

County of Kern
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION-MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Tuesday July 9, 2013

Commissioners Present: Walter Williams (ww), Jewelle Scales (js), Greg Collins (gc), Fiona Lytle (fl)

Commissioners Absent: Marisa Banks, Andre Taylor, Marcus Mitchell

Equal Employment Opportunity Officer: Michael Goulart (mg)

Others Present: Marquez Equalibria, Ron Wakabayashi, Francis Moore, Greg Gonzalez, Maribel Galvan

1. **FLAG SALUTE**
2. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS: None**
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

June 11, 2013 Monthly Meeting

Motion to approve minutes (fl), 2nd: (gc), all ayes

4. **OLD BUSINESS:**

a) Report: Meeting with Kern County Sheriff's Department

(js) I see that we have some representatives here from the Kern County Sheriff's Department (KCSO), thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to come here and join us. We had a meeting with the KCSO on 6/25/13. The meeting included me and Commissioners Mitchell and Banks, as well as, Marquez Equalibria, Undersheriff Wahl, and Chief Deputy Francis Moore.

We all met to talk about how we can build a collaborative relationship with the Sheriff's Department and then take that information regarding building the relationship with the KCSO and present it to the public. There is a public perception which may or may not be true, that sometimes law enforcement is not forthcoming with information. One of the things that the HRC wants to do is to make sure that if we have an opportunity to dispel thoughts or myths that are not true we want to work with all parties that are involved to get that information to the community.

One of the questions that was asked is how does the HRC build a relationship with the KCSO? The meeting was a huge success because there are all types of vehicles. The KCSO has a wonderful website and it talks about ways the community can get involved with the KCSO. One of the things that we talked about was the Sheriff's Citizens' Academy. That is a way that the KCSO interacts with

citizens throughout the County and they talk about procedures; what they do and what they cannot do. If you go on to the website there are many opportunities to get involved with the KCSO. The department also has many collaboratives in which they go out and talk about what they do and who they are.

One of the things that I am familiar with is the neighborhood watch where officer Pruitt goes out and talks to people in the community about organizing watch programs. I also asked “how do we see law enforcement from your eyes?” We talked about the Citizens’ Academy again. That is where would could get the most bang for our buck. One of the things that we wanted to walk away from that meeting with was to be able to get information from the KCSO and then take that information and disseminate it to the community.

We talked about doing a pilot project. As an aside, I wanted to talk to each of the commissioners about the districts they represent. Commissioner Collins, which district do you represent?

(gc) I am in district 3.

(fl) I am an at large appointee.

(js) I also represent district 3, which is Supervisor Maggard’s district.

(ww) I am in the southeast in supervisor Perez’ district.

(js) Which is district 5. One of the things we talked about is using the information that we get and creating a pilot in district 5. Not to single out that area but sometimes the people in that area don’t understand how law enforcement acts and reacts. We want to create a pilot program and get together with citizens in that area. Start with a core group and build some buzz in the area about sharing the information.

One of the ways that you start to bring down walls is by starting with a core group. For lack of a better term, we want to look for “power players” in the district. We want people that have a strong voice in the district that we can share information with. That would be one of the ways to start a relationship.

We talked about doing some community forums. Commissioner Mitchell, who is the Chair, has some decisions to make regarding the process. Once he is back we can make some decisions and then come back together with the KCSO to get the pilot project going. Once we have a pilot project going we want to open it up on a larger scale and with more frequency. We talked about first doing something at a pilot level to increase the opportunity for sustainability.

When entities get together to share information the community needs to show up. Sometimes there is a disconnect that occurs when the community has either lost interest or they are unaware or unable to attend the type of functions that we are talking about. There is also perception sometimes that it doesn’t matter if the community shows up because nothing is going to change. We talked about being

selective in terms of the core group and getting those into the room that can help this be successful and get the information out so that there is sustainability in that, even if we as Commissioners are not here next year, It will keep going.

We also talked about having a spot on the Commission just for a representative of law enforcement. We don't know at any given time who will attend our meetings. If there were a representative from law enforcement and people show up with law enforcement related questions they could get answers to their questions in real time. Often when people get answers in real time it alleviates some of the tension and they can go back and tell others the same information.

I would like to give Chief Deputy Francis Moore an opportunity to add anything that I might have missed.

