

MINNEAPOLIS COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS
Commission Meeting MINUTES
Monday, August 15, 2011
Minneapolis City Hall
350 South 5th Street – Room 241
Minneapolis, MN

6:07 PM, Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioners in Attendance:

Lonnie Nichols, John Oberreuter, Michelle Monteiro, Michael McHugh, Adosh Unni, Bernadette Casey, Emily J. Froehle, Jennifer Thompson, Thomas Gallagher, Marla Khan, Scott Flaherty, Cecelia Rodriguez-Melendez, Surya Rochel, Patricia Nelson.

Commissioners Absent: Sonja Peterson, Joshua Williams

City Staff: Michael Browne, Caroline Bachun, Monica Diaz

Guests: Phil Duran

Approval of Agenda: Moved McHugh, Approved by consensus

Approval, July 18, 2011 MCCR minutes: Moved Thompson, Second Nelson, 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 August 15, 2011, there were 65 total case files pending resolution: 30 current cases under review by the Commission; one (1) PC, 15 Dismissal and 14 NPC determinations, and; 21 cases in the backlog with only four (4) exceeding 31 months under review. SI Newborn noted that the number of cases in the backlog was down to 21 from 216 in September 2010. Any case over 365 days old is deemed to be in the backlog.

AD Browne reminded the Commission that the existing EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) contract ends on September 22, 2011, and indicated a departmental goal to close out the remaining 21 cases in the backlog by the end of said contract.

Assistant City Attorney Caroline Bachun explains legal restrictions on City of Minneapolis lobbying efforts. Attorney Bachun states that the City cannot spend funds advocating against a constitutional amendment unless there is a direct impact on the city. The question pending is whether expending funds to advocate “Vote Yes or No” is a justifiable expense. In lieu of the proposed resolution to the Council, a recommendation in a quarterly report to the Mayor and Council supported by research on the impact that a constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage in the state of Minnesota would have on the City of Minneapolis was discussed. Attorney Bachun indicates that the commissioner stipend paid for attending the monthly full commission meeting should not

be a questioned expense, provided a recommendation and/or resolution on the pending ballot initiative for a constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage was discussed and acted upon as regular business during said regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

Motion to create a task force to research the impact that passage of a constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage in the state of Minnesota may have on the City of Minneapolis; moved Monteiro, second Casey, passed.

Motion to table action on the commission proposed resolution in opposition to the constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage in the state of Minnesota; moved Gallagher, second Rodriguez-Melendez; Unni opposed, passed.

Commission on Civil Rights Committee Reports

Contract Compliance - McHugh stated that Marvin Taylor was no longer staff with the department, indicating that he had no further information on the matter. McHugh said that staff Johnny Burns had sent a letter to the department's contractor list regarding the transition from the existing certification system for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) to the new DBE Contractor Certification system. Commissioner McHugh was listed on said letter as a contact person for road, bridge, street and sidewalk construction.

Public Relations and Education: The Sunday, August 7, 10:00-11:00 AM program on Civil Rights in the City aired on KFAI radio and seemed to go well. Commissioners Nelson, Nichols, Casey, Rodriguez-Melendez, and Peterson participated. The Martin Luther King, Jr. essay topic has been announced. The re-establishment of a Community Service Award in Civil Rights was discussed and task force established. Minneapolis One Read will feature a book by Michelle Norris of National Public Radio. The annual Domestic Abuse Project Luncheon fundraiser will be on October 18, 2011.

Standards and Procedures: Next meeting is August 8, 2011, with primary agenda item a discussion on proposed guidelines for an appeals procedure for clientele involved in NPC and Dismissal case recommendations rendered by the Commission.

League of Minnesota Human Rights Commission: No report provided.

Commission on Civil Rights Chair Person's Report, Flaherty reminds Commissioners they should plan ahead for 3 hour Commission meetings in September and October to allow for strategic planning sessions on: Long Range Planning for the Commission and how our actions can support goals of the Civil Rights Department, and; Individual-Commissioner goals on an annual and per term basis. SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of MCCR activities and potluck venue is planned.

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment at 7:19 PM: Moved Thompson; Second Rodriguez-Melendez, Passed.