi Rick Steinberg shared that there were no updates available.
13. Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM by Chair Becky Esparza in silence to in memory of the Jonathan Martinez, 8-year-old boy who passed away in the fatal shooting in North Park Elementary School in San Bernardino.