

Orange County Human Relations Commission

1300 S. Grand, Bldg. B, Santa Ana

7:00 PM, Thursday, March 10, 2016

**MINUTES**

1. The general meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chair Ken Inouye at 7:15pm following the special presentation.

PRESENT: Ken Inouye, Elliott Singer, Sean Thomas, Bill Wood, Becky Esparza, Bekele Demissie, Bang Van Pham, Rabbi Rick Steinberg. ABSENT: Tim Kowal, Chief Mike Hamel, Nadia Bettendorf. STAFF: Alison Edwards, Rusty Kennedy.

2. M/S/C to approve the Commission minutes of 2.11.16.

**OPEN FORUM:**

James Wen of the Transgender Advisory Board of West Hollywood addressed the Commission. He shared the work that his Board is currently doing, including: improving relations between police the local transgender community, drafting a resolution supporting state-wide racial profiling legislation and supporting the addition of gender identity and expression to the protected classes named in the federal Civil Rights Act. Mr. Wen asked whether the Commission would support the creation of a Transgender Advisory Board in Orange County and if the Commission would like to support any of the initiatives listed above.

3. Commissioner Thomas reported the results of the AWARDS 45 Business Award selection process and it was M/S/C to approve Disney Resorts as the honoree.
4. City Council Annual Report Visits were reported on, scheduled and coordinated.
5. Rusty Kennedy reported on the Convening of Muslim, Arab and Interfaith organizations. Commissioner Kowal shared via email that he was struck by the idea that targeted groups are often victimized twice, once by the incident and again by the fear and not having time to mourn before needing to respond and defend their faith. Rabbi Steinberg suggested that the Commission amplify the voices of Muslims who denounce extremism. Commissioner Inouye suggested that what we have learned from the local Muslim Community be relayed to the Board of Supervisors, along with the Commission's response.
6. Commissioner Inouye reported on the KKK Rally, Counter Protest and Vigil. Commissioners Inouye, Esparza, Thomas and Bettendorf all attended the Vigil and reported that it was well attended, peaceful, and drew a diverse crowd.
7. Alison Edwards reported on the "Its Your Space, Use It!" Campaign in the ABC Neighborhood. The campaign seeks to organize residents to work with landlords to reopen shared spaces in the community for positive use. The spaces are currently fenced off and not available for use. The next phase of the project is Press Conference in April.
8. Rusty Kennedy gave an update on the Office of Independent Review and shared that he had testified to the Grand Jury on the topic during the previous month.
9. Rusty Kennedy shared that an RFP has gone out to select the shelter operator for the Kraemer Homeless Shelter, the bus depot in Santa Ana is also looking for an organization to run it as a temporary shelter, and that OCCR Director Karen Roper has announced her retirement.
10. Alison Edwards got approval from the Commissioners to use the May 12th meeting as a strategic planning session with the Board and staff.
11. Commissioner Thomas reported on Walk In My Shoes Jr. Youth Conference that took place on March 4th. He shared that he was impressed by the way the students were able to talk about human relations issues, he also complimented conference organizer, Don Han, on his work.
12. Commissioner Singer reviewed the articles for the month, including one that he penned for the local Los Alamitos paper, where he lives.
13. Commissioner Wood reviewed the monthly summary.

14. During the announcements Alison Edwards shared that Commissioner Thomas will be honored for his volunteerism in April and Commissioner Inouye shared that the SELANOCO Chapter of the JACL will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in May.
15. Commissioner Inouye adjourned the meeting.