

MINNEAPOLIS COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS
Commission Meeting MINUTES
Monday, October 17, 2011
Minneapolis Central Library, Mark E. Johnson Conference Room N-202
300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN

5:04 PM, Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioners in Attendance:

Lonnie Nichols, John Oberreuter, Michael McHugh, Bernadette Casey, Sonja Peterson, Marla Khan, Cecelia Rodriguez-Melendez, Surya Rochel, Patricia Nelson, Emily J. Froehle, Jennifer Thompson, Scott Flaherty

Commissioners Absent: Joshua Williams, Michelle Monteiro, Adosh Unni, Thomas Gallagher

City Staff: Michael Browne, Caroline Bachun, Monica Diaz

Guests: None

Approval of Agenda: Moved Thompson, Second Peterson, Approved

Approval, September 19, 2011 MCCR minutes as amended to reflect Flaherty and Diaz not in attendance: Moved Peterson, Second Rodriguez-Melendez, Approved

Civil Rights Department Reports:

Michael Browne, Assistant Director (AD) provides report on Probable Cause (PC), No Probable Cause (NPC) and Dismissals, indicating that as of October 17, 2011, there were 59 total case files pending resolution: 17 current cases under review by the Commission; 1 PC, 10 Dismissal and 6 NPC determinations, and; 9 cases in the backlog with only 2 exceeding 31 months under review. AD Browne noted that the number of cases in the backlog was down to 9 from 216 in September 2010. Any case over 365 days old is deemed to be in the backlog.

AD Browne reminded the Commission that an EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Contract) had ended on September 22, 2011. The EEOC goal was 254 cases and the contract closed with 263 cases having been submitted. AD Browne announces that staff Monica Diaz will be leaving the department and moving to California later this month; Browne and the commission thank Diaz for her years of service to city and wish her well.

Commission on Civil Rights Committee Reports

Contract Compliance - McHugh said that the CC committee did not meet. Related news included that a minority owned company was decertified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) at the federal level.

Public Relations and Education: Commissioner Nelson reported that the PR&E committee did not meet, but confirmed that all the Martin Luther King, Jr. essay packets had been distributed to Minneapolis schools.

Standards and Procedures: Did not meet, but are scheduled to meet in November. There may be some No Probable Cause cases that need assignment.

League of Minnesota Human Rights Commission: Commissioner Peterson asks for a volunteer(s) to attend a League meeting in Shoreview on Saturday, October 22. Peterson announces that Minnesotans United for All Families is providing training sessions on how to educate others on the constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage.

Motion: Support the Minnesotans United for All Families resolution opposing the amendment to the Minnesota Constitution banning same sex marriage and include the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights on their list, moved Peterson, second Flaherty, passed. Chair Flaherty will process the applicable paperwork.

The ad hoc committee researching the potential impact on residents of the City of Minneapolis of passage of an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution banning same sex marriage in the state of Minnesota indicated preliminary information could be presented in November.

The Commission on Civil Rights Chair Person's Report, Chair Flaherty reported that Commissioner Williams had resigned from the Commission for personal reasons, specifically to support his mother in her fight against cancer. The strategic planning sessions originally proposed for September and October 2011 will now be condensed into a single two to three hour strategic planning session, following a brief full commission meeting on Monday, November 21, 2011. Previously mentioned topics for the strategic planning session have included a discussion on how our actions can support the goals of the Civil Rights Department, and a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of MCCR activities. A potluck is planned for the November planning session.

New Business: Department staff was asked to check into the issuance of Saving Bonds to the 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. essay winners. Staff reports that approximately 10 applications were received for open seats on the commission.

Adjournment at 5:35 PM: Moved Thompson; Second Rodriguez-Melendez; Passed.

This meeting of the Commission was abbreviated to allow Commissioners to attend a social hour and panel discussion titled: "United States of Immigrants?" at the Minneapolis Central Library on Monday, October 17, 2011. The event was organized by the Minneapolis YWCA and sponsored by Cargill. Minneapolis Civil Rights Director Velma Korbel moderated the panel discussion and the keynote social hour speaker was Linda Chavez.