HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION May 30, 20th at 4:30 pm Council Chambers

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

Tony McClendon

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

STAFF PRESENT:

Deputy Director Frances Jordan, Secretary Betsy Schuette

COMMISSION ATTORNEY PRESENT:

Kelly Benjamin

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Commissioner Kohen moved that the February minutes be approved as presented. Commissioner Stroh seconded. Motion carried March minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

No report.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

No report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Deputy Director Jordan presented the Director's Report in Director Smith's absence.

Annual Dinner:

Deputy Director Jordan stated that based upon the evaluations from the Annual Dinner, it was a success! There were 56 evaluations completed and the majority was extremely positive. The final count for the dinner was 242. The attendees enjoyed the keynote speaker Luke Visconti.

Although the Annual Dinner didn't get the push in numbers we had hoped for, qualitatively, Mr. Visconti was one of the best speakers we have had per the feedback from our attendees. Bob Pittman, our Laws Award recipient also propelled the quality of the dinner as well. Many respondents were absolutely thrilled with Bob's selection.

Deputy Director Jordan has tabulated the evaluations and created a summary chart. Discussion ensued.

Diversity Roundtable:

Luke Visconti conducted the Diversity Roundtable to an audience of about 50 attendees. Mr. Visconti came to Columbus to spite his big event "Innovation Fest" that was to take place six days after he left.

Deputy Director Jordan asked the Commissioners to please begin thinking about a speaker for next year as we officially celebrate the Commission's 50 years of existence.

Commissioner Marak:

Deputy Director Jordan reiterated what Director Smith had mentioned in her update, that Commissioner Marak will be leaving the community and therefore the Commission. On behalf of the Commission, Director Smith, and Deputy Director Jordan, Commissioner Marak was extended well wishes and much success. The Commission will miss him and the talent he brought to the Commission and this community.

Deputy Director Jordan encouraged the Commissioners to begin thinking about candidates they feel might be interested or qualified. The Commissioners have some time since we can continue to operate with a minimum of nine commissioners. However, a full Commission board is more ideal. Discussion ensued.

OTHER ACTIVITIES - Networking with the Community/Educating the Community:

Director Smith is still working with Ruchiera on the Cummins International Hires Project which is intended to gauge how welcoming Cummins and Columbus is to international employees at Cummins. Director Smith agreed to serve as a sponsor.

On March 6 Director Smith met with a Josh Ratliff, a Corporate Hospitality manager at Cummins, at the recommendation of Chuck Wells to discuss possible volunteer opportunities with the Commission. Director Smith has pulled Josh into the Commission's Welcoming Community Project and he has already brought tremendous ideas to the project. Deputy Director Jordan and Director Smith had their first meeting with Paula Herlitz from Mill Race Center and Josh on Monday May 21.

Director Smith is still working with a core group who is examining the possible development of a Community Portal as part of the Welcoming Community efforts. Director Smith drafted a portion of the RFI, which has been approved by the core group. The RFI is close to completion and will go out to potential marketing groups hopefully in a week. The core group consists of Brent

Engle, the city's IT Executive, Lyn Morgan from Heritage Fund and Chris Price who is the chair of the Telecommunications Advisory Committee. Discussion ensued.

Welcoming Community Grants:

As Director Smith has previously reported, the Commission received a Heritage Fund Welcoming Community grant for the "Great Columbus Diversity Adventure". Director Smith indicated that the name may change somewhat based upon some ideas from Josh Ratliff.

The Commission is also a collaborator on an Oral History Project on which the Commission is partnering with IUPUC, ICC and Pride alliance. The project will document the stories of the LGBT community in Bartholomew County and is a follow-up to the African American stories from the Commission's first Oral History Project.

Deputy Directory Jordan is working the Teen Pregnancy Workgroup. The Deputy Director currently is creating a Teen Resource Guide, and creating a link to the HRC as a way to diversify the teen mother's experience.

Deputy Director Jordan served on the Community Impact Committee for the United Way.

