

**West Lafayette Human Relations Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**

7:00, February 10, 2009

West Lafayette City Hall

**Members Present:** Vidhya Iyer (Chair), Susan Thomas (Vice Chair), Charlie Shook (Secretary), Tom Logan (Attorney), Bob Reiling (Attorney), Zarjon Baha, Asako Iikubo, Kim Reisman, David Rosenthal and Phil Subeck

**Members Absent:** Angelica Duran,

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Iyer at 7:00. She determined that a quorum was present.

The minutes from the November 12, 2008 meeting were presented for approval. Mr. Shook moved that the minutes be approved. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**Continuing Business:**

**Survey:** Mr. Shook reported on the progress of the survey of West Lafayette residents that will be conducted early in 2009. The survey will be randomly distributed to 2,500 households in West Lafayette in English and Spanish and will be placed on the City of West Lafayette web site. He also presented a revised budget of \$3,636, which includes printing and mailing the survey and cover letter in two languages, a follow up postcard in one language (English) and the return postage for approximately 500 survey responses. Preparing the survey for mailing will be done with volunteer labor. Ms. Reisman moved recommending the amended budget to the Mayor for approval. Mr. Baha seconded. The motion was approved.

**Triple XXX Complaint:** Ms. Reisman and Mr. Baha performed the investigation of the complaint. Ms. Reisman gave an overview of the investigation process: they reviewed the complaint and information presented, interviewed the individuals involved and witnesses to the event and visited the location. They presented their findings in a formal report and reached the conclusion there was no probable cause that a violation of the West Lafayette Human Relations Ordinance occurred.

Ms. Reisman recommended that a copy of the investigation report be delivered to the Complainant and the Respondent before it is released to the public. Ms. Thomas moved that 1) the Commission accept the findings of the investigation report, 2) a copy of the investigation report be mailed to the complainant and the respondent and 3) one day after the reports are mailed to the complainant and respondent, the investigation report be released to the public. Mr. Rosenthal seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Diversity Training: Ms. Iyer reported that a Diversity Training seminar was delivered to approximately 30 members of the Lafayette Regional Association of Realtors on February 4, 2009 by the WL Human Relations Commission and the Purdue Housing and Food Services Division. All the parties involved with the program indicated that it met all expectations. Ms. Iyer indicated that John Metzinger asked if we can collaborate with the Tippecanoe and Lafayette HRC's in delivering training to a more broad based audience. Ms. Iyer will pursue the idea with John.

Facebook: There is perceived value in having a WLHRC Facebook page to promote the Commission's efforts and mission. Mr. Rosenthal and Mr. Subeck will meet and make recommendations to the Commission.

Banners: Ms. Iyer reported that the WLHRC banners are up on Salisbury and Grant Streets.

Possible Complaint: Ms. Iyer spoke to a party involved in an issue that may lead to a complaint. She directed the party to the forms online. At the time of the meeting, a complaint has not been submitted.

Complaint Observations: Ms. Iyer observed that many of the possible complainants that she speaks to have issues that do not fall within the scope of the Human Relations Ordinance or could be solved peacefully with proper communication before the struggle reaches the point of filing a complaint. Mr. Subeck suggested the Commission consider performing some level of mediation service prior to the investigation portion of a complaint. Ms. Reisman supported Mr. Subeck's suggestion, stating the Commission needs a process within the ordinance that allows dispute mediation prior to filing a complaint instead of after finding probable cause.

Mr. Logan expressed concern about mediation falling outside of the scope of the HRC's authorities. Mr. Baha and Ms. Reisman will meet with Mr. Logan to discuss creating language for an amendment to the Ordinance that will allow for mediation prior to an investigation.

Website: A Communication class at Purdue University reviewed the HRC content on the City of West Lafayette website. The class noted that 1) the portion of the website dedicated to the HRC was not visually appealing, 2) the meeting dates were no longer current, 3) HRC minutes are not posted on the website, 4) although providing the complaint forms online is positive, the complaint process is hard to follow and they suggested including a flow chart and 5) the jurisdictional issues are difficult to follow and suggested a clearing house be established between all three local municipal HRC so that there is one location to file a complaint.

Mr. Baha shared that many Purdue classes are looking for website consultation projects and they may be able to offer assistance. Ms. Iyer said the City has already hired a web consultant to review the entire website.

It was also noted that the Ordinance, the complaint process and the complaint forms are only presented in English and Spanish. Mr. Baha and Ms. Iikubo will do some research to determine what resources are available to translate the pertinent information into some of the more common languages used in our community, beyond English and Spanish.

It was also noted that a jurisdictional map needed to be included in the HRC portion of the West Lafayette website. Mr. Reiling suggested the Tippecanoe Board of Elections will have a map that contains the official city boundaries.

Chairperson: At the November, 2008 meeting, Mr. Shook was elected chairperson of the Commission, pending completion of the investigation of the Triple XXX complaint. At the close of the February 10, 2009 meeting, Mr. Shook will assume the duties of the chairperson. Mr. Subeck, on behalf of the WLHRC, thanked Ms. Iyer for her effective and aggressive leadership. Mr. Shook moved that Mr. Rosenthal be appointed Secretary. Mr. Baha seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**New Business:**

Nominating Committee: Ms. Iyer accepted Mr. Shook's request to chair the Nominating Committee. She will appoint additional members prior to the next meeting

Globalfest: Ms. Iikubo volunteered to chair the Globalfest Committee. Her offer was quickly accepted by the Commission.

**Adjournment:**

Ms. Reisman moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:25. Mr. Subeck seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Shook, Secretary.