



# Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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[DRAFT] MINUTES  
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS  
Commission Meeting of November 2, 2015  
Community and Senior Services (CSS)  
3175 W. Sixth Street, Room 304 – Ray Bartlett Conference/Teamwork Room  
Los Angeles, California 90020

PRESENT: Cynthia Anderson-Barker      Preeti Kulkarni  
Jarrett Tomas Barrios      Daisy Ma  
Adrian Dove      Eleanor Montaña  
Susanne Cumming      Ashlee Oh  
Isabelle Gunning      Sandra Thomas (By Telephone)  
Lea Ann King

ABSENT: Melina Abdullah      Michael Gi-Hao Cheung  
Donna Bojarsky

STAFF: Robin Toma      Robert Sowell  
Elena Halpert-Schilt      Emily Pacheco  
Grace Löwenberg

1. **Call to Order/Flag Salute and Moment of Silence:** A quorum of the Commission was established at 12:30 PM with 10 members present. President Cumming called the meeting to order, and Commissioner Oh led the pledge of allegiance.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** It was moved by Commissioner King, and seconded by Commissioner Oh, to approve the minutes of the Commission meeting held on October 5, 2015 with additions. The motion carried unanimously.
3. **Public Comment:** Jeffery Williams, a third year doctoral student from USC Keck School of Medicine, introduced himself and expressed his eagerness to learn more about the Commission and ways in which he can help serve its mission. He noted that he became familiar with the Commission after learning about its hate crime report on NPR.
4. **President's Report:**

- 4.1 Photos from the Hate Crime Report Press Conference:** Commission President Cumming noted that photos of the Hate Crime Press Conference event would be on display throughout the meeting.
- 4.2 Photos from the IAOHRA Conference:** Photos from the IAOHRA conference will be shared at the next Commission meeting.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

Robert Sowell, Commission Staff Supervisor, presented on the Commission's Strategic Priority 2, Fairness and Equity in the Criminal Justice System.

Mr. Sowell provided an overview of the programs administered under Strategic Priority 2. The following was presented to the Commission:

- Dispute Resolution Restorative Justice Victim-Offender Mediation: Staff continues to work with four agencies, the Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center, the California Conference for Equality and Justice, Centinela Youth Services and the City of Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, which administer this program. This program aims to bring victims of infractions or misdemeanors together with the offender, to resolve issues outside of the formal criminal justice system. In this setting, offenders acknowledge the responsibility they hold for the harm done. This program is helping to change the way these particular offenses are addressed, and in some cases charges are dropped or never filed.
- Bias Policing Complaint Mediation: Two L.A. City police stations are currently participating in a program in which community complaints formally filed with the station are also referred to mediation, so long as they do not involve use of force or explicitly racial bias. In this setting, community members and police officers are given an opportunity to express their perspective and concerns to one another. A recent successful outcome has been that a police officer who went through the mediation expressed gratitude for having been reminded that police officers are also members of the communities that they serve, and that communities need to be reminded that police officers are there to serve them.
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Prevention: Consistent with the Commission's recent approval of 10 recommendations to prevent and address the commercial sexual exploitation of minors, the Board of Supervisors recently requested that minors who are victims of sex trafficking not be charged with a criminal offense. Subsequently the County Sheriff's Department agreed to no longer charge minors with this criminal offense, and to avoid using the term child prostitute, or child prostitution. Furthermore, managers have met with Board of Supervisors deputies to discuss the expansion of the county wide first responder protocol. All of these advances are consistent with the Commission's recommendations.
- Police Community Hearings/ Trust Talks: Commission staff is also involved in ongoing Police Community Hearings, as well as Trust Talks. It was noted that Commissioner Gunning recently participated as a facilitator in one of these Trust Talks.

**5. Committee Reports**

**5.1 Ad Hoc Committee on Policing Practices and Human Relations:** This report was tabled.

**5.2 Ad Hoc Committee on John Anson Ford Human Relations Awards:** Commissioner King informed the Commission that the committee is preparing to have an event like the one held last year at the Disney Concert Hall, with a scroll presentation at the Board of Supervisor's meeting immediately preceding the luncheon. She also indicated that the secondary focus of the committee is to begin developing the 2017 event with an aim to increase the awareness of the Commission's work, engage elected officials in its mission, and honor the work done in the community.

**6. Action/Discussion Items:**

**6.1 John Anson Form Human Relations Awards:** The Commission was provided with a budget for the upcoming 2016 event, with a recommendation from the committee to approve it as presented. The Commission was informed that a request will be made to Community and Senior Services to cover the cost of the event, but if funds are unavailable, the John Anson Trust Fund will cover it.

**It was moved by Commissioner King, and seconded by Commissioner Gunning, the approve the JAF awards event budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**6.2 John Anson Ford Trust Fund Guidelines:** The John Anson Ford Trust Fund Guidelines were presented to the Commission for approval. The guidelines were distributed to commissioners in advance of the meeting, and were approved as presented.

**It was moved by Commissioner King, and seconded by Commissioner Barrios, to approve the JAF Trust Fund Guidelines as presented. The motion carried with 9 members in favor, and one abstention (Dove).**

**6.3 Policing and Human Relations Hearings:** This item was previously addressed in item 5.

**6.4 Strategic Priority Two—Updated Goals:** This item was previously addressed in the special presentation.

**7. Executive Director's Report:**

**7.1 Domestic Sex Trafficking of Minors:** As noted in the special presentation, the Commission's 10 recommendations to address and prevent the commercial sex trafficking of minors were influential in leading to the decriminalization of victims by the Sheriff's Department, as well as the expansion of the countywide first responder protocol by the Board of Supervisors.

**7.2 Commission Strategic Planning Update:** A current list of Strategic Priorities was provided to the Commission. Commissioners were informed that staff is currently working on updating the strategic plan, and will provide recommendations for the

Commission to consider and approve. A strategic planning session for the Commission will be scheduled, and a focus group formed to help direct the process. More information will follow in the coming months.

8. **Commissioner's Comments/Announcements:** Commissioner Cynthia Anderson-Barker informed the Commission that the National Lawyers' Guild, the ACLU, and Legal Aid are currently filing suit against the LAPD for discarding the belongings of street vendors without due process. In addition the group is working to legalize street vendors.

Commissioner Dove announced that the Kingdom Day Parade will be held on January 18, 2016.

9. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m. in the memory of Grace Lee Boggs (1915-2015), author/social activist/feminist, and Don Edwards, civil rights champion called "the Conscience of Congress" (1915-2015).

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Susanne Cumming  
Commission President