(Chief Deputy Francis Moore, KCSO) to touch on the Citizens' Academy, we are going to maintain the Academy that we currently have and offer it to everybody all of the time. One of the topics that came up was that sometimes the people that qualify to go to the academies are not the ones that we really need to get out and get the word to. What we discussed was based on suggestions from Marquez and input from the Commission. We need to create a scaled down version of the Academy where we can get that vital information out on how we move through things, how the law requires disseminate or not we share or not. How can we get that to those people that wouldn't be able to pass the background to get into the Citizens' Academy to begin with? Those people who may or may not be the vocal ones that we need to target.

We have given Marcus an outline of the information that is covered in the Citizens' Academy and hopefully he can share it with you and you can decide what information you think would be the most important and tailor it to the audience that we are trying to target. We want to get the information that is most desired to those people that are willing to share it.

The Citizens' Academy was designed on surveys that went out to the public. We asked, "what do you want to know?" We took the surveys and designed the curriculum based on the responses. It is up to us to talk to the community, get some input and design something that works. We are open to this and the Sheriff is very excited about the opportunity.

(js) I think this is a critical thing for the HRC to delve into. There are many human relations issues in Kern County but if we can tackle this issue there are others that may fall into place due to a domino effect.

(Moore) This is a good place to start to build that trust and once there is the trust there then we can move on to other areas.

(Marquez Equalibria) I brought a copy of the Anaheim Police Department's "shrunk down" version of their Citizens' Academy. I have a physical copy for you (submitted). They come to their community and do small scale meetings. There is no paperwork involved. All that they want to know is what neighborhood the people

are from.

(Moore) We presented this plan to our strategic planning committee and asked if anyone would like to be a part of this. We have received several emails back from employees that want to be a part of this.

(js) There are some comments from the commissioners.

(gc) I'm new to the Commission and I am kind of lost as to the timeframe. I know that there was a meeting between DOJ and KCSO and then DOJ appeared before the Commission. There was another Commission meeting and at that point last month the Commission was going to ask the DOJ to seek a meeting with the KCSO. Are we speaking about that meeting, since last month or are we speaking about a meeting since last month's meeting?

(mg) The meeting that we are discussing tonight was subsequent to the June regular meeting.

(gc) So this information and the pilot program and what we are discussing came out of that meeting so what you are speaking of now is what the Commission would like to do in cooperation with the DOJ and the KCSO?

(js) Yes. DOJ started the momentum and we jumped in and that is how we arrived at the conversation that we are having now.

(mg) You indicated that Commissioner Mitchell will be making some decisions moving forward. Tonight is a report of the meeting. Is the Commission to expect Commissioner Mitchell to bring an action item forward, possibly next month?

(js) That is the expectation. What we want to do is continue to move forward. If the Commission agrees via a vote then now is the time. We have many people that are willing to jump on board and we want to keep the momentum. I think that we can expect an action item next month.

(gc) My concern with that statement is that when the HRC says that this is a hot item, no one has come to the Commission other than the DOJ and said that there was an interest in this other than the fact that they saw this on the internet or in social media. No one from the community has come to the HRC and said that the HRC needs to get involved.

(js) This has been an ongoing and continuous conversation that the community has been having. Previously, Lt. Mullens from the Bakersfield Police Department has been here representing the Safe Streets Project. Prior to that Commissioner Hererra was a part of the Law Enforcement Committee and he continued to bring issues here. That is why it is so exciting that we are actually moving forward. We did a previous community forum that involved the BPD but not the KCSO.

Although we may not have had anyone come forward in the last three months to say that there is a problem, this has been an ongoing dialogue with the Commission for

about the past five years. Now we are at a place where we can take some action steps to work with law enforcement and the community to share information.

(gc) I understand and I probably didn't put forth all of the things that I was saying. I was here when Commissioner Hererra brought those things to motion. I am aware of Lt. Mullens and the Safe Streets Program. What I am saying is that no one from the community. In particular, there was a shooting that occurred at a local liquor store. There was some picketing and some protests that took place and people took part in those protests. The family asked people not to protest because they felt that it was being publicized too much.

My concern is if the HRC is taking the forefront of this. Is the community as involved or concerned about these things as we are? I know that DOJ is spread very thin. Mr. Equalibria spoke of how thin they are spread and of how they became aware of this last incident. Commissioner Williams spoke of this last incident, when Mr. Turner was killed on Niles Street the DOJ did not come. So the concern for me now is now that we are bringing the HRC into this and whether or not we are stepping outside of our bounds in putting ourselves out in front of the community and whether the community has as much concern as the HRC.

