



**City of Richmond
Human Rights and
Human Relations Commission
MEETING MINUTES**

*Jasmine Jones, Chair
Joyce Harris, Vice Chair
Betty Burrus-Wright, PhD, Commissioner
Texanita Bluitt, Commissioner*

*Courtney Cummings, Commissioner
Carole Johnson, Commissioner
Crystal Johnson, PhD, Commissioner
Ada Recinos, Commissioner*

*Councilmember Vinay Pimple, Council Liaison
Debra Vaca*

*Sr. Asst. City Attorney Everett Jenkins
Jantsan Damdinsuren*

Monday, January 25, 2016 at 6:30 pm
City Council Chambers
440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA 94804

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Human Rights and Human Relations Commission was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chairperson Jones.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Chairperson Jones, Vice Chair Harris, Commissioner Burrus-Wright, Commissioner Bluitt, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Carole Johnson, Commissioner Crystal Johnson and Commissioner Ada Recinos

Councilmember Vinay Pimple, Sr. Asst. City Attorney Everett Jenkins, Staff Liaison Debra Vaca and Commission intern Jantsan Damdinsuren

ABSENT: None.

AGENDA REVIEW

January 25, 2016 Regular Meeting Agenda approved as presented.

OPEN FORUM #1

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Cummings, seconded by Commissioner Bluitt, to accept the

October 2015 and November 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes as written. The motion is passed by the unanimous vote of the Commission.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Councilmember Vinay Pimple attended the opening of the Harbour View Apartments located at 25 Harbour Way. As part of the agreement, the newly opened apartment complex is providing affordable housing for 38 seniors from Hacienda. He also reported that Central Housing by the Pacific East Mall will be providing 255 affordable units. Councilmember Pimple reminded the HRHRC about its annual report to the City Council on January 26.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Cummings thanked the Richmond community groups and members for providing services and bringing holiday spirit to the most vulnerable residents of Richmond during the holiday season. She recently attended "T-Rex Planet, a three-day exhibit featuring about two dozen of the dinosaurs species" at Richmond's Craneway Pavilion. Residents and children from Richmond and neighboring cities enjoyed seeing and interacting with animatronic models, dino-themed rides and jumping structures. Commissioner Cummings also encouraged the members of the Commission and public to download the Richmond Police Department application on their smart devices to efficiently report urgent and emergency matters to the RPD. She also highlighted that the Native American community is appreciative of the recently released film "The Revenant" for shedding light on issues impacting the Native American communities.

Commissioner Betty Burrus-Wright commended HRHRC Human Rights Awardee and NPS Ranger Betty Soskin for introducing President Obama at the White House Tree Lighting Ceremony in December 2015. She also reported that one of her priorities in 2016 is to raise awareness of human trafficking through her "Let's Talk Sex Literacy" curriculum.

Vice Chair Joyce Harris has recently retired and shared her commitment to supporting the HRHRC Education Committee.

Commissioner Crystal Johnson reported that Contra Costa prosecutors charged a white male resident of Richmond for making death threats and hate crime against Muslim faith community on December 4, 2015 outside the Islamic Center of West Contra Costa County. Richmond community groups and members came together to condemn his criminal actions and give support the members of the Islamic Centers.

Commissioner Texanita Bluitt reported that Black Women for Organized Political Action (BWOPA) is considering and reviewing possibilities of district elections in Richmond. She also highlighted a dinner forum organized by BWOPA with Kamala Harris. Commissioner Bluitt also expressed her interest in supporting the HRHRC Education Committee in 2016.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chairperson Jones shared her priorities in 2016. She is looking forward to organizing a community forum on Police-Community Relations and identify ways to reduce increasing violence in Richmond. She also shared that she is expecting a baby in June 2016. In addition, Chairperson Jones decided to pursue a doctoral degree in sociology.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Jenkins recommended the members of the HRHRC to read a report on changing demographics in Richmond from the HAAS Institute for Fair and Inclusive Society at UC Berkeley. There is a memorial service for George D. Carroll in the Richmond Auditorium. Carroll served as a Richmond Councilmember from 1961 to 1964, was elected as the first African-American mayor in 1961 and named the 1st African-American judge in the Contra Costa County. The Court House in Richmond is named after him. In addition, Mr. Jenkins pointed out that the director of the film "Creed," is from Richmond and he also raised a concern that there are no African American nominees for this year's Academy Awards or Oscars.

