



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
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MINUTES

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
August 20, 2011
PCC Cascade Campus
700 N. Killingsworth, Terrell Hall Rm 112

Attendees

Chair: Carlos Richard
Vice Chair: Samaura Stone
Commissioners: Karol Collymore, Isaac Dixon, Phyllis Rand, Clifford Walker, Lorraine Wilson, Willie Woolfolk, Sen. Rod Monroe
Guests: Mr. Lloyd Gervais (father of Commissioner Wilson) and other members of Commissioner Wilson's family
Staff: Lucy Baker, Nancy Kramer

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting called to order by Chair Richard at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was established.

II. Review and approval of agenda

An update on the Oregon Education Investment Board was added to New Business.

There was discussion of process regarding submission of agenda items. Currently, agenda items are submitted to the Chair and the Chair and Vice Chair set the agenda. It was agreed that, moving forward, if a suggested agenda item is rejected, the Chair will respond to the submitter as to why it was rejected, and the discussion about the agenda item will remain between the submitter and the Chair.

Motion (Collymore/Dixon): to approve agenda. Carried.

III. Review and approval of minutes

Commissioner Wilson stated that the July minutes reflected the points of Commission Fish but did not capture the position of the OCBA Commissioner. There was discussion regarding how minutes are amended and distributed. It was agreed that when the minutes are amended that the corrections are captured in the current minutes. A clean copy of amended minutes is to be distributed to the Commissioners.

It was agreed that the minutes will reflect the agenda topics, key points and actions, but that the passion of some discussions is not reflected in the minutes.

Corrections to July 2011 Minutes:

Pg 1, Item I. Remove question mark after “A quorum was established.”

Pg 1, Item II. Add Walker as the 2nd for the motion, remove question mark.

Pg 2, 2nd paragraph, 4th bullet: Change sentence to, “After many years of being neglected, Fair Housing will now become a front burner issue.”

Pg 2, last paragraph of Item IV. Change “continued work” to “working”.

Motion (Wilson/Walker): OCBA meetings are to be recorded. **Carried.**

Motion (Dixon/Rand): To approve the July minutes as amended. **Carried.**

IV. New Business

OCBA Committees: OCBA committees are being established with the goal of changing the structure of how the Commission operates. Committees can carry out the work of the OCBA rather than trying to do so in the full Commission session. The Commission agreed that including ad hoc members (not Commissioners) in a committee is beneficial.

Operational Committee:

A. Executive Committee

Has the responsibility of monitoring, reviewing and developing the budget for Commission. The first report of this Committee will be at the September OCBA meeting.

Committee Chair: Chair Richard

Committee Member: Vice Chair Stone

Staff: Lucy Baker

Standing Committees

A. Advocacy Committee

The work of the Committee will include:

1. Develop strategies for monitoring and making recommendations to state agencies and other organizations to ensure that programs, processes, and procedures positively, or do not negatively, impact, social, legal, economic, and/or political equality of African Americans.

2. Review and report recommendations to the Commission regarding letters of complaint and general issues or matters (that affect African American Oregonians) that surface in the media or in other forums.

3. The Advocacy Committee will implement the actions and recommendations assigned by the Commission.

The goals of the Advocacy Committee are to:

- Establish the main platforms and focus of the OCBA and take the lead on those items, and,

- Support other organizations who have been taking the lead on these issues, and show them support and solidarity.

Committee Chair: Chair Richard, TBA

Committee Members: Vice Chair Stone, Commissioner Collymore

During discussion the key importance of early childhood development and education, and OCBA's support of assuring its success was noted.

B. Research Committee

The Research Committee will research and provide background on issues of key importance to the OCBA. The Committee will assist the OCBA to understand the complexities and impact of legislative issues and the commitment of time needed to address them.

Committee Chair: TBA

Committee Members: Commissioner Dixon, Commissioner Collymore

- i. Commissioner Dixon will develop a database of students willing to do this. Lewis and Clark College has students who are interested.
- ii. Partner with other agencies that are providing research, like Urban League.
- iii. Interns may be helpful.

C. Legislative Committee

Committee will monitor legislation and keep the rest of the Commission informed. This Committee will work with legislators to develop legislative concepts and coordinate testimony.

Committee Chair: Commissioner Wilson

Committee Member: Vice Chair Stone

Senator Monroe and Representative Frederick will serve as liaisons.

Additional Committees

A. Outreach and Visibility Committee

This Committee will assist the OCBA in establishing relationships among communities, media and policymakers statewide. It will help OCBA to reach beyond Portland, Salem and Eugene.

Committee Chair: Commissioner Kemp

Committee Member: Vice Chair Stone

Chair Richard will work with the Committee Chair to draft a goal statement for the Committee.

B. Bylaw Committee

The OCBA Bylaws were last updated on January 18, 2008. The first report of the Bylaw Committee will be at the September OCBA meeting.

Motion: (Richard/Dixon): Kathleen Sadat to be added to the Bylaws Committee. Carried.

Committee Chair: Commissioner Isaac Dixon

Committee Member: Kathleen Sadat

Meeting Days for OCBA: There was a brief review of why the OCBA meets on the third Saturday of each month in the morning. After hearing that Saturday morning is the best time for legislators to attend when they are in session, Commissioner Dixon withdrew his interest in making a motion to change the meeting day.

Fair Housing Council (FHC) Housing Evaluator volunteers: FHC contacted the OACO Office to request that Commissioners consider becoming volunteer testers to monitor discrimination. Lucy has requested that FHC provide updated information on the next tester training from FHC and will send it to Commissioners.

Oregon Education Reinvestment Board:

This Board was just appointed and has not yet met. The purpose is to facilitate K-20 education (Bill 909), essentially a task force to make recommendations for legislation. Senator Rod Monroe has been appointed to it, and Rep. Ben Cannon (formerly serving on OCHA) has been appointed as its staff person by the Governor. Commissioners Wilson and Dixon were interested in being on the Board. Lucy Baker will send a slate of names to the Exec. Appointments Office on Monday to pursue further appointments from the Commissions onto the Reinvestment Board if possible.

V. Old Business

Partnership opportunities on Fair Housing with Office of Commissioner Nick Fish: There was much discussion about whether the OCBA will partner with the City on housing discrimination. Points raised included:

- Daniel Ledezma announced that she is no longer with Commissioner Fish's office. She committed to getting responses from Commissioner Fish to any of the 12 questions that were unanswered at the July OCBA meeting. Commissioner Avakian is running for office and in the midst of campaigning. He is less accessible.
- Commissioner Fish's Housing Plan is going before the City Council on September 14th, where a decision is expected to be made about an advisory committee.

- It was stated that the OCBA Bylaws specifically say “monitor”, not “form a partnership”, therefore it would be amiss of the Commission to seek partnerships when the Commission is charged with monitoring agencies.

A Motion was proposed but ultimately struck.

Motion (Walker/Woolfolk): A police detail be created by the City of Portland to protect against housing discrimination. Motion failed.

This topic now goes to the Advocacy Committee.

Discussion and disposition of old business tabled at the June OCBA meeting:
This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Administrator’s Report: This item was tabled until the next meeting.

VI. Public Testimony

Mr. Lloyd Gervais of Trinidad and Tobago, Commissioner Wilson’s father, spoke briefly about his experience of being a former school principal and the challenges he encountered with discrimination. He is of mixed heritage – a Grand Chief of the Walau tribe, as well as having French and African heritage. He was keenly aware that the work of the OCBA is the same work he has done in fighting discrimination.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Gervais for his comments.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by common consent at 11:29am.