(js) I think those are relatively easy questions to answer and it goes back to history. There were some community leaders that have come and expressed the concern and would have liked for us to move forward on several specific incidents. Jeremy Wright came and expressed a concern about police and community relations. Pastor Donald Wesson came and spoke and asked for us to get involved. He was strategically involved in the Central-Cali Market incident. Patrick Jackson who was the Co-Chair of the NAACP at the time and Sean Battle worked directly with the Sheriff's Department related to the Turner incident and at one point wanted the HRC to get involved.

Those are just four examples of times that the community has come to us and said that we want you to get involved. To speak to the Community interest question, that's why it's important to do the pilot piece. We want to know if the need or the interest is still out there. If we put the pilot together and there is not much interest we can adjust. I still think, as a Commission, that it is important to get the information out to the community and the community can decide what type of information they want to be a part of. We have a responsibility to try. If the Community does not participate what cannot be said is that the HRC didn't try.

(Moore) You raised some questions for me. One of the things that I want to make sure is that this is not a "case-specific" effort. We are not looking at "this event" or "that event." The classes would consist of topics that explain the structure of the KCSO, the laws that mandate or dictate what information can or cannot be released. It is to better understand the process of what occurs and to see from a different perspective the frame of mind that that community is in. We want to understand and be more empathetic to the communities' needs and concerns. This would not be designed to address answers to specific cases. I want to make sure that there are no misconceptions that we would be talking about specific cases. We would want to share information such as, when this law says we can't talk about

something that is what we must follow. We are not trying to hide behind something or be less transparent we are simply abiding by the law.

(js) I think that when the community can look at general facts they can apply them to something specific to understand why things happen. This is just an opinion right now but I think that there is a disconnect.

We also talked about media relations. We have to figure out how to bring the media in because sometimes they fuel a fire that doesn't necessarily need to be burning. We don't want to discuss specifics. We want to give people information that will empower them. Every community has peers and we want to get the information to the people that the community will listen to.

(Moore) Our intent is to create and strengthen relationships. With a relationship there is better trust and with trust there is a willingness to wait for the information to come as we can lawfully disseminate it. I agree that when those hot topic items are there, those key players are more willing to show up. I agree that this may be a good time kick this off on order to capture the interest that is there. Sustainability is going to be the key.

(js) Sustainability has been the hard part with a lot of community programs. The program can die off if we do not continue to feed people the information.

(ww) I don't know if I would totally agree with this. There are some good points that I see. First of all, let's get one thing straight, law enforcement and the community, you both stereotype. There are good community people and there are bad community people. There are good cops and there are bad cops. The Sheriff's programs that you were talking about, I think it's good for certain level of people but for a community that is frustrated, where it's been going on since the 70s, it's been stereotyped, we have never come to a point where we can say I can trust you because you've been truthful to me. Community needs truth. We need for you to share information as well as you need us to share information.

Why would I need to have a background for your academy to teach me what your protocol is if I am a part of your community? It is important to know the protocol but is that information going to be given to people that are low income? You are already separating them by saying that you need to have a background. It's for the community. Whether you are a straight A student or "Johnny be good", and then if you have them teaching they don't interpret the way you want them to. You have to understand you have rights to but you also have to be compliant. That's the bottom line, you have to be compliant. Even though you might see something wrong, there's a better way you can do this.

For the community that's more like a short term academy like you were talking about. What they will be interested in is the protocol, that's it. You're talking about different levels. You're just talking about middle class. What we need but nobody is willing to do is to come in contact with is the felons, and mothers with kids that are out of control.

To Commissioner Scales, the people that you announced as community members mostly are people that have their own ideas or agendas. Unless you have community, 15, 20, 30 people coming up to you, you don't represent the community. People like me, what we are are advocates for the community but we are not the community.

(fl) May I interject? Commissioner Williams how would you approach those individuals then?

(ww) Let me finish and you will catch on to what I'm saying. We need to quit self appointing people as community. We need to bring the community in. Its topics that affect the food on the table that brings people in. Their head is already down. How do we get there? I don't know. What will make them want to talk to you? We need a community review board. We need to be able to talk about the hot issues and be able to ask you the hard questions. And you need to be able to be honest with us. Then, we need to accept as a community that there is a part of this that we are responsible for. We let gangs come into the neighborhood, set up shop and we don't say anything. At the same time, the police are not protecting people. Have some sensitivity. You don't have the police force to protect each individual.