Debra Vaca reported that the memorial service for George D. Carroll is scheduled on Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at the Richmond Auditorium.

Jantsan Damdinsuren invited the members of the HRHRC and the public to the launch of the Richmond Promise Program at the John F. Kennedy High School on Wednesday, January 27 at 10 am.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

K.1 PRESENTATION FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES ON "RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FOR HEALING HARM IN THE COMMUNITY" PRESENTER: CAT WILLETT (45 MINUTES)

HEAR PRESENTATION AND DISCUSS RECOMMENDATIONS

Commissioner Crystal Johnson

Chairperson Jones invited Commissioner Crystal Johnson to frame the item. Commissioner Crystal Johnson invited Cat Willet to introduce the HRHRC to the process of healing harm in a community. The Police Community Relations Committee of the HRHRC identified restorative practice as a creative way to improve police-community relations.

Cat Willet, Restorative Justice Coordinator at the Catholic Charities of the East Bay, presented an overview of restorative justice practice and programs offered by her organization in the Richmond community. She coordinates Experience Hope for Schools, a program that provides training and coaching services to schools to help school staff develop and maintain restorative justice programming in their classrooms, at Richmond HS, Kennedy HS, and Greenwood Academy. She also works with RYSE's Youth Justice Coalition to support young people.

Ms. Willet invited the members of the Commission to an upcoming event on Restorative Justice on February 12 from 9 am – 3 pm at the Catholic Charities of the East Bay, 217 Harbour Way.

K.2 COMMITTEE REPORT: POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (10 MINUTES)

HEAR REPORT FROM JANUARY 11, 2016 COMMITTEE MEETING

a. Present updates

b. Present PCRC Community Outreach Plan

Commissioner Crystal Johnson, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Carole Johnson, Chairperson Jones, Victoria Sawicki, and Vivien Feyer

Commissioner Crystal Johnson reported that a letter from the PCRC was sent to City Manager Bill Lindsay to inquiry about the recruitment process for the new Richmond Police Chief. The Commission directed staff to follow up with the City Manager's Office.

Commissioner Crystal Johnson also reported the PCRC developed an outreach plan to survey local community organizations about their work plan in respect to improving police-community relations.

K.3 COMMITTEE REPORT: EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (10 MINUTES)

HEAR AND DISCUSS COMMITTEE UPDATES

- a. AWASAL Booklet
- b. Annual AWASAL Program

Commissioner Burrus-Wright and Vice Chair Harris

Commissioner Betty Burrus-Wright is working with local elementary schools including Verde, Stege, Cesar Chavez, Olinda and Riverside to implement the Artistically Write and Speak Aloud (AWASAL) program. Due to changes in the school administrations, the Education committee has not finalized dates for this year's AWASAL program.

K.4 COMMITTEE REPORT: ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING (25 MINUTES)
DISCUSS AND SET PRIORITIES FOR 2016

- a. HRHRC Report to Richmond City Council on Tuesday, January 26
- b. HRHRC 2016 Calendar
- c. Intake Form

Chairperson Jones

Chairperson Jones framed the item. The following members of the Commission anticipate on attending the City Council Meeting: Jasmine Jones, Dr. Betty Burrus-Wright, Joyce Harris, Texanita Bluit, Carole Johnson and Ada Recinos. The Commission directed staff to submit the HRHRC Intake Form to the City Attorney's Office for a legal review.

REPORTS

None.

OPEN FORUM #2 (At approximately 8:30P.M.)

Cordell Hindler, resident of Richmond, requested to have RYSE Center's Young Men's Group to present to the HRHRC in February 2016 Meeting.

Brandon Williams, resident of Richmond, spoke regarding Section 8 voucher and lack of affordable housing in Richmond. Ms. Williams lost her Section 8 voucher 18 months ago and spoke about the difficulties she is facing trying to qualify for Section 8 again. The Commission requested Councilmember Vinay Pimple to follow up with Richmond Housing Authority Director Tim Jones regarding Ms. Williams' case.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Human Rights and Human Relations Commission's Regular Meeting in January 25, 2016 was adjourned at 9:12 p.m. and to meet again on Monday, February 22, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the Richmond City Council Chambers, 440 Civic Center Plaza.