

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

## MINUTES

January 4, 2010

4:00 PM

Members Present: David John, Chairman; Karen Bayless, Chairman Pro-Tem; Art Allison, Eugene Baker, Randy Joslin, Catalina Liles, Emet Rudolfo

Members Absent: Kristin Joe, Francis Mitchell

Ex-Officio Members Present: Lucy Alvarado, Melissa Charlie, Joyce Donald

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Dorothy Nobis, Marlene Sandoval

City Staff Present: Bob Campbell, Assistant City Manager; Dana Anderson, Paralegal; Lisa Hutchens, Administrative Assistant

Guests Present: Steve Lynn, Zang Wood, Wayne Barnett, Francis Benally (UNM), Matt Clugston (Ziems),

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman David John at approximately at 4:00 pm and there being a quorum of members present, the following proceedings were duly had and taken.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Karen Bayless moved to approve the December 7, 2009 minutes as presented. Randy Joslin seconded. Motion carried.

### CURLEY COMPLAINT

Mr. Curley was not available. Lisa left a message inviting him to the meeting. There is no update available in Mr. Curley's absence. Emet Rudolfo reiterated that discrimination is not necessarily a blatant act as Mr. Curley stated at a previous meeting. In this particular case, Mr. Rudolfo feels it would be difficult to prove racist actions occurred in this situation. There were no allegations of racist slurs. Eugene Baker asked Mr. Rudolfo what finding he would suggest on this case. Mr. Rudolfo felt like "Not Sustained" would be the appropriate finding. Catalina Liles noted that the complainant himself never attended a meeting, only his parents. However, a representative from Ziems has attended two meetings when the item was on the agenda. There are not other complainants alleging Ziems discriminated against them. There is no other evidence. Mr. Rudolfo made the motion to find the complaint as "Not Sustained." Art Allison seconded. Motion carried.

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Catalina Liles stated that the Chautauqua series is funded by a federal grant. Therefore, we cannot piggyback. Lisa spoke with Linda Baker at San Juan College and was told the CRC could have a booth to hand out information at the event organized by the Student Activities Center at San Juan College. Karen Bayless stated she feels like this is a viable option. Lisa will e-mail the Commission details as soon as she receives them. Randy Joslin moved to pursue this option. Catalina Liles seconded. Motion carried.

### OLD BUSINESS

A letter was sent to the Aztec School District and the City of Aztec regarding the complaint up at the last meeting by Aztec Dormitory employees.

## NEW BUSINESS

Citizen Input—Zang Wood commented on the October 6, 2009 Daily Times article where he read that the CRC will sponsor Native American heritage, Hispanic heritage and Black History month events. Mr. Wood stated he feels like he is being discriminated against since events are not planned to acknowledge White History month. Art Allison asked what Mr. Wood would like it called. Catalina Liles asked when Mr. Wood wanted it done. Mr. Zang replied those details would be left up to the Commission. He just wants a level playing field for all races and cultures and felt he should bring it to the attention of the Commission. Further discussion took place regarding celebration events. Chairman John thanked Mr. Wood for his comments and asked Lisa to place the item on the next month's agenda.

## COMMISSION BUSINESS

Randy Joslin noted that the Commission is having difficulty getting complainants to show up at the meetings. Mr. Joslin commended Ziems for showing up at both meetings. Eugene Baker agreed, considering the meetings have been receiving coverage in the newspaper. Mr. Baker also stated that whoever is doing the fact gathering needs to insist the complainants appear at the meetings. Karen Bayless suggested amending the complaint form to state the complainant will be required to attend a meeting or a hearing. Complainants may feel uncomfortable confronting others in a public meeting but the accused should be able to meet the accuser. Randy Joslin noted that the two most recent complainants didn't show up to the meetings but the accused did. Chairman David John stated he has talked to complainants who are not willing to fill out a complaint form and appear at a meeting. Chairman John stated he feels they are not serious enough about their complaints. Art Allison agreed, stating that most individuals do not want to appear publicly in front of the Commission and the newspaper. Chairman John stated he feels that headway has been made to let the community know that the Commission exists. Some feel more comfortable shopping in Farmington again because of the Commission. He said he feels like the Commission needs to continue in its education efforts and re-visit the complaint process as needed. Matt Clugston shared his opinion on the process given he just went through it as an accused business. He suggested mediation as a possible solution between parties in certain cases. This should occur prior to the case being heard in front of the Commission. Ford Motor Company has a mediator that is available to work between customers and dealerships which is successful. When Mr. Clugston sat down with the Curleys he was unaware the situation has escalated to this point. Lisa stated that as was discussed when the Commission was trained on mediation, if the person who is investigating the complaint feels a mediator would be helpful in a situation, the City is willing to contract with one.

Commissioners reached consensus to notify parties who are on the agenda by any means listed on their complaint form.

Eugene Baker asked if the Commission should elect officers. Karen Bayless asked if the Commission has a calendar for 2010. Art Allison, Kristin Joe and Catalina Liles terms are up in April. Should the Commission wait until then to elect officers? Mr. Baker suggested making a recommendation to the new Mayor about who should stay on the Commission. Mr. Baker also asked if meetings should be kept the same date and time. Lisa reminded the Commission that the current Open Meetings Act resolution is in effect until June so if there are any changes in meetings, those details will need to be advertised. Karen Bayless suggested having meetings at different times and places. She suggested having evening meetings every three months and possibly a meeting at noon on occasion to accommodate the public.

## ADJOURNMENT

Eugene Baker moved to adjourn the meeting. Catalina Liles seconded. Motion carried.

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David John, Chairman

Lisa Hutchens, Secretary