Another thing, quit calling people who do try to help you snitches. They're not snitches, they're community homeland security. Snitches are the ones who have a crime partner. They need to kill each other if that's what they want to do. People have the right to protect themselves. If the police would quit calling people that try to help snitches, because gangs do that to make you feel bad and make you not want to report anything. Dealing with those issues will help you.

You know that if you talk about a community review board every chief runs and says we aren't going talk about that but you have to. However it's done, we need to make this happen because the trust is gone from both sides. If we're going to do this we need to ask the hard questions. We need you to be as professional as can be. Maybe then we can have a dialogue that is worth something.

Like I said, I think that the academy is good for those that meet your criteria. Low income only needs 15 or 30 minutes and we need to talk about other issues but that's not how it's going to run because it's too upscale for what you want. You're not going to get community people to come there. There will be different levels; you will get the educated and the upper-class.

(js) That's what we're talking about. We're talking about the Commission talking to the community to create an academy that works for the community and starts on a very small level. I think to bring 200 people in to a room you're not going to accomplish anything. We can get there I think if we build it correctly. We need foundational stuff about trust and reciprocity. You have to start small, build a solid foundation and go from there.

(ww) You see this isn't going to work, you have to have community.

(gc) If I could interject, we are at old business with the meeting with the KCSO and

we are getting information and I think Commissioner Scales gave us a brief report of how several commissioners met with the KCSO and the DOJ. I think what they brought to the table was some type of a pilot program that has not yet been approved by the Commission. I think that is something that the Commission will have to discuss as to whether or not the Commission is going to go forward with such a program. I appreciate the Sheriff's Department coming in and appearing in front of us and being as visible as they are but, I think that the Commission needs to decide whether or not the Commission wants to be involved in something like that.

(js) I think that's the conversation that Commissioner Williams is saying. We need to figure out how this is going to work.

(gc) We need to figure out if the Commission is even going to do it. The Commission has not discussed it.

(ww) I just want to make that point because I feel strongly about that and I just can't rubber stamp that happening that way.

(gc) I appreciate that you're saying you can't rubber stamp it because you haven't been given the opportunity to discuss it.

(fl) Commissioner Scales, if we could go back. You talked about having someone, representative here to have the opportunity to have questions answered in real time. Would that person also be available to speak on certain pieces or things that are going on?

(js) Right, and as we create it we would also have to create a format for that. I would say yes because that would be a good thing to have.

(mg) If the question is about speaking to specific cases that are going on then I would defer to the KCSO. We have had issues before where there is a case going on and there are questions. This is not the forum to discuss ongoing specific cases. We can ask the Chief Deputy but I don't think that is the kind of discussion that we would get into.

(js) We should not but we should have a level of conversation that is very general that would help to be able understand the specifics of some of these things.

(Moore) I think that is where we are going and I agree with Commissioner Williams in that we can't lump the community into one group any more than we can lump cops or certain portions of the community. What we have to do is reach out and touch all parts of the community. We have meetings that have upper scale folks attending. We have the citizen's academy and you are right, it's full of people that can pass a background. This new venture that we're taking is that there is no background. We are trying to get into the heart of the community and to get information to those folks.

I think that even here having a member on the panel or someone that is regularly here to answer questions like here is what you can expect from the KCSO. They

can tell you things like the steps that will be taken to get to the end of a process. They can tell you when information can or can't be shared if there is a criminal or personnel issue. There is a myriad of issues that have to be addressed before we can say anything at all. From the communities perspective it looks that we are tight-lipped or covering up and that is why it is taking so long. I firmly believe that I have never witnessed that. I'm not saying that it doesn't happen. There are good and bad in every occupation and we have to address that and recognize that.

I agree with Commissioner Lytle that it would be good to have someone here regularly that has built a trust by being here and they could say, "I understand what the issues are. I can't address that case for a particular reason."

(js) Even though we are not there we are just trying to give you the information of what the model may look like. I do realize that we have not discussed it as a full Commission but that is the report to give you a vision of what it could be and I think those discussions are valuable.

(fl) The key is also that we are still talking about a pilot program.

(js) No decisions have been made but it is important to lay the vision out. There is a lot of history. This is an ongoing conversation.

(Equalibria) Commissioner Scales another thing to add is that we have been talking a lot about education but at the same time, and this is a topic that you all can discuss, what other vehicles can be used to listen to and address general concerns or community issues that fit under your jurisdiction?

(ww) Just one more thing, you mentioned the media. I have a real strong dislike for the media. When it comes to the Southeast you are in a hurry when something goes bad. I have called them many times about positive events and they won't even show up or they don't have time but they don't have any problem when something bad happens and that needs to also change.

