

**NEW JERSEY HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**September 19, 2012**

The regular meeting of the New Jersey Human Relations Council was held on September 19, 2012, at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex, Market Street, Trenton, New Jersey. Chairperson Jim Peeler called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Those serving on the Council and Advisory Board in attendance were the following: DAG Hester Agudosi, Mr. Tawfiq Barqawi, Mr. Bobby Battle, Mr. Richard Biolsi, Ms. Cathi Finnen, Ms. Gabrielle Gallagher, Ms. Renee Herron-McKithen, Mr. Lawrence James, Mr. Corbett S. Klein, Ms. Mary McGowan, Chairman Jim Peeler, Ms. Reisa Sweet, Mr. Brett Waters, Sgt. Greg Williams, Dr. Paul Winkler; and Ms. Holly Lees, Administrative Support for PSE&CB.

**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

All assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Open Public Meeting Act Statement**

Chairperson Peeler read the statement that pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et. seq., notice of the meeting was filed with the Secretary of State, the *Asbury Park Press*, *The Times*, *The Courier Post*, *The Star-Ledger* and posted in the Office of the Attorney General.

**Reading of Mission Statement**

Chairperson Peeler read the Mission Statement: "The purpose of the New Jersey Human Relations Council shall be to promote prejudice reduction, education and address the problems of bias and violent acts based on the victim's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation gender or disability." Further, Chairperson Peeler stated that "this is our purpose and we will adhere to our purpose".

**Introductions**

Council, Advisory Board members and guests introduced themselves, and briefly told of their affiliations.

**Minutes**

Chairperson Peeler advised minutes of March and June, 2012 meetings would be posted to the NJHRC web page.

**Meeting Presentation**

- *No special presentation*

**Chairperson's Report**

- Chairman Peeler opened meeting at 10:05 a.m.
- Encouraged attendees to promote consistent attendance and promote attendance by others. Council members need to be more involved and proactive
- Chairman Peeler reminded every one that every department in State Government holds a seat on the NJHRC. The charge of the Council is ineffective if there is lack of attendance, communication and involvement by Council members
- Encouraged municipal and county HRC's to be more proactive and encouraged each HRC to send a representative to the State bi-monthly meetings
- Chairman Peeler announced the goal for this year is to expand on last years theme, Resources + Re-Entry = Results. This year the focus will expand to the affects of incarcerated parents on children.
- Chairman Peeler announced this meeting was a general meeting, and nominations would be taken for the Election of Officers. Election would actually take place in November, not this meeting as stated on Agenda.
- Chairperson Peeler announced the NJHRC will go forward with the brochure for incarcerated parents, but will be a frequently asked question, answer and resource format. NJ HRC is collectively working with Carol Berger, Wanda Moore, Hester Agudosi, Division of Children and Family to get this moving.
- Chairman Peeler provided a briefing on his activities as the NJHRC Chairman.
  - Working with Cape May closely due to monumental problems with police department. He is meeting with prosecutor, police department representative and Cape May County HRC.
  - Chairman Peeler encouraged municipal and county HRC's to not hesitate to contact State HRC regarding issues within their municipalities and counties.

