



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
3218 Pringle Road SE, #270
Salem OR 97302
503.378.2139
Fax 503.373-1427

MINUTES

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs

February 6, 2009

1:00 – 4:00 PM

Morrow Crane Building

3218 Pringle Road SE, Salem OR 97302

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Everette Rice. Those in attendance were: Chair Everette Rice, Vice Chair Cliff Walker, Commissioner Carlos Richard (phone), Commissioner Frank Thompson (phone), Administrator Helen Hoang (phone) and Staff Darlene Hulzebosch. Administrator Hoang and Commissioner Walker asked for a public meeting manual. Darlene will pursue.
- II. Administrator Hoang talked about planning for Darlene leaving. The job posting closes on February 13, 2009 and would like interviews on March 2, 3, and 4 depending on number of qualified applicants. Staff is to call Suzi to get on Commissioner Thompson's calendar. Commissioner Walker asked about the office being located in Portland. Administrator Hoang will talk to BOLI about a desk being made available to OCBA. Commissioner Thompson asked about the additional costs of a satellite office. Administrator Hoang talked about the formality of 10% budget cuts being made to the 2009 – 11 budget but the reality is at least a 20% cut this year. Asked where that 20% will come from, Administrator Hoang said 5% will come from general cuts but 15% will come from the positions of the Administrator and staff. Commissioner Thompson said he would look into finding a location for the office with donated space. Administrator Hoang said the Ways and Means committee will consider our budget at the end of March or early April. Commissioner Walker suggested a virtual office.

Administrator Hoang reported the OCAA is talking about a joint dinner bringing the four commissions together. It would be imperative that the commissions all work together to plan this event. Commissioner Thompson and Administrator Hoang will pursue the chairs and vice chairs to see about interest by the other commissions. Commissioner Walker moved that a joint fundraiser event be organized and planned with the other commissions. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous with Commissioners Thompson, Richard, Walker and Rice voting for approval.

There is talk of eliminating ethnic commissions in the State of Connecticut because of budget constraints and members are asking for support to keep the commissions from other states. The OCAA has voted to support the ethnic commissions and will write a letter for all the commissions. Commissioner Thompson made the motion to approve, Commissioner Richard seconded and the vote was unanimous with a voice vote by Commissioners Walker, Richard, Thompson and Rice.

- IV. Chair Rice introduced Attorney General John Kroger. The Attorney General how because of Oregon laws civil rights cases can be tried but there is no civil rights enforcement unit. The budget

proposal will show that funding can be available for the civil rights enforcement unit. One example of discrimination is with the returning National Guard soldiers trying to go back to jobs. Mr. Kroger said substance abuse is apparent in 80% of property crimes and 90% of child abuse cases. Locking criminals up does not work, whereas drug treatment works. The system needs a complete overhaul. The system needs accountability. There is a \$1 to \$6 savings in drug treatment opposed to incarceration. Staff will contact the Attorney General's office for statistics. As far as recidivism, New York State took a group of criminals and sent half of them to prison and half to treatment and the results were overwhelming for the treatment group. Commissioner Walker asked what happened to the funds for the unit and Mr. Kroger said the funds were from the state and disappeared in the 1980's. Commissioner Walker stated that the Portland police is policing more in Black neighborhoods. Mr. Kroger said racial profiling goes on but there is no resolution to end the practice. Throughout the state, officers have been sent to training to resolve the issue. Commissioner Walker asked Mr. Kroger about his Martin Luther King speech where a VIP called and asked him not to pursue the civil rights enforcement unit. Commissioner Walker asked for the name of the VIP. Attorney General Kroger said he would not tell him who the VIP was. Commissioner Thompson moved that the OCBA support the Attorney General on his civil rights enforcement unit and the substance abuse treatment of criminals. Commissioner Richard seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously with votes by Commissioners Richard, Thompson, Walker and Chair Rice.

Chair Rice asked if the Attorney General civil right enforcement unit is a duplicate effort with the BOLI civil rights division. Mr. Kroger said he is very supportive of BOLI but it has not rights to try cases in court. Right now, 95% of the cases can be handled through BOLI. But some need to go to trial, that is what his unit would do. So it is complimentary services. Commissioner Walker requested a statement be made publicly by the Attorney General addressing the disparity in the Portland police. Commissioner Walker asked for a meeting with the Attorney General. Staff will set up the appointment through the Attorney General's office. The Attorney General said he would be interested in attending the next OCBA meeting with the Labor Commissioner to discuss these issues.

Discussion followed about a meeting with the president of the Portland police union and Rosie Sizer, head of the Portland police along with the Attorney General. Commissioner Richard said the focus needs to be on the street – gangs, etc. Policing is different in high crime areas rather than low crime areas. The law enforcement community needs to gain the trust of the people in the neighborhood. Chair Rice thanked Attorney General John Kroger for joining the meeting.

Commissioner Richard said the sooner the better to have a meeting with the Attorney General and to start giving him as much information as possible. Chair Rice said this is a great opportunity for the African-American to make great strides.

- VI. Chair Rice introduced Jess Barton who discussed HB 2352. The bill is up for public hearing on February 11, 2009 at 3:30PM in Hearing Room 50. He worked with Rep. Chip Shields on this bill in the last session but it went nowhere. Mr. Barton said that the states of Iowa and Connecticut already have this law and Wisconsin might by now. Chair Rice said the time has come for this bill. Commissioner Walker moved that the OCBA resolve to support passage of this bill and to encourage the other commissions to support it. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. Commissioners Richard, Thompson, Walker and Chair Rice voted unanimously to approve. Chair Rice thanked Mr. Barton for attending.
- V. Commissioner Walker moved to have the discussion of OCBA support or Civil Rights Division enhancement at the Bureau of Labor and Industries at the next meeting. Commissioner Thompson

seconded the motion. The vote was Commissioners Thompson, Richard, Walker and Chair Rice for, the vote was unanimous.

- VI. The commissioners discussed the frequency of OCBA meetings and decided on monthly. The next meeting will be on March 6, 2009 from 1 – 4PM at the Morrow Crane Building in Salem. Commissioner Richard asked that a report on the status of commissioner be presented at the next meeting.
- VII. The commissioners asked that a press release be sent out to show support of the OCBA of HB2352 and support for the Attorney General's civil rights enforcement unit. Staff Darlene will work on this with Chair Rice.

Chair Rice talked about editorial he wrote for the Observer recently. He said it is a great way to show visibility. Administrator Hoang will contact Danny Santos of the Governor's office as to identity of OCBA or personal identification with articles.

- VIII. There was no public testimony.
- IX. Administrator Hoang asked if the commission was interested in Legislative training to be done in house in late February. The commission is interested. Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 with a motion by Commissioner Thompson and seconded by Commissioner Walker.