(js) I think it's the same reoccurring conversation. You have to build those relationships where you have someone from the media that is supporting what you do. I have also seen the good side of the media when they have called and said, "hey, we're just going to show up at your event."

On another issue, one of the things that Commissioner Mitchell has been talking about is training for us as a Commission so that we are really clear about what are functions are and how we can be more effective.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

None

6. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) Community & Media Outreach – No report.

b) Education/Essay Contest –

(fl) I was looking at last years' essay contest prompts and I would like to know if we are able to redirect the focus and instead focus on community engagement or building healthy communities?

(js) I think one of the things that we have been trying to do with the essay contest is to not "just have an essay contest". One of the things that we are charged with is active education. The contest was just the catalyst to start a reaction. We have been talking about expulsion rates in schools and that is one of the issues but the contest is the vehicle that drives the process. The real purpose is to create the relationships and build the trust that will allow us to go into academic arenas and talk about the issues.

(fl) How do we normally contact the schools? Are there particular schools or people that we contact?

(js) Typically we have moved everything through the Personnel Department. That gives us an extra set of hands. I think it may be something that we want to look at in terms of getting a larger community engagement.

(mg) In the past we have targeted every middle school in Kern County. We have contacted the schools directly by letter to either the school principal or English teacher.

The prompt is just used to convey a general idea. There is flexibility, in that; the Commission may pick any topic that fits under the jurisdiction of the areas that the Commission covers or the vision or mission of the Commission.

(fl) Do we ever offer the schools to come back and tell us if they have a topic that they really see building in to their curriculum?

(mg) In the past we have created the topic and sent out. The process has not been a two way street.

(gc) I would urge the essay contest to go forward and tie it into something that the school is already doing. If we could do that it could be more effective and helpful to those students as they address how they are growing up in the community.

(Ron Wakabayashi) This is just an informational note but July 2, 2014 will be the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act. This may be a topic that fits the context of what you are discussing.

Also, the California Endowment's major initiative is called Men and Boys of Color. It is specifically focused on students surviving, meaning not being expelled or suspended. The foundation has put together a tremendous amount of research data. I think you have seen some of the impacts already

in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Part of the role of a Human Relations Commission is to be a piece of a larger group that works together to figure out how to make diversity work.

(gc) I appreciate you bringing that up. We are not getting the attention from the community on these issues regarding the community's relationship with law enforcement however; the state is focusing on the fact that there are so many suspensions and expulsions of young men of color. That is something that the Commission started working on. The Commission took a year to finally respond to that and I would like to see the Commission continue to respond considering the expulsion and suspension levels are higher in Kern County than they are anywhere else in California.

I would like to say again that the Commission should focus on those items that could tie in to our essay contest and our relationship with law enforcement. If our young men of color are not graduating from school and not getting an education what other alternative do they have than to commit crimes and then come under the foot of law enforcement.

(ww) If kids aren't in school what they are in the back yard. What else can they do? If they can't get an education you have facilitated the making of a criminal. Most of the Black males that are in prison have a third grade education. The crimes start with things like petty theft because they don't have anything to do. You need to use law enforcement to deal with those things before you have to deal with the bigger things.

The Housing Authority also needs to get involved because they hang around the apartments and cause chaos and beat up kids that are getting straight A's. And then there is a problem at the housing.

(fl) One more note on the essay contest, is there a funding stream for the prize money?

(js) We do not have seed money so typically we raise money through the sale of tickets. The winners and an immediate family member do not pay for tickets. Last time we gave Commissioners a bundle of tickets that they were responsible for paying for.

(Moore) I am on the County of Kern Probation Auxiliary Council and we have a scholarship fund and if someone were to approach the Auxiliary we may be able to partner with you. We have multiple scholarships that we normally offer from \$250 for books to \$1000.

(js) It's a great way for the Commission to expand beyond our borders.

(ww) Do we have a health committee? The reason why I ask is because I have invited someone to come talk next month about the Affordable Care Act and that can help anyone that has a family member that may need medical care.

(js) We do not have a health committee but we have Access and Functional Needs and Special Issues that we may refer to.

(mg) If you have someone that would like to give a presentation just let me know and we can agendize the presentation for the August meeting.

(gc) I believe I volunteered to chair the Senior Citizens and Aging Committee but it is not here. There was a question of whether or not it exists.

