

MINUTES OF MURRAY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
August 12, 2013
5:00 P.M.

The Murray Human Rights Commission met in regular session on Monday, August 12, at 5:00 p.m. in City Hall's Council Chambers of City Hall with Chair Jody Cofer Randall presiding.

Members Present: Chair Jody Cofer Randall, Linda Cherry, Paula Compton, Dr. Peggy Pittman-Munke, Connie Payne, Jane Shoemaker, Tung Dinh

Members Absent: Dr. Brian Clardy

Staff Present: Mayor Bill Wells, Cathy Morris, June Batts

Others in Attendance: Dr. Allan Beane, Bully Free Systems, LLC.; John Hopkins, Cheri Theatres; Jim Foster, Culver's; Cami Duffy, Executive Director, Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, Murray State University; Keith Travis, Murray Calloway County Hospital; Lisa Satterwhite, Murray Calloway County Chamber of Commerce, Edward Marlowe, *Murray Ledger and Times*

Chair Cofer Randall welcomed members and the meeting began at 5:00 p.m.

Chair Cofer Randall recognized Dr. Allan Beane, who gave a presentation on statistics, facts, and other information regarding bullying in schools and the workplace.

After the presentation, invited guests introduced themselves to Commission members.

Jody Cofer Randall asked business leaders about their thoughts on the information presented by Dr. Beane. Business leaders discussed work related issues as they pertained to bullying including turnover, health consequences, problems between employees (relationships), supervisor training (online and in-house), open door policies, protected classes, situational specific responses, and the importance of restoring individual employees who have been bullied.

Chair Cofer Randall asked if members/guests thought bullying had become more prevalent or if awareness had increased. Commission members and business leaders discussed the prevalence of bullying, the causes of the behavior, including the impulsivity of children, lack of parental discipline, aggression in the home, lack of consciousness of bullying's impact, the internet as a proponent, and the anonymity of some internet forums.

Members and guests discussed business related issues including: policy as a first start, but not the answer; enforcement, consequences, setting standards, dealing with abusive customers.

Chair Cofer Randall asked what the Commission could do for the business community to empower businesses to respond and be proactive with this issue. Members and guests discussed stickers to advertise Bully Free environment/business. Keith Travis stated that given it takes seven years to effect a change in culture, a training program must be developed that started with education and laying out the basic premises.

Mr. Foster stated that engagement would be the biggest challenge, especially if the business was not centered in Murray.

Members and guests discussed a training component organized through the City by the Commission to facilitate seminars or training for supervisors of local businesses to certify the business as bully free. The HRC would work with Dr. Beane to develop a program to “train the trainers” which would provide ongoing maintenance to businesses in order to keep the certification.

Chair Cofer Randall stated that October was National Bully Prevention Month and that would be a good time to launch the training component of the program. Chair Cofer Randall stated that business sponsored activities could include billboards, digital message boards, books in waiting rooms, and informational pamphlets for businesses. Mr. Travis stated that the Character Counts program may be tied in with the HRC initiative.

Mayor Wells stated that Commission members were given a copy of City’s workplace bullying policy in draft form and recognized Cathy Morris. Ms. Morris stated that a webinar on bullying in the workplace would be aired on Aug 20 at 11:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers. Mayor Wells stated that all Commission members and citizens of Murray were invited to attend the webinar.

Old business:

The Minutes of July 8, 2013 were presented for approval. Dr. Munke motioned to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Ms. Shoemaker. All members present were in favor of the motion.

Chair Cofer Randall stated that a copy of letter for faith-based leaders would go out in next few days, and Dr. Beane and Dr. Clardy would be involved in speaking to the group at the next HRC meeting in September.

He also stated that he and Ms. Cherry continue work with MSU athletes, coaches, and directors to become involved with campaign. Chair Cofer Randall stated that he and Ms. Cherry met with the associate athletics director about press releases, videos, images on screens at ball games and reading programs. He stated that Athletic Director, Mr. Ward was very supportive, and they would like to meet with athletic staff on the 26th to get bulleted list of action points.

Dr. Beane asked if there were any updates on the publishing of the newspaper articles he submitted to the Commission. Mayor Wells stated that he spoke with Ms. Rouse about the articles, and would reiterate the importance of publication on Thursday at Rotary. He also said that the support provided by the Murray Ledger and times was much appreciated.

Chair Cofer Randall stated that there was nothing new to report regarding Human Rights Ordinance.

New business: Dr. Pittman-Munke gave brief presentation on her attendance of the National Association of Human Rights Workers Midwest Regional Conference, titled *Contemporary Human and Civil Rights Struggles*, hosted by the Cincinnati Human Rights Commission. She stated that although turnout was low, the Kentucky Human Rights Commission was out in force. She stated that no other local commissions had taken bullying on, but were more concerned with racial discrimination. She reported on sessions regarding Fair housing/Housing discrimination, the Avondale Youth Council, and Disability Rights. She stated that the conference as a whole was interesting and potentially useful in terms of contacts.

Chair Cofer Randall stated that the next HRC meeting was scheduled for September 9th.

Mayor Wells asked if an earlier time would be convenient for HRC members. He stated that in October seven members would need to be reappointed, with the exception of Jane Shoemaker whose term will expire in November. Members discussed meeting at 4:00 p.m. **Ms. Shoemaker moved** to change the meeting time, **seconded by Ms. Payne**. Chair Cofer Randall called for a voice vote, in which all members present were in favor of the motion. Chair Cofer Randall stated that he would notify Dr. Clardy of the time change.

Ms. Shoemaker motioned to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Cherry. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.