

**PITTSBURGH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
A G E N D A**

May 7, 2001

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
- III. COMPLIANCE UPDATE - George Monroe**
- IV. STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**
 - A. Director's Report
 - B. Nominations Committee
- V. NEW BUSINESS**
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- VII. ADJOURNMENT**

PITTSBURGH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Minutes of Meeting

May 7, 2001

Attendance: Pamela Golden, *Chair*

Robert McClenahan	Susan Hunt	Barbara Burstin
Stephan Broadus	Frances Barnes	David Engel
Sandra Glass	Mark Stein	Curtis Smith

Called/Unable to attend: B. J. Samson Alma Speed Fox
Elizabeth Pittinger Father Lou Vallone

Unexcused: Christine Williams

Staff: Charles F. Morrison, *Director*
George Monroe Connie Miskis Zatek Yancy Miles

Guests: Dave Goldberg, Controller's Office

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Pamela Golden, called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

Commissioner Golden introduced, Mark Stein, the Mayor's most recent appointment to the Commission. Mr. Stein briefly outlined his background, noting that he has been resident of the Highland Park area since 1982 and is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University. He has worked primarily in the field of medical research, and is a past administrator of the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force.

Commissioner Golden also informed Commissioners of the passing of Byrd R. Brown on Thursday, May 3, 2001. Funeral services held earlier this date. Mr. Brown had served as the Commission's solicitor for more than 20 years and his absence will be profoundly felt. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that memorial contributions be made to the Wilhemina Byrd Brown Scholarship Fund in care of Mrs. Barbara Brown at 4255 Parkman Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

Commissioner Burstin is interested in collecting any information on Byrd Brown in connection with the Commission. Commissioner Golden volunteered to provide all Commissioners with copies of articles that appeared in the New Pittsburgh Courier.

Kevin Trower, associate counsel, had indicated to Director Morrison, that in a recent conversation with Mr. Brown, he had said that the law offices should be kept open. Mr. Trower is planning to honor this wish.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the April 2, 2001 Commission meeting were unanimously adopted as mailed upon motion of Commissioner Engel and second by Commissioner Barnes.

III. COMPLIANCE

A. EEOC Contract Update

George Monroe, liaison to EEOC, reported that as of April 30, 2001, 109 cases had been completed for the current EEOC contract. The contract year runs from October 1, 2000 to September 30, 2001, during which time, this Commission is to process 219 cases. It was noted that this is the highest contract the Commission has received throughout its association with the EEOC; the previous contract was for 145 cases. The generous upgrade was due to an adjustment made at mid-year when it was determined that the Commission would be able to process more cases. Mid-year reviews are conducted in late May or June and linear projections are made based on the actual number of cases completed up to that date. If it is determined that the Commission will not be able to fulfill the contract at 219 cases, it will be readjusted downward. Director Morrison was confident that the contract could be fulfilled at the current rate, especially with the recent addition of both full and part-time staff persons.

IV. STAFF & DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Director's Report

Director Morrison highlighted information that was presented on the written report mailed earlier to all Commissioners.

- The Commission will join with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to present a training conference in September. The emphasis will be on reaching human resources representatives. Director Morrison would also like information to be targeted to community outreach.
- Allegheny County Chief Executive, Jim Roddey, has issued the Report of the Violence and Protection Task Force. This task force came about last year following the shootings in Wilksburg and surrounding suburbs. Director Morrison served on this task force.
- Director Morrison met with City Councilman Jim Motznik to acquaint him with the work of the Commission and elicit his support.

B. Housing Committee

Director Morrison briefly highlighted Fair Housing Month activities that included distribution of an informational brochure and speaking with patrons at local supermarkets. In addition, the Commission co-sponsored a Fair Housing Month program at the Carnegie on April 26, 2001. Approximately 35 people participated. Work is progressing to begin the RFP process to identify a consultant who will coordinate housing initiatives including a series of town meetings -- one in each of the six police zones.

Commissioner Engel reminded the Director to include representatives from the Dept. of Public Safety, Building Inspection and the Dept. of Public Works, as well as representatives of the URA housing section on the mailing/invitation lists.

Commissioner Barnes inquired as to what the Commission is trying to convey at the town meetings. She stressed the importance of *keeping focus on designing or developing strategies to address impediments already identified in the housing study*. Chairperson Golden agreed that this point is well taken and stated that the Department of City Planning has oversight of the project; she will check details with them.

Commissioner Barnes requested a copy of the Housing Impediments Analysis, which was to be forwarded to all Housing Committee members.

C. Nominating Committee

Commissioner Burstin, chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the following slate of candidates for positions on the Executive Committee:

Pamela Golden	Chair
Robert McClenahan	1 st Vice Chair
Father Lou Vallone	2 nd Vice Chair
Stephan Broadus	Treasurer
B. J. Samson	Secretary

Commission Engel moved to accept the report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Glass and carried unanimously.