(mg) There is nothing that indicates when and why the committee changed to Access and Functional Needs. There was no By-law change at the time. I believe that we had a commissioner that thought that access and functional needs better expressed issues that senior citizens deal with. Of course as commissioners change so do the specific interests of the Commission. There is no reason that the committee cannot morph back into senior citizens and aging.

(js) I also recall the conversation and the commissioner wanted to include visually and hearing impaired individuals or those that had any other type of medical or physical impairment. She didn't want it to just focus of seniors so the change was made to encompass any person with those issues. There was also discussion of doing some work with Georgiana Armstrong at EOC because that is where the access and functional needs group meets.

(gc) if it pleases the Commission I will serve as the chair of that committee.

(js) We are also not just only looking at their needs but also disaster preparedness for that group.

- c) Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action – No report
- d) Grants/Funding – No report
- e) Housing – Commissioner – No report
- f) Judicial & Legislative Review – No report.
- g) Law Enforcement - No report
- h) Special Issues – No report
- i) Access and Functional Needs – No report
- j) Annual Report Ad-hoc Committee – No report.
- k) Training/Mentor program Ad-Hoc Committee – No report.

7. **STAFF REPORT:** (mg) Last month Commissioner Mitchell indicated that the Commission would be sending a follow up letter to the Kern High School District. It

is a follow up to the meeting that was held with them last year. The letter which you received in draft form from Commissioner Mitchell went out last month and it asked for additional follow up from the District. We have not received a response from them yet.

(js) Commissioners Banks, Mitchell and I, attended the KHSD meeting. Commissioner Mitchell had a conversation with Superintendent Carter regarding setting some time frames to come back to us.

The meeting was a budget meeting and it was very interesting. We also met a parent that was there and talked specifically about her child being expelled and wanted to come and talk to us but Commissioner Mitchell has not set that meeting up yet.

(mg) I sent Commissioner Lytle a copy of the documents that we have used for the Essay Contest in the past as requested last month.

I also asked for new contact information last month and here is a copy of the latest information. (hard copy provided).

(js) Regarding the Essay Contest, I think we ran in to gridlock in the past because we didn't have involvement from enough commissioners in the past to move the project forward so we have talked about the entire Commission being involved. I think Commissioner Lytle will be an asset to keep us moving forward and also keep us accountable.

(gc) Would it be appropriate for us to approach the Supervisors for possible funding?

(mg) Yes, in the past supervisors have bought tickets that have been given to award recipients and their guests.

8. COMMISSION MEMBER PRESENTATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS:

(gc) I just wanted to remind everyone that I as the Chair of Rebuilding Together Kern County. Our project is VFW Post 97. We will be doing a project in late July or early August. If you know of a person 14 years or older that is looking for volunteer hours or a skilled person please let me know. The Post is located at 5350 South Union Avenue. They need a new building but we do not have the funds. The Bakersfield Californian Foundation gave us \$10,000 to do some painting and cleaning up.

(js) I received an email from Undersheriff Wahl and it discusses the start of a Citizen's Academy. I believe the start date will be September 24.

(mg) One of the things that the Commission has faced in the past is a lack of membership. The Commission has attempted to maintain the monthly meeting schedule but frankly there has not been a need for additional meetings because of a lack of activity. As the Commission becomes more fully staffed it is important to

remember that you have the ability to call for special meetings and committee meetings as needed. When there are events occurring or issues that need to be addressed and you do not want to wait for the next monthly meeting we can have a meeting within a few days of posting that will allow you to come together, have a discussion and take action.

(gc) Can you tell me if the Commission can have a closed session meeting? I have attended other meetings where the bodies go into closed session or executive session and I would like to know if we could do that.

(mg) As we learned in training regarding the Brown Act, Executive or Closed session meetings are reserved for a body to discuss issues that are related to a personnel action or pending litigation. Because the Commission does not have a staff, there is no cause for considering personnel actions. There is also no cause for a meeting to discuss litigation. Any time the Commission meets to discuss any item that is considered to be “the business of the Commission” the meeting must be open to the public.

(Equalibria) I just wanted to remind you that we are here to assist you in any way that we can. As you move forward, we can provide resources, information and training. One of the things that Commissioner Mitchell was interested in was training regarding the functions of a Human Relations Commission.

I have also provided you with a copy of the City of Phoenix Community Engagement and Outreach Implementation Plan. The plan provides some examples of strategies for addressing community/law enforcement interaction. The plan includes multiple components in the model (hard copies provided).

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to Adjourn: (ww) 2nd: (gc), All Ayes, meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.