## OTHER BUSINESS:

- Dr. Paul Winkler brought to the table questions and concerns regarding the HRC working on *prison rehab* into communities. Members of the Council do not see the big picture of how this focus relates to human relations. Dr. Winkler believes the HRC needs to make a statement as to how we tie incarcerated parents in to the human relations mission.
- There was a special meeting regarding Florida manual to assist with the New Jersey manual. At this point there are no plans in development after the meeting with Florida. Information was given to NJ but nothing has been done with it.
- CAMDEN HRC Representative: January 2012, Eugene Kent, Chair, tasked Camden with projects through the year.
  - June 2012 – San Juan Vestista Event
  - October 13, 2012 – International Day – Flyer provided, will be posted to HRC website
  - U.S. Department of Justice is offering free training, in Philadelphia
  - Cinnaminson, New Jersey is having a “Friends Meeting” on social justice and economic development
- OCEAN HRC Representative (Reisa Sweet):
  - Meeting with concept for new project through KidsBridge, it is part of the College of New Jersey and requires a 3-year commitment. Lakewood is one of the partners of this project. All ethnic groups are represented. Flyer provided regarding KidsBridge Tolerance Museum.
  - The Power of the Presidency on Civil Rights, lecture scheduled for October 15, 2012, flyer provided.
- GLOUCESTER HRC Representative (Tawfiq Barqawi): Looking for nominations for award program. Will send information to Holly Lees from the Gloucester HRC.
- MERCER HRC Representative (Corbit Klein): MCHRC invites every one to their first Annual Membership Luncheon on September 29, 2012. Flyer to be posted to NJHRC.
- Phil Freeman advised DCR is seeing many complaints regarding non-violent offenders not being able to obtain mortgages to purchase homes, secure employment, rent apartments, etc., due to criminal record and poor credit history.
  - There is a veteran outreach mission geared to veterans who are denied opportunities because of disabilities. Many cases remain unreported. Reservists and active duty military personal return from conflict situations with no jobs or a decrease in the status and pay of previous employment.
- September 29 – Battleship New Jersey Program. Flyer posted to NJHRC website.
- Senator Ruiz (through her designee) encourages greater input from each person on the Council and throughout all communities to her office. She will be very active and will advocate for the HRC’s cause.
- NJSP Representative (Greg Williams):
  - Law enforcement event in Washington regarding law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty.
  - There is training tentatively scheduled for October 15 & 16 for Police Chaplains. Trainer for this program heads of the national organization.

## Hester Agudosi Report:

- Hester reviewed the nomination and election of officer rules and regulations. Hester reviewed the members at the meeting who were eligible to vote, and who were eligible to run for office.
- Nominations were taken from the floor:
  - Chair Nominee – Jim Peeler – Accepted nomination
    - Nominated by Tawfiq Barqawi
    - Seconded nomination by Renee Herron-McKithen
  - Vice-Chair Nominee – Tawfiq Barqawi – Under consideration
    - Nominated by Richard Biolsi
    - Seconded nomination by Hester Agudosi
  - Secretary Nominee – Richard Biolsi – Under consideration
    - Nominated by Jim Peeler
    - Seconded by Tawfiq Barqawi
  - Treasurer – No Move Forward
- Officers are bound by legislation. Advisory Board members will not be acceptable as back-up to Council.
- List of eligible Council members are available. Contact Holly Lees.
- Lobbying on behalf of Advisory Board members to be on State Council. Must be nominated by Legislature

## COMMITTEE’S:

- Chairman stated, again, that there are several committees that do not have active members or a chair nominated to them. We need Council members to volunteer to chair these committees.

**Education Committee** ~ Promotes & locates progressive prejudice reduction education for youth & adults.

- Members signed up: Dr. Joan Rivitz, **Chair**, Ms. Reisa Sweet, Mr. Chuck Stein, and Dr. Paul Winkler.
  - Dr. Rivitz stated she will send Ms. Lees the names of the other current members.

**Community Outreach & Human Relations Commissions Liaison** ~ Develops communication strategies for the Council to communicate and assist county and municipal HRC's in achieving their objectives.

- Members signed up:

**Law Enforcement and Community Relations** ~ Facilitates programs for the law enforcement community and addresses the problems associated with bias crime.

- Members signed up: Maj. Wendy Galloway (Ret.), **Chair**; Mr. Richard Biolsi

**Policy and Reports Committee** ~ Compiles reports and recommendations that represent the findings and positions of the HRC.

- Members signed up:

**Housing Committee** ~ Addresses housing issues and impact on diversity.

- Members signed up: Steven Landfield, **Chair**

**Public Relations Committee** ~ Inform the public and promote the HRC, projects, activities and events that the HRC is involved with or that may help communities with.

- Members signed up: Corbett Klein (will be member, but not Chair)

**Committee Reports ~ No Reports**

**NO Advisory Board meeting held**

**Announcements**

Officer nomination deadline: October 24, 2012

Next Meeting Date: Election of Officers, November 14, 2012

Meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m. by Chairman Jim Peeler

Motion to conclude by Renee Herron-McKithen, second adjournment motion by Hester Agudosi

Respectfully submitted,  
Holly A. Lees