

NEW JERSEY HUMAN RELATIONS COOUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2014

The regular meeting of the New Jersey Human Relations Council was held on January 15, 2014, at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex, Market Street, Trenton, New Jersey.

Those serving on the Council and guests in attendance were the following: Mr. Bobby E. Battle, Mr. Richard Biolsi (Secretary), Detective Lakeisha Davis, Ms. Kay Delp, Mr. Philip E. Freeman (DCR Liaison), DAG Edward H. Haas, Chief Edward M. Kerr, Jr., Ms. Victoria Kuhn, Esq., Ms. Leila Lawrence, Esq., Ms. Wanda Moore, Mr. Chuck Stein.

Those serving on the Advisory Board in attendance were the following: Ms. Pauline Bey, Mr. Steve Landfield, Ms. Karen Positan, Ms. Felicia Smith, Ms. Reisa Sweet.

Call to Order and pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Jim Peeler called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. All assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Open Public Meeting Act Statement

Chairperson Jim Peeler referred to the Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et. Seq. and the posting of a notice on the meeting in newspapers.

Introductions

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

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Jim Peeler referred to the controversy of the last meeting concerning the procedural difficulties resulting in part from the transition from the Division of Criminal Justice to the Division on Civil Rights. Jim, along with Vice Chair Tawfiq Barqawi and Advisory Board member Larry James, met with Philip Freeman and Edward Haas to work out the issues. He believes that the procedures are now clear and the NJHRC will be able to adhere to them.

Jim stated that there will be an election in June and that all officer positions will be open (Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary and Advisory Board Chairperson). He has held the position of Chair for eight years and feels that it is the right time to step down. He encouraged Council members to let him know of their interest in becoming an officer.

Jim indicated that the Council will continue working on the theme of children of incarcerated parents. There was a discussion concerning a draft on the topic that Jim had put together and the need for updated statistics. Philip

Freeman suggested an ad hoc committee made up of DCR representatives, Council members and outside experts to put together a manual. Jim indicated that his draft is a guide for the 17 county councils and is not meant to be definitive. Victoria Kuhn from the Governor's office said that they are committed to have a manual out by the end of the year and believe that it will be done because of the focus of the Council.

Housing Committee Reports

Chairperson Steve Landfield stated that he is continuing to work on the lead paint issue and will provide a report to the council in the future.

Karen Positan gave information on a foreclosure program that has been developed by her county HRC and they are available to present it to others. For more information contact Karen.

Steve gave a twitter demonstration and encouraged members to use twitter to communicate activities. The account is at twitter.com/NJHRC. To ask Steve to put activities on twitter, contact him at slandfield@gmail.com.

Liaison Report

DCR Liaison Philip Freeman distributed information concerning the documentation of requests for travel reimbursement and referred the State Ethics Commission for information concerning the receipt of gifts and services. Ed Haas talked about restrictions on the receipt of free meals when one is representing the state.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on December 11, 2013 were read and approved (Bey/Sweet).

New Business

No new business.

Old Business

No old business.

Member Reports

Reisa Sweet from the Ocean County HRC spoke of a zoning meeting concerning a proposed Yeshiva for girls in Jackson Township. She described alarming attitudes concerning the proposal and is concerned about behaviors that adults are modeling for their children. Jim Peeler asked Reisa to put the date, time and location of the next zoning meeting on the NJHRC website.

Bobby Battle from the Administration of Courts told of an initiative on fairness and access to the courts that has been launched through his office.

Wanda Moore of the Office of the Attorney general offered her support for the focus on children of incarcerated parents and suggested looking at initiatives that other states have taken.

Kay Delp of the Cumberland County HRC spoke of the organization Steered Straight, which has three motivational programs for children of incarcerated parents. She will try to bring the leader, Michael DeLeon, to the next meeting.

Karen Positan of the Union County HRC said the county Police and Teens Together program is in its fourteenth year of operation.

Pauline Bey from the Camden County HRC and other organizations stressed the importance of communicating directly with the children of incarcerated parents and using their input in putting together programs.

Adjournment

A motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting at 12:16 p.m. (Bey/Battle).

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Biolsi
Secretary

NEXT MEETING MARCH 19, 2014