

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

60-

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT: July 1, 1996 - January 31, 1997

FILED WITH CITY COUNCIL

Study Session 3-26-97

MISSION STATEMENT:

THE MISSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF PALM SPRINGS IS TO PROMOTE IMPROVED HUMAN RELATIONS, CIVIL PEACE, INTERGROUP UNDERSTANDING AND THE FULL ACCEPTANCE, RESPECT AND PARTICIPATION OF ALL PERSONS IN ALL ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LIFE SO THAT WE WILL BE EQUAL IN THE EYES OF EACH OTHER.

WORK COMPLETED:

Organizational issues:

- Rewrote the Rules of Procedures (copy attached)
- Appointed representative from Palm Springs High School to be a part of the Commission
- Established 8 working committees to better serve the community as follows:
 - Commission Development/Mediation
 - Community Relations/Budget/Personnel
 - Youth/Education
 - Gay/Lesbian/Women
 - African-American/Asian-Pacific
 - Latino/Native-American
 - Seniors/Disabilities/Veterans
 - Religious/Business/Homeless/Housing/Employment

Mediation:

- Presently working with Police Department to resolve administrative-officer issues
- Seven Discrimination Notices received within this 6 month period. Two of these have gone to mediation.

Community Activities:

- Participated in the Palm Springs Lesbian & Gay Pride '96 Parade and Fair and presentation of Proclamation from the Mayor's office
- Martin Luther King Commemoration Day participation on Jan. 19, 1997
- Assisted the Palm Springs Police Department in updating their current "Sexual Harassment" brochure
- Continued regular meetings with the Gateway Community

Education:

- Attendance at the CAHRO (California Association of Human Relations Organizations) conference Sept. 25 - 27, 1996, in Los Angeles
- Forum held on October 29, 1996 entitled "The Answer Is.....Help our Senior Citizens"
- Forum held in November 1996 entitled "Coming together for the Community". This forum was represented by many different agencies who contributed valuable information on the current housing laws.

WORK PLAN:

- Forum on "AIDS & the Minority Church" to be held on April 11 at Palm Springs High School
- Schedule mediation training for commissioners
- Task Force to present to the City Council its results from a recent survey as well as a 5 year plan
- Obtain better communication within the City Government structure
- Presently participating in the ongoing discussions of the Palm Springs High School Intergroup Relations Study Committee with regard to the 1996 incidents at the High School
- Presently working with the Fire Department to include the Human Rights Commission in the SEMS Multihazard Functional Plan being formulated by Blake Goetz
- Gay/Lesbian Committee is presently working with P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians) in support of adding to the high school's current policy to recognize sexual orientation as a minority
- Community Relations/Budget/Personnel Committee is currently working to establish minority statistics for City personnel
- Establishing leadership within various minor communities such as Latino, Native-American and Asian-Pacific
- Homeless/Housing Committee is organizing a meeting with heads of departments and leaders of the community to discuss the new Welfare Reform Bill
- Establish meeting with the Coachella Valley Ministerial Society
- Try to establish TV exposure for education city wide
- Memorandums of Understanding with community groups
- Committee expansion to include as many groups as possible within the City
- Staff development on improving communications in tense and difficult situations
- Moving the commission meetings to Palm Springs High School
- Work with the City Manager on the role of the Human Rights Commission within the City government structure and the commissions's location.
- Develop Webb site page