



City of Richmond
Human Rights & Human Relations Commission
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Friday, July 20, 2012

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

**City Hall, Richmond Conference Room, 1st Floor
450 Civic Center Plaza - Richmond, CA 94804**

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Vivien Feyer called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. and City staff person, Jacqueline McBride took roll call with the following results, including the Chair:
Present:

Vice Chairperson, Rock Brown, Commissioners Betty Burrus-Wright, Ph.D., Courtney Cummings, Joyce Harris, and Kathleen Sullivan, Assistant City Attorney, Everett Jenkins, Staff person, Jacqueline McBride, and Facilitator, Mutima Imani

Absent: Commissioners Wendy Gonzalez, Jenabi Pareja, and Demetria Saunders

2. WELCOME/OVERVIEW

Facilitator, Mutima Imani welcomed everyone and gave a brief overview of the morning-long team-building exercises. The focus was on history, vision, mission and purpose.

3. INTRODUCTION: VALUING DIVERSITY— WE ARE ALL UNIQUE AND DIFFERENT

The outcome of the introductions exercise, during which each participant was asked to share a characteristic that he or she brings to the HRHRC and how long he or she has served on the Commission, yielded the following:

Communication and has served **2 ½ years**

Integrity and has served **7 years**

Honesty and has served **2 days**

Listening Skills and has served **5 years**

Integrity and has served **7 years**

Facilitator, Mutima Imani stated that “We take care of ourselves by attempting to operate in ways that “work” for us and this is not good when others’ values are not respected in the process.”

The Commissioners were requested to begin thinking of themselves in the following manner: 1) Unique representation of someone serving the Richmond community; and 2) Role as a commissioner which serves a larger role as “Leader”.

4. TEAM-BUILDING EXERCISE I: WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MYSELF IN THE ROLE AS COMMISSIONER – The outcome of this exercise was as follows:

Chair Feyer likes her role as a Peacemaker in the midst of struggles allowing vulnerability in the process.

Vice-Chair Brown likes his role Meshing, bringing people together for good.

Commissioner Burris-Wright likes her role as a Person with Greater Sensibility of people in Richmond and her role as a Psychologist working with children while eliminating judgment.

Commissioner Cummings likes her role as a Compassionate Person that people with real concerns, etc. finds approachable because of her personal experiences.

Commissioner Harris likes her role as a Respector of Opinions of her fellow commissioners, and her Ability to Provide Assistance where needed.

Commissioner Sullivan likes her role as a Strong Person who is unafraid to speak out on hard issues—absent of fear in the process.

Assistant City Attorney Jenkins likes his role as Mender—assisting with helping to put things back together as needed.

The following were among the things they would like to see occur as indicators that the Retreat was successful:

- Completion of needs assessments comprising clear examples of what HRHRC can accomplish
- Cohesiveness regarding the items appearing on the monthly meeting agenda— without continuing to carryover the same items indefinitely
- Acknowledgment by commissioners when they are overextended, including moving on so that the work of the HRHRC may be better distributed among remaining members

5. TEAM-BUILDING EXERCISE II: I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT THESE ISSUES
The following were issues commissioners shared as ones they find passionate:

Building a strong community || Our shared humanity || Justice for all || People who showed me the way || Spirituality as a core value || Being a voice for the voiceless || Education || Maintaining high standards || Holding elders in high

esteem || Alleviating pain in people who have been victimized and addressing the pain within the victimizer || Being a positive role model || True U.S. History || Trail blazing fearful frontiers || Family || Caring about people irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds, without putting them in little pockets || New place of humility || Showing generosity in terms of feeding and helping people || Fairness || Future || Sacrificed || Ancestors || Love for people in this community ||

6. REVIEW OF THE HRHRC STRATEGIC PLAN

Upon reviewing the strategies currently in place for the HRHRC, the group determined that it is an “Action” commission, not merely a reporting one. Each commissioner was asked to determine their personal limitations versus the commission’s responsibilities.

Because the City of Richmond is now officially a “Human Rights City,” Facilitator, Mutima Imani recommended the Commission researches, or shares its earlier findings, about what it actually means to hold this recognition. Also, the HRHRC may benefit from determining the advantages available to the Commission due to the city’s “Human Rights City” status.

7. COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Because Richmond has been declared a “Human Rights City”, the HRHRC must include increased capacity to address ongoing community requests involving human rights issues, including, 1) developing and releasing resolutions; 2) appropriate office for community to voice issues/concerns; and 3) permanent full-time staffing.

Healing for violence and violence prevention surfaced as an essential issue that needs addressing on behalf of the Richmond community. Included in this discussion was, 1) developing clarity about ways to address issues within the North Richmond community, which is located outside of Richmond; 2) linking/collaborating with other groups working on human rights issues; 3) the HRHRC’s role in bringing harmony on the City Council; and 4) the HRHRC’s ability to communicate independently, without a vote from Council.

8. COMMITTEES REVIEWS

After Facilitator, Mutima Imani conducted a brief group exercise consisting of categorizing the goals of the HRHRC’s eight Committees along with the overall objectives of the entire Commission. The outcome of this exercise indicated there is a possibility of combining the Committees as follows:

Culture of Peace Committee to include: Civility at Council, and Community-Police Relations activities.

Community Concerns and Emergency Issues Committee to include: Education and Outreach, Employment and Human Rights Alliances issues.

The Committees would be reduced to three: **Budget, Community Concerns and Emergency Issues** and **Culture of Peace**, thereby reducing the total number of meetings the commissioners serving on the respective Committees are currently required to attend.

Additionally, in an effort to determine ways to reduce the work of committee members, Facilitator, Mutima Imani, suggested HRHRC consider recruiting community members to actually serve on the various committees, with Commissioners overseeing the work. Consequently, there would be more people available to implement, participate in, and execute the Commission's objectives, plans and activities.

9. PLANS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE FUTURE AND NEXT STEPS

The HRHRC will consider embarking upon the following:

- ✓ Cultivate relationships with key stakeholders outside of the HRHRC, including City Council members
- ✓ Invite/recruit community members to serve on HRHRC's Committees
- ✓ Determine which Committees it is able to successfully combine
- ✓ Determine comprehensive responsibilities and benefits associated with being part of "Human Rights City"
- ✓ Seek grant opportunities to increase HRHRC's capacity-building as a Human Rights City
- ✓ Attempt to link/collaborate with other groups working on human rights issues
- ✓ Continue educating women in absence of males in households and offer them clear directions for success

10. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Reviewed by: Mutima Imani, Facilitator

Submitted by: Jacqueline McBride, Staff Assistant