

**CITY OF NORWALK
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MARCH 19, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Carol L. Frank, Chairman; Rahoul Dupervil; Julius Gamble;
Andrew Mattiello; Diana Paladino; Vicky Su; Karen Tobin

STAFF: Adam Bovilsky, Human Relations Director

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by the Chairman. Ms. Frank asked to suspend the rules to move Executive Session up to the next item on the agenda. All were in agreement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ** MS. PALADINO MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CASE #228-08E.**
- ** MR. MATTIELLO SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Committee went into Executive Session at 7:48 p.m. and reconvened into Public Session at 8:47 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: FEBRUARY REGULAR MEETING

The following corrections to the February 19 minutes were requested:

On page 1 Stamford Adovcate should be "Advocate". On page 3, paragraph 1, third sentence Mr _has should be "Mr. Wright". On page 4, Nelsa should be "Nilsa"
On page 5 Fernandez should be "Fernandes".

- ** MS. TOBIN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY MINUTES WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.**
- ** MR. MATTIELLO SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Frank stated that her report was basically the same as last month. The documentary film "Brick by Brick", will be shown for the Fair Housing. She stated that she is still waiting for a resolution from Zoning for the inclusion of an asterisk on the use of the term "work force" in printed literature.

She said that they completely ignore her requests, and suggests that someone from that Commission attend the Human Relations Committee meetings should they care to provide input into the printed literature.

Regarding the budget, Ms. Frank stated that she wanted the Commissioners to know a very important item that as of now the Fair Housing Director's budget is at an amount of only 59 cents. Ms. Su said she did not understand what that meant, and Mr. Bovilsky clarified that the Fair Housing Departmental budget has been trimmed to only a line for Personnel, which when rounded, leaves a remainder of only 59 cents for an operational budget for expenses.

- ** MS. TOBIN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT.**
- ** MR. GAMBLE SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Bovilsky highlighted his written report as submitted, that there were no formal complaints filed with the Human Relations Commission. He reminded the committee that they still had one commissioner's position to fill whose term had expired, and there has been no action on appointments due the recent budget issues.

Regarding the budget, Mr. Bovilsky stated that he has heard unconfirmed rumors that the personnel cuts will not actually happen. However, he suggested that commissioners attend the March 25 Common Council meeting at 7:30 p.m., which is the Annual Public Hearing held here in the Concert Hall. This is the ideal opportunity to speak on behalf of the Human Relations Commission, or other departments. He added that the Director usually does not speak at this meeting, but he encouraged the commissioners to attend and to make a statement in support of the budget.

Mr. Bovilsky reported that his priorities have not significantly changed from the routine work as required in the office. He will be focusing his efforts on the completion of Case 228-08E, and he is close to finalizing plans for the Diversity Training in May. As an update, he has narrowed things down to the top first and second choices, and now just needs to get approval from the Common Council on March 24 to use dollars as allocated in the budget.

Regarding items in the news, Mr. Bovilsky provided copies of a recent newspaper article that appeared in The Hour entitled, "Norwalk NAACP offended by Post cartoon calls for boycotting New York tabloid." He suggested that the commissioners read this and other related items in the press to become familiar with this situation.

Ms. Tobin stated that she can understand the intention of the artist and did not see it as a derogatory or inflammatory reference. Mr. Bovilsky added that the NAACP concern is the implied context taken which is based on the offensive, historically deep, long-standing reference to African Americans depicted as monkeys as a form of discrimination.

- ** **MS. PALADINO MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT.**
- ** **MR. GAMBLE SECONDED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

MOTIONS ON CASES

- ** **MR. DUPERVIL MOTIONED TO REQUEST A WRITTEN RECOMMENDATION FROM MR. BOVILSKY TO PROVIDE HIS DECISION ON CASE NO. 228-08E TO BE APPROVED BY THE CHAIRMAN.**
- ** **MR. MATTIELLO SECONDED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BILLS AND COMMUNICATION

There was no report on Bills and Communication.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no unfinished business items on the agenda as all were covered in the Director's and Chairperson's reports. Ms. Tobin asked if the Commissioners should be fearful of the budget. Mr. Bovilsky restated his suggestion that Commissioners attend the March 25 Common Council meeting at 7:30 p.m. and to make a statement in support of the budget.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no report on New Business.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** **MR. DUPERVIL MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** **MR. GAMBLE SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services
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