

PITTSBURGH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
M I N U T E S
July 1, 1996

Attendance: Dr. George Board, III, Chair

Dr. Barbara Burstin
Pamela Golden
Harry Kunselman
Robert McClenahan
Elizabeth Pittinger

B. J. Samson
Curtis Smith
Father Lou Vallone
Christine Williams

Staff: Charles F. Morrison, Director

Janice Burris
Christina Jumba

Yancy Miles

Legal Counsel: Donna Ford, Esquire

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:38 p.m. by chairperson Dr. George Board.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

After some discussion, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved with the condition that a Commissioner's name be deleted where it was attributed to certain remarks.

III. INTRODUCTION OF SUMMER EMPLOYEES

Allen Lee, Desirea Jackson and Dinelle Martin introduced themselves to the Commissioners. These students will be working in the Commission offices for the summer.

IV. COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Director Morrison reported that a total of 127 cases have been reported to the EEOC. This exceeds our contract which is for 114 cases. The amount of next year's contract will be based on the number of cases closed in this contract year. Additionally, Director Morrison has requested an upward modification in this year's contract.

The next Compliance Review Section Meeting will be held on Monday, July 8, 1996 at 3:30 p.m.

V. STAFF & COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Director's Report

Director Morrison reported that on August 6, 1996 the Commission along with Councilman Eugene Riccardi will be co-sponsoring a Prejudice Reduction/Conflict Resolution Program for youth ages 8-12. This half-day session will be held at the Warrington Recreation Center in Council District 3 and will be conducted by Robert Burley. Approximately 20-25 children are expected to participate. Commissioners are also welcomed to attend.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has accepted the proposed amendments to the Code submitted by the Commission as meeting the requirements for substantial equivalency. Changes in the City Code will have to be made and submitted to City Council for approval. It was suggested that when the definition changes to the Code are submitted, it can be coupled with the recent proposed addition of the definition of sex and be submitted to the council as a package.

Director Morrison reported that he is working along with the National Conference of Christians and Jews in the planning of a two-part symposium on The Impact of Racism on the Achievement Gap. Part one, to be held in October, will focus on the reality of what is happening in schools. In November, part two will look at ways to close the gap successfully for all children.

The Commission staff had 100% participation in the United Way Program in this year's campaign. It was the only city department with 100% participation.

Director Morrison has completed the final segment of the "Home Smart" radio talk show. The station is considering airing that program nationwide.

The University of Pittsburgh Center for Social & Urban Research has asked Director Morrison to be on the Benchmark Advisory Committee.

The Director attended the meeting of the Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation, also known as Pittsburgh 2000. This project has been in place for approximately one year and is establishing a team of instructors to focus on ways to dismantle racism. The training of these instrutors is

estimated to cost \$1,000 - \$3,000 per person. They are hoping to get some of the cost underwritten by local churches.

The Director has been participating in the Thomas Merton Centers six part speaker series on combating racism which ended in June.

The Director attended a public hearing at Perry Traditional Academy regarding a civilian review board.

Director Morrison attended the monthly inter-agency school council meeting held at the Board of Public Education. In response to a question from the Commissioners, the Director reported there was no discussion regarding the Human Relations Councils which are to be established in the schools. The main focus was on the recent KKK rally and the community response in Punxsatawney, Pennsylvania.

A question was raised as to why the Commission has not informed the Mayor that this agency has powers which are very similar to a Civilian Review Board. The Director stated the language of this component is in the regulations and it is tied to the Commission's authority to examine problems with respect to police community relations which may tend to have an adverse effect on inter-group relations and is not geared strictly to individual incidents of misconduct by the police.

At one point, former Commissioners wanted to delete Police-Community Relations because the Commission lacked enforcement powers. It was also felt that some of the issues did not impact on interracial relations.

B. Budget & Finance Committee

Commissioner Pittinger will meet with David Miller and Karlyn Anderson from the budget department on July 2, 1996 at 4:15 p.m. to discuss the 1997 Commission budget.

C. Community Relations Committee

No meeting held.

The Pittsburgh school board has set the Human Relations council in force. Commissioner Burstin would like for Yancy Miles to be the advisor on the Pittsburgh School Board Human Relations council.

D. Economic Disparities

The committee will be drafting a report for Commission review including input from those who testified during the public hearing.

E. Housing Committee

Commissioner Smith and staff person Miles met with the only two black appraisers in the Pittsburgh area. There are approximately 200 appraisers in the Pittsburgh area. In order to become an appraiser, one must meet the requirement of having approximately 1000 hours of apprenticeship. It is hard for blacks to obtain the direct apprentice hours needed, which comes through the trade and lending institutions, because of nepotism and the buddy system. Some institutions are now using their own in-house appraisers which becomes one more obstacle for the black appraisers to secure business.

Mr. Miles will be gathering information on the criteria needed, recruiting methods and the number of female appraisers. Also, he will attempt to find out the number of minorities who have been shut out of this industry.

VI. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY CODE

Director Morrison distributed copies of the proposed language revisions in the City Code which have been approved by HUD.

-Delete the term "Housing Accommodation" throughout the Code and replace it with the term "Dwelling".

And change the definition of "Dwelling" in Chapter 651.04(f) of the Code to:

Dwelling--means any building, structure or portion thereof, which is occupied as or designed or is intended for occupancy as, a residence by an individual or one of more families, or by a group of persons living together, and any vacant land which is offered for sale or lease for the construction or location thereon of any such building, structure or portion thereof.

Amend the Code Chapter 659.03(e) as follows:

For any person, including any bank, banking organization, mortgage company, insurance company or other financial or lending institution, or any agent or employee thereof, engaged in whole or in part in the business of providing or arranging for appraisals and/or financial assistance to whom application is made for the purchase, lease, acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of any dwelling.

The proposed language for the amendments to the Code were accepted by the Commission.

Commissioner Kunselman made the motion to amend the City Code as proposed. B. J. Samson seconded the motion.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner McClenahan made the motion to amend the previous motion to add the word individual to the proposed language. Second by Commissioner Vallone.

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. EXPIRATION OF COMMISSIONER VALLONE'S TERM

Commissioner Vallone stated that he submitted a letter of resignation to the chairperson and the Mayor. The chairperson read the letter to the Commission members. A letter requesting his reappointment was written on June 14 by the Director. In filling the position of a previous Commissioner who had an appointment for five years, his remaining time existed for three years and expires on July 31, 1996.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to be discussed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

:jb

MEMORANDUM

TO: Commission Members

FROM: Connie Miskis Zatek
Secretary

DATE: June 25, 1996

SUBJECT: MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the full Commission is scheduled for 3:30 p.m., Monday, July 1, 1996 in the Commission Conference Room.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Minutes from the June meeting.

If you need anything in preparation for this meeting, please call me at 255-2600.

/cmz

Enclosure