ADA Transition Plan:

The City's ADA Transition Plan has not been updated for close to 20 years. As the City does not have a personnel person in place, the Human rights Department is coordinating efforts to put in place the process for conducting a self-evaluation or audit. The Engineering Department which receives funds from the feds is in danger of losing the funds if their portion of the plan is not updated. Frances is coordinating the process so that there is an effective hand-off to the new personnel person. The CHRC department is helping as a departmental courtesy. Frances has done significant research and benchmarking from Bloomington as part of this process and has done a splendid job. We will keep you updated.

Mayors Advisory Council on Disability and Accessibility (MACDA):

As reported previously, the Human Rights Department is the convener of the Mayor's Advisory Council on disability and Accessibility. This department drafted the resolution, application, and letters of interest, bylaws and other forms for the creation of the committee. A press release was issued and interest has already been generated. As soon as applications are received, the apps will be forwarded to the mayor and she will make her selections.

Casework:

- The Commission reported the following activity:
- Two technical assistance on an employment situation involving FMLA and a harassment in housing situation.
- A technical assistance with an FMLA case that staff plans to use for acquiring more research for resources of future similar cases.
- A disability and race in employment intake is scheduled for Friday, June 1st.

 Staff is working on an ongoing case involving disability in employment; a request for information was issued and staff expects a response from the local company some time this week.

City Hall:

City Hall New Hires and Staffing Activity include:

- Kelly Benjamin, former assistant prosecutor has been hired as the City Attorney. Kelly
 will handle the affairs for the Commission. Alan Whitted will remain as Assistant City
 Attorney.
- Jeffrey Logston has been hired as the Director of Finance and Operations. Jeffrey was formerly hired as the city assistant attorney and had been assigned as to the Human rights Department.
- Personnel Director Position is still open. Jeffrey is leading the search for the position.

Newsletter:

The current issue was released last week. Staff is changing the date for the newsletter to come out in the middle of the month instead of the beginning since it conflicts with the monthly meeting.

Office/Staff Activities:

- Deputy Director Jordan graduated from Leadership Bartholomew County. Director Smith attended part of her ceremony.
- Director Smith continues to attend the Mayor's Strategic Plan meeting and assist the Mayor in her vision for the City.
- On May 18, the Human Rights Commission hosted the Indiana Civil Rights
 Commission's CLE regarding Employment Discrimination law, and the ADA. Former
 Director Arlette Tinsley presented on the ADA updates.

Upcoming:

<u>Budget Hearings:</u> Budget hearings are slated for July 29 and 30. Please SAVE THE DATE! City Departments are to submit their budgets by June 29.

FOR ACTION:

This item was tabled. The 'For Action' item was to consider partnering with Ivy Tech on the William Rasdell Exhibit, "Looking for the Rainbow: A cultural collage of the Western Cape Province in post-apartheid South Africa" on June 14th @ 6:30. Ivy Tech had originally invited us to give non-financial support to their Exhibit however time elapsed since the last meeting. Discussion ensued.

DISCUSSION:

Annual Dinner Debrief and Report: Deputy Director Jordan directed the Commissioners attention to the budget handouts. Deputy Director Jordan explained to Commissioners that during the Annual Dinner process, Clerk Treasurer's office informed staff that the Commission's donations, which are mostly annual dinner receipts and some donations, are process through a Donations Account and that the yearly funds are appropriated to the non-reverting fund. Staff was under the impression previously that the donations and non-reverting fund were one in the same.

Handout of the annual dinner budget breakdown was distributed to the commissioners.

An update on the Commission's Welcoming Community Grant was also presented.

LIAISON REPORTS:

Commissioner Baker-Ipek reminded the staff and commissioners of a free one-day clinic on immigration from the Indiana Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. The event is this Saturday June 2, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. at law office of Lewis & Kappes.

Commissioner Marak gave a report regarding the grant for the oral history project. He reminded Commissioners that he was leaving the community, but the oral history project will move forward with others from IUPUC still contributing to fill his void. He stated that their recent meeting involved discussion on how his role would be filled.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Carter moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Rallapalli seconded. Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote at 5:45 p.m.