Commissioners were reminded that other nominations may be submitted by completing a nominations form carrying the acceptance signature of the individual and the signature of two Commissioners making the nomination. Nominations

forms and instructions will be mailed to all Commissioners. Completed nominations forms must be returned to the office before May 14, 2001. A final slate, naming all candidates, will be mailed on May 18, 2001. Election of officers will take place at the June 4 Commission meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- Commissioners were reminded to return completed Statement of Financial Interests as soon as possible.
- Commissioner Barnes again raised concern that only 12 housing cases were filed in 2000, and that this Commission deals primarily in employment cases. She stated that more emphasis must be placed in addressing housing discrimination. Dr. Barnes stated that strategies must be developed to increase the number of complaints filed with the Commission.

Commissioner Golden agreed that this was the goal in the Commission trying to establish referral partnerships with the Urban League and other community agencies. Part of the Commission's strategy, as discussed and formulated during its planning meeting on November 3, 2000, is to create more awareness in the community of how the Commission may be able to intercede on their behalf in cases of housing discrimination. Commissioner Smith noted that his experience on the Housing Committee in the past showed that housing discrimination in Pittsburgh is vast and deep and will "take quite a while" to fight for elimination of discrimination.

With no further business to address, the meeting was properly adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

/cmz

Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations

Directors Report

April 27, 2001

March 22, 2001	Attended the Mayor's Awards for Employee Excellence and Mayor's Service Awards at the Pittsburgh Convention Center. Director was recognized for 30 years of service to the City of Pittsburgh.
March 29, 2001	Conducted a training workshop for Commissioners on the Americans with Disabilities Act, the subject of "Constructive Discharge" and racial and sexual harassment. A total of five Commissioners were in attendance.
March 30, 2001	Attended a meeting with the Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pittsburgh to plan for increased education and outreach. Also discussed details of planned Fair Housing month activities. Yancy Miles of the staff was also in attendance.
April 4, 2001	Testified at City Council's legislative meeting regarding the appropriation of funds for the City's Fair Housing Plan.
April 5, 2001	Met with City Council member Jim Motznik (He won the special election to fill Michael Diven's term) to provide background information and explain the work of the Commission.
April 10, 2001	Attended City Council's hearing on the Mayor's nomination of Mark Stein to the Commission.
April 10, 2001	Attended the NCCJ's (National Conference for Communities and Justice) Brotherhood/Sisterhood awards program.
April 11, 2001	Attended the monthly meeting of the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education's Inter-Agency Task Force meeting.
April 12, 2001	Attended the Mayor's roundtable meeting on safety in the workplace.
April 17, 2001	Attended a meeting with EEOC Area Director Eugene Nelson and PAHRC Regional Director George Simmons to discuss plans for a joint training conference. The conference is planned for September 2001.
April 19, 2001	Attended the conference, "Preventing Crime in the Black Community," hosted by Pennsylvania Attorney General Mike Fisher.
April 22, 2001	Attended the dedication of the Freedom Corner Memorial.
April 26, 2001	Attended the press conference on the release of the report of the Allegheny County Violence Prevention Task Force. The Director had served as a member of the Task Force.
April 26, 2001	Participated in the Fair Housing Month Program jointly held by the Commission and the Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pittsburgh at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

rec'd
5/67/01
Jen

Fair Housing???

It was a matter of the color of our skin! With earned doctorate degrees from Columbia University and top level positions in the public school system of Montgomery County, Maryland, we, my husband and I, experienced the indignity of overt racial discrimination. We fought the assault all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States. Justice did not prevail at the time, but so began a long tortuous journey for fair housing for us and for others denied, in our country. It was the summer of 1961.

The introduction to the petition to the Supreme Court, October term 1965, reads, "This case involves an incredible story of housing discrimination, within the very shadow of the Nation's Capitol, supported and assisted by the federal courts.

"Petitioner, Dr. Roland E. Barnes, a Negro resident of the District of Columbia, sought to obtain a home in a housing development near the Rockville, Maryland public elementary school of which he was principal. The seller's agent at the development accepted his deposit, but it was returned to him because the sellers were unwilling to sell to a Negro. After lengthy negotiations and threat of a suit, the sellers entered into a formal agreement promising petitioner a house on a lot substantially equivalent to the one for which his deposit had been returned. But instead of a lot of the promised quality, respondents tendered to Dr. Barnes a far smaller lot at a much less desirable location where he would be 'seen the least.'

"Respondent Sind explained on cross-examination ^{at} of trial, that he had selected this as the only lot to be offered to Dr. Barnes because at that spot he would be hidden from view: 'I thought, if I put the man in the middle of a block, he might not be seen as often.' It 'is quite obvious,' said Sind, that this was the house where Dr. Barnes 'would be seen the least.'"

Now let's fast forward to Pittsburgh, PA 1973. When it was learned that a Black couple was negotiating to buy a house in "their" neighborhood--it is the house where I now live--a petition was circulated for signatures to pressure the seller not to go through with the deal for they didn't want (my words) to "pollute" their neighborhood with the presence of a Black full professor at the University of Pittsburgh and his internationally accepted educational consultant wife.

It was again a matter of the color of our skin!

When will this cancerous malady end?