

PITTSBURGH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
AGENDA
April 6, 1997

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES
- III. REVIEW BOARD REQUEST OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
- IV. COMPLIANCE UPDATE
- V. STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - A. Director's Report
 - B. Budget & Finance Committee
 - C. Public Relations Committee
 - D. Housing Committee
 - E. Community Relations Committee
- VI. OTHER
- VII. PUBLIC HEARING SECTION

PITTSBURGH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
M I N U T E S
April 7, 1997

Attendance: Harry Kunselman, Chair

Dr. George Board, III
Sandra Glass
Pamela Golden
John B. Grice

Charles W. Honse
Rev. William D. Morgan
Elizabeth Pittinger
Father Lou Vallone

Staff: Charles F. Morrison, Director

Janice Burris
George Monroe

Yancy Miles

Legal Counsel: Kevin Trower, Esquire

Guests: Dennis Swanson, University of Pittsburgh
David Greenberg, Controller's Office
Lisa Steinbrueck, Melissa Baran, Deborah Smith,
Jamila Young, Journalism Students

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:29 p.m. by chairperson Harry Kunselman.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved upon motion by Commissioner Board second by Commissioner Grice and unanimously adopted.

III. REVIEW BOARD REQUEST OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Dennis Swanson from the University of Pittsburgh, Institutional Review Board (IRB) stated that they are requesting the assistance of the Commission in providing a venue for community consultation with regard to research studies/protocols directed at improving the outcome of emergency care. The Institutional Review Board is mandated by the Food & Drug Administration with the responsibility for the oversight and protection of people in human subject research.

The human subjects can be in the volunteer or consent group. The volunteer group gives their permission to be subject to new drugs and procedures whereas the consent group has someone to authorize permission. Emergency care has new procedures that cannot be tested on the consent group because of regulations. Regulations require there has to be consultation with the residents of the community but no guidelines were given. Dr. Board had initially suggested to Mr. Swanson to make a request to the CHR for assistance.

Should the Commission agree to act as the community consultation mechanism, the Commission will listen to approximately 15 minutes of oral presentation in addition to review of a written summary.

At the present time there are two protocols pending. One is for an artificial hemoglobin which is to be tested in emergency room trauma cases. Thereafter, there may be approximately one per month. The Commission will present the questions and concerns of the community. The Commission was concerned about cost that may arise from this task but was assured there will be no financial cost to the Commission; the primary involvement will be the time.

There was mention that if the Commission were to agree to this obligation agencies may ask for assistance in various projects. At the present time, the University of Pittsburgh and Allegheny General Hospital are the two agencies holding these studies.

Commissioner Pittinger moved that the Commission act as the community consultation forum for the IRB. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Board. Chairperson Kunselman made a friendly amendment to the motion which reads:

The Commission agrees to participate as a community-based organization for the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board for a one-year period. The motion carried unanimously.

The chairperson stated that from his personal observation the Commission should make adjustments to the meeting due to the fact the IRB may require about 30 minutes out of each Commission meeting.

IV. COMPLIANCE UPDATE

George Monroe, EEOC Liaison, reported that 81 cases have been submitted for contract credit. Mr. Monroe stated that a number of these cases are pending review by EEOC. In addition to the 112 contracted cases, there has been an upward modification of four cases which brings the total to 116 cases for the EEOC contract.

V. STAFF & COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Director's Report

March 4--Director Morrison met with representatives of the County Commissioners to discuss the possible expansion of the Commission's services and protections to the citizens of Allegheny County. This would require that financial resources commensurate with the increased responsibilities be made available by county government. The Director also met with Sal Sirabella of the Mayor's office to discuss approval by the Mayor's office of this initiative.

March 6--Director Morrison attended the Disparity Study Commission meeting. The Disparity Study Commission will be hiring a consultant to assist them in the development of a study and program to ensure that minority and women's business enterprises are receiving their fair share of city contracts for goods and services.

March 18--31st Ward Community Council

The Director met with council board members to discuss concerns relative to the cross-burning at Mifflin Elementary School on "Devil's Night". This is a practice that has been going on in that community for over 40 years. Steps are being taken to put an end to this practice. However, the community council maintains that this is not a racially motivated incident. Two years ago, there were arrests made and the individuals involved were charged with disorderly conduct.

March 19--Director Morrison attended a meeting of the Intimate Partner Abuse Coalition of the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh which is developing programing geared toward violence reduction.

March 25--The first meeting of the curfew advisory committee was held. The six youth and six adults who make up the committee will review statistics and gather public reaction, comments or complaints regarding the curfew. They will issue a report to city council in June.

March 26--Director Morrison attended the graduation of Commissioners Fox, Pittinger, Honse and Morgan who have completed the Police Citizens Academy.

April 2--Director Morrison gave a presentation to the Teen Leadership Council of Western Pennsylvania.

April 3--The National Council of Christians and Jews held a forum on Impediments to Fair Housing. The areas discussed were people, banking, real estate and credit. The Commission was a co-sponsor.

April 5--The Commission was one of the organizations involved in the Anti-Klan Rally held in Market Square. Fifty-eight speakers were registered to speak. A future goal is to have an annual unity celebration day in Pittsburgh.

April is Fair Housing Month and as part of our ongoing effort of community outreach and education we have scheduled eight meetings at Carnegie Library branches throughout the city. Commission Representative Yancy Miles will be offering information to and answering the questions of residents on fair housing laws.

At the May meeting, Mr. Morrison will present information on the proposed Summer Human Relations Program co-sponsored by the city's department of Parks & Recreation.

March 31 city council passed a resolution to enter into a contract with HUD.

Director Morrison announced the establishment of a data-sharing relationship with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. The Commission is now receiving copies of all decisions made by this agency and case information. In exchange, our data is also being shared. Also, quarterly meetings are being held with the Regional Director.

A suggestion was made to send the chief of police a letter to commend the police on the way the KKK rally was handled. Director Morrison stated that a letter had already been prepared to send.

Commission chair Kunselman stated that he may ask committees to supply written reports in the future in an effort to shorten the meeting.

Motions Commissioner

Commissioner Kunselman announced that Commissioner Samson has been appointed to become the Free-Standing Motions Commissioner for a six-month period. All pending motions prior to April 7 will be handled by Commissioner Vallone. All motions received after this date will be handled by Commissioner Sampson until the end of her appointment. Commissioner Samson is removed from the Compliance Review Section until completion of her term as Motions Commissioner.

Three members are to be appointed to the Nominating Committee. Additionally, he asked that staff survey the Commissioners to determine their interest in serving on the nominating committee. Anyone interested in serving should contact Constance Zatek.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING SECTION

The Public Hearing Section meeting was called to order by Father Lou Vallone, Section chair at 4:40 p.m. Father Lou Vallone stated that two cases have been forwarded to the Section by hearing panels with recommended findings. Section members indicated that they are prepared to vote on both cases.

E-94-148/Demitras v. Peoples Choice Deli

Voting in favor of panel recommendation:

Morgan
Golden
Vallone
Board

Abstaining

Grice

EO-93-032/Slifko v. City of Pittsburgh,
Department of Public Safety

Voting in favor of panel recommendation:

Morgan
Golden
Vallone
Board
Grice

Father Vallone stated he sees a potential problem because according to the City Code Chapter 658.03 the Compliance Review Section must vote unanimously on all probable cause decisions because it takes a majority vote of the Commission to authorize a public hearing.

Director Morrison stated that he believed that this issue was addressed by the amendments to the Rules and Regulations.

Yancy Miles obtained a copy of the Rules and Regulations and confirmed that Rule 3 addresses this issue.

Father Vallone also stated that Rule 7, Motions Commissioner is flawed because a motion constitutes a request for adjudication. Also, that Rule 7(c) keeps all decisions on motions with the Public Hearing Section.

The meeting of the Public Hearing Section adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

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