



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Wednesday, December 7, 2016, 7:00 p.m.**

**El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito CA 94530**

Roll Call 7:01 pm

Commissioners Present: Edwards, Glueck, Hunter Parisi and Pardue-Okimoto

Absent: Aga, Hughes, Su

1. Oral Communications from the Public:

- **Miguel Gravelle** introduced himself as an El Cerrito resident and local teacher at Summit K-2; he wants to see a holistic response. He would also like to be kept informed on what the HRC/City is planning and how to get involved.
- **Judith Tannenbaum** said she recently sent a letter to the HRC and wants to help organize a community meeting to involve the City, School District, Police, and perhaps other groups, to speak about “what is possible” in terms of protecting community members from possible mistreatment and/or Federal policy changes.
- **Rayah Long** recently moved to El Cerrito and is involved in humane work. She sees a connection among animal rights, human rights and environmental protection rights. For example, empathy & understanding of animal rights relates to empathy against hate crimes. She would like to get involved.
- **Sherry Drobner** would like to get involved in efforts against hate crimes and possible future Federal policy changes, such as helping to put on a community gathering.
- **Janaki Sullivan** is concerned about what is “coming down the pipe” at the Federal level and would like to get involved. She feels a “Sanctuary City” protects vulnerable residents and shows the City’s commitment to everyone’s safety. She has done research on sanctuary cities including information from the ACLU and sample ordinances.

Officer David Wentworth with the El Cerrito Police Department shared a statement by Chief Keith (attached). He also shared his view as a 13-year member of the ECPD, reflecting that the ECPD does not treat non-citizens any differently, and in general, they do not inquire about a person’s immigration status.

Commissioner Pardue-Okimoto said there is some concern over potential loss of federal funds if El Cerrito decided to become a Sanctuary City and that would require more research.

Chair Edwards thanked all the speakers and said there are a number of avenues the HRC could propose to the Council like Sanctuary City status and becoming a “Compassionate City”. The matter will be discussed by the Tolerance sub-committee and the HRC at a future meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

It was moved (Glueck /Pardue-Okimoto) to approve the minutes of November 2, 2016. Unanimous.

3. Staff, Council Liaison and Commission Announcements and Reports:

Suzanne Iarla, Assistant to the City Manager introduced herself and passed on regrets from Karen Pinkos that she could not attend the meeting tonight. Iarla mentioned the new issue of the Recreation Activity Guide is available and that Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto, Greg Lyman and Paul Fadelli were elected to the El

Cerrito City Council. The swearing-in ceremony will be on Dec 20 and everyone is invited. Everyone congratulated Pardue-Okimoto on her election to the City Council.

Pardue-Okimoto reported that she was included on a letter from Ken Tenabe (the founder of "Loving Day") to President Obama requesting federal recognition for Loving Day. Rochelle was honored to be one of the signatures on the letter. She also reported that she saw the film, "Loving Day" and recommends it. Chair Edwards thanked her for bringing Loving Day to the attention of the HRC.

4. **Human Relations Commission Workplan:** Chair Edwards reported she is working on a draft of the workplan, including to gather photos about last year's accomplishments.

Glueck mentioned she has re-applied to serve on the HRC but only got the re-appointment letter on 11/28 so her application was submitted late.

Iarla encouraged everyone who was interested in joining the HRC to apply, even after the deadline since applications are accepted on an on-going basis.

5. **Subcommittee on Tolerance Update:**

Chair Edwards provided an updating that the subcommittee is considering a number of avenues, such as hosting a diversity forum, meetings, film screening, etc and that they can do more with support from more people.

There was consensus for the subcommittee to brainstorm/discuss the ideas presented by the public tonight and then come back to the full HRC. The HRC might make a recommendation to the Council in the future.

Resident Rayah Long offered to help and said she has skills as a graphic designer.

Edwards said that the group has looked into planning an input event using "Not In Our Town" materials/model, as well as using the Anti-Defamation League's model for targeted meetings (i.e. for youth).

The subcommittee will meet in late January (sometime after the MLK event) and interested community members are welcome to attend the subcommittee meeting.

6. **MLK Event 2017:** Pat Durham and other volunteers participated in a discussion about the logistics for the parade and rally on January 16, 2017. Pat announced the theme is "Enhancing the Dream- Make it Real" and keynote speaker will be Dr. Desmond Carson. There was also discussion and agreement for St. Peter's Church to host a sign-making event in early January.

Adjourned

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Task Force regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at City Hall - 10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, during normal business hours.