# HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION January 25, 2012, 4:30p.m. Council Chambers

PRESENT	ABSENT	
Rhea Baker-Ipek	Tony McClendon	
Andrae Marak	Shiva Rallapalli	
Greg Lewis	John Roberts	
Gil Palmer	Rosalind Pegram	
lan Kohen	John Stroh	
Trena Carter		

# **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

# **STAFF PRESENT:**

Director Lorraine Smith, Deputy Director Frances Jordan, Secretary Betsy Schuette

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

Secretary Roberts called roll. Due to staff constraints, minutes were deferred until the next meeting.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT:

Director Smith reported \$10,732.95 as the Donations Account beginning balance; no activity.

## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:**

No report.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Smith stated that the office has been busy. She reported the following: two sexual harassment filings scheduled for next week from the same employer and three technical assistance advising people on various issues. No complaints have been filed with these but they were given assistance in a complaint process which was outside of our jurisdiction

Deputy Director Jordan is writing up one case determination case and hopes to have it completed by the first quarter of 2012. Deputy Director Jordan is also working on a sexual harassment/sexual orientation case in the workplace and is waiting to interview the respondents. In answer to a Commissioner question, Director Smith informed the Commissioners that in some years we see more sexual harassment cases or national origin cases; there is no clear cut reason why trends occur.

Director Smith provided a refresher on the case determination process for the Commissioners. Most cases are mediated, but the case determination is the summary of findings when no mediation occurs. The determination is a finding of whether there is probable cause or no probable cause that discrimination occurred.

2012 meeting dates were distributed to the Commissioners which is patterned after the 2011 Commission meeting dates; the commission meets the last Wednesday of the month except for December due to the holidays. Director Smith informed Commissioners about Mayor-elect Brown who is soliciting applications for various jobs in her administration via her website. Some of the positions are political appointments such as the Director of Administration. The site does not mention the Human Rights Commission Director Smith stated she had a brief conversation with Kristen Brown after the election, offering a meeting with Director Smith and Chairperson Palmer. She had a follow-up conversation with Mayor-Elect Brown who stated that the Human Rights Commission is on her radar, but she has been very busy; she also stated that she would welcome talking with Director Smith and Chairperson Palmer. Discussion ensued.

The Commission discussed creating another contact sheet which would include spouses' information so that Commissioners can reference it for personal reasons such as the birth a child of a commissioner. That sheet would only be available to commissioners and staff. When Commission Liaison is appointed and if there is a change in attorney, that will be added to the sheet.

Deputy Director Jordan informed the Commission that in addition to the Art & Essay Contest Packet information, the Director and Deputy Director will be sending out a letter to lawyers and organizations to bring awareness of the services provided by the Human Rights Commission and to reach more of the community so that they are educated about the filing process and deadlines. Director and Deputy Director asked for any suggestions for distribution.

## **LEGAL UPDATE:**

Deputy Director Jordan presented slide presentations on US Supreme Court Case Law regarding the issue of retaliation, caselaw regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and on a Seventh Circuit Discrimination case. Discussion ensued.

#### **LIAISON REPORTS:**

No report.

#### FOR ACTION:

No action items.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Roberts moved that the meeting be adjourned at 5:32 pm. Commissioner Carter seconded. Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote.