

MINUTES  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
CITY OF AUSTIN

Thursday, May 23, 2002

PRESENT: Gabe Garcia, John Hagen, Karl Dalager, Nancy Clark, Tricia Wiechmann, Brandon Lawhead, Masuka Magambo, Anu Kasturi and Pat MacLean.

ABSENT: Liliana Silvestry-Neilon

The meeting was called to order by Chair Garcia at 6 p.m. There were no minutes from the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting because there was not a quorum.

Old Business

1. Large calendar of events: Not available according to Nancy.
2. Department of Human Rights brochures: Trish will see if the Police Department and other agencies/departments still have some of our local brochures left.
3. Written complain procedure: Liliana and Nancy will report at a later date.
4. Meeting with Joe Brown: Nancy reported that Mr. Brown felt there was not any problem with discrimination at Austin High. He said many of the problems could be attributed to students not being able to read. He suggested inviting parents of minority students into the school and give them a tour before school starts and at various times in the year, having interpreters available to answer questions/concerns. He thought it was important to get parents involved.

Mr. Brown offered to meet with the 5 student who dropped out and see what the problems were. At the meeting, Liliana said she would check with those students to see if they will meet with him. It was agreed it was important to pursue specific problems, not just deal in generalities. He encouraged the Commission to bring problems to him, as we become aware of them.

5. Report on ideas on school programs, advertising, community projects, etc.: There was extensive discussion about these issues.
  - Brandon suggested promotion of a Diversity Week at Austin High.
  - John suggested there be a survey of the teachers to see if they think there is a problem with discrimination/racial tension. He asked if there is already an instrument to measure this.
  - Trish suggested we contact other Human Rights Commissions to see what has worked in their communities.

- Nancy said she would contact the APEX Education Committee to see what they are planning and doing in the area of diversity education.
  - Masuka reported Tony Orange comes to the Austin Medical Center every year to conduct diversity activities. She will check on the costs and availability, etc. She said he is funny and effective.
  - Nancy, John and Masuka agreed to report back in September with some information and ideas. They will communicate via email.
6. Pat will ask KAUS for another copy of the promotion tape. The last one was blank
  7. Trish will write a thank you letter to Joe Brown. She will request that he follow up on his suggestion to invite parents to the school and ask for an assembly time to develop a diversity event.
  8. John would like to see updated racial demographics of our community.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

**The next meeting is at 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 26th in the City Administration Building. Please call Tricia or Gabe if you will not be able to attend.**