

Kern County Human Relations Commission
Kern County Administrative Complex – Third Floor Multi-Purpose Room
1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield
Tuesday, August 9, 2016 at 5:30 PM
Monthly Meeting Minutes

Present: Brady Bernhart (Ber), Louis Medina (Med), David Vivas (Viv), Jewelle Scales (Sca), Marcus Mitchell (Mit), Michael Caves (Cav)

Absent: Joseph Snyder

Others Present: Michael Goulart (Mg) Principal Human Resources Analyst, Amy Angeli

Agenda Items: Called to Order at 5:30 Pm

1. Flag Salute: Commissioner Mit.

2. Public Presentations:

a) Amy Angeli told the Commission that she has applied to serve on the Commission and she was here to observe the meeting and see how the process works.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Tuesday March 8, 2016. **MOTION to approve with corrections:** Mit **2nd:** Cav **Vote:** all ayes

4. New Business:

Discussion of Commission participation in the Good Neighbor Festival to be held on Saturday, October 8, 2016 at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park.

(Ber) Stated that he would like the HRC to attend.

(Sca) Discussed the possibility of conducting a regular meeting at the event.

(Ber) Recommended taking a laptop that had information about Supervisorial Districts and current vacancies.

(Sca) **Made a MOTION: to investigate having an HRC meeting at the Good Neighbor Festival on Saturday October 8, 2016, Second: Caves, VOTE: All ayes.**

5. Old Business:

a) **Discussion of plan to facilitate an open dialogue between law enforcement and community groups.**

(Sca) The HRC may need to create a community conversation to include all of the components of the criminal justice system instead of just law enforcement.

(Cav) Agrees, sees the need to create an opportunity for members of the public to view situations from a different perspective.

(Ber) What is the HRC is hearing from law enforcement regarding the best way to handle the issue.

(Sca) Have not heard from Sheriff Youngblood due to staffing issues in the Sheriff's Office. BPD Chief Williamson is on-board with having other segments of the criminal justice system participate in the conversation.

(Mit) Discussed the need to create a new conversation considering budget issues that are facing law enforcement and the need for a balance between spending money on law enforcement and preventative programs that deter crime and keep people out of the legal system.

(Med) Discussed attending the National Night Out and the potential of the HRC participating in the future.

Commissioner Medina also discussed working with the BPD as a member of the Board for the Gay and Lesbian Center following the Orlando shooting. The BPD can provide training about an active shooter scenario and perform a facilities or site assessment and suggest changes that could be made.

Commissioner Medina is fearful of crime that is occurring like the rash of murders and auto thefts. He is also noticing more homelessness but our local homeless collaborative says that homelessness is going down and he sees a disconnect. He is also disturbed

about the Kern High School District allowing people to carry guns on campus. He sees a need for the conversation to broaden.

To follow up on a previous discussion, Commissioner Medina said that police chaplains are not autonomous. If the Commission wanted to get a chaplain for a panel they would need to work through the law enforcement agency.

(Sca) Feels that the HRC needs to branch out and take the conversation to the community rather than waiting for the community to come to the Commission. The Commission has good allies in Marquez Equalibria with the Department of Justice and Rhonda Dugan at CSUB. She would like to talk to Faith in Action about expanding the conversation.

(Viv) Shares the same concerns as Commissioner Mitchell and asked about working with organizations like Stay Focused Ministries that are already working with the youth in the community.

(Sca) The more we expand the conversation, the more help we can do. She talked to Judge Bush about getting young people involved in the discussion to educate them as to why they don't want to end up in the legal system. She also believes that there is a need for a multi-generational conversation.

(Med) Asked about involving the Police Activities League of the Sheriff's Activities League. He also discussed working with truant officers in the Kern High School District Police or the Probation Department.

(Mit) Said it would make sense to focus on youth intervention. We have talked to the adult population and if you start with the youth component you can explain alternatives. There are also many mental health issues. Maybe we should focus on youth services for the next event.

(Med) The City has a new Youth Commission that we may be able to partner with.

(Viv) Maybe we have a forum. Parents that I deal with feel that they are at a loss. We need to bring a continued awareness and give parents alternatives with different organizations.

(Sca) I am hearing that we feel there is a need to expand the discussion and focus on youth. I will be making phone calls to agencies to discuss working together toward addressing issues with the youth.

b) **Planning Matrix**

(Sca) Discussed having a candidate's forum in the 3rd or 4th quarter of the year.

(Cav) Proposed having a ballot forum before the November election.

(Sca) The HRC can investigate holding a ballot initiative forum at the Good Neighbor Festival.

6. **Committee Reports:**

Special Issues) Ber – The Kern Food Policy Council hired a consultant to perform an 18-month project to determine how the local food system works. They will be looking at farm-to-table in Kern County. They will formulate policies and should be done around the end of the year.

7. **Staff Report:**

(Goulart) As you are aware, the County is being impacted by budget constraints. Human Resources has taken reductions but we are dedicated to providing the Human Relations Commission with the support and resources that they need to conduct business.

8. **Commission Member Presentations or Announcements:**

(Med) Reminded the Commission that the Annual Veteran's Stand Down will be on Thursday, October 13, 2016 at Stramler Park. There are already about 35 service providers that are signed up. Commissioner Medina asked if the Commission would like to have a booth at the event. Commissioner Medina will be there.

(Sca) Could we have more of a presence there than just a booth. Maybe we could do a similar function like we are talking about for the Good Neighbor Festival.

(Med) I think that it works better as an outreach event and we just engage people one-on-one.

Commissioner Medina also reported that Debbie Johnson's organization which provides transitional and permanent housing with a focus on veterans is providing housing to three transgender individuals. Two of them are a couple and the other one lost a home to the Erskine fire. Johnson reached out to Commissioner Medina because she wanted to know how to be more culturally sensitive. Commissioner Medina put her in touch with the Gay and Lesbian Center and this may lead to more training for her staff at the California Veteran's Assistance Foundation. This will also be the first time that the Gay and Lesbian Center has a booth at the Veteran's Stand Down.

(Sca) Commissioner Scales serves on Junior League and has a conflict with the time of the HRC meeting. The Commission discussed moving the regular meeting date to the first Tuesday of the month, beginning in September 2016, if possible.

Commissioner Medina made a MOTION to move the regular meeting date to the first Tuesday of the month. Commissioner Scales offered a SECOND to the motion. The VOTE was all ayes

9. **Adjournment: Motion: Ber 2nd: Mit Vote: all ayes 6:50 p.m.**