

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

James Hanley, Chair
Cynthia A. Brown, *Commission Liaison*



Francis Jack Russell, President
Kenneth R. Dement, Commissioner
Lawrence D. Jarboe, Commissioner
Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., Commissioner
Daniel H. Raley, Commissioner

St. Mary's County Human Relations Commission
St. Mary's County Governmental Center
August 5, 2009
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: James Hanley, Theo Cramer, Craig Buist, Leesha Wood, Robert Cryer, Kimberly Beachy
Commission Liaison: Cynthia Brown

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm by James Hanley. Since there were four new members present, everyone introduced themselves and stated their reasons for becoming a member of the Human Relations Commission. A common theme expressed by all was the desire to "give back to the community".

July minutes were reviewed and Theo Cramer made the motion to accept as presented. The motion was seconded by Robert Cryer and passed unanimously.

Cynthia Brown reported the HRC has \$2750 in its budget. This is the amount the County Commissioners allotted the group at the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1, 2009, and any amount not spent within the course of the year will revert back to the County on July 1, 2010. Additionally, Ms. Brown explained that any profit generated through the use of these dollars also goes to the County's general fund.

J. Hanley gave a history of the Human Relations Commission including the reason it was created, organizational changes over the years and significant activities. The HRC was established in the 1960's to address and mediate complaints of discrimination. As St. Mary's County grew, the community became more diverse and cases became more complex. This resulted in more cases being referred to the Maryland State HRC for judgment rather than mediation. In the 1990's the State HRC opened a field office in Leonardtown to address cases in St. Mary's, Charles and Calvert Counties. Around that same time a local mediation center opened in the Lexington Park area. All these factors combined caused the local HRC to re-examine its role as mediators. The membership voted to cease mediation since that need was being met by other entities in the county but to continue and expand its role as advocates for adherence to anti-discrimination laws and diversity related issues. Within the past year, the HRC has spent significant time reviewing and editing its charter.

Theo Cramer led the discussion on the significant activities of the HRC over the past year. He cited involvement in the planning of the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr breakfast held at St. Mary's College, coordination of the Study Circles dialogues on race relations, outreach to the State HRC and local Mediation Center to discuss collaborative efforts and the HRC's annual awards breakfast recognizing individuals in the community. In addition to all these efforts, HRC activities for this year will include re-establishing the awards breakfast, coordinating presentations to the County Commissioners for various national designation months and hosting a human relations symposium to network with other local organizations whose missions are human/civil rights oriented. Members were asked to think about which activities they'd like to work on.

Elections were held resulting in J. Hanley as Chair and T. Cramer as Vice-Chair.

Craig Buist commented that the HRC minutes aren't current on the County Government website and this gives the public the impression the group isn't active. C. Brown agreed to contact the County's IT Department to rectify that matter.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cynthia Brown