



## Meeting Record

<b>Human Rights Board (HRB)</b>	<b>Date: January 11, 2016</b> <b>Call to Order: 4:14 PM</b>
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### Attendees

Judith Ann	Maria Barth (phone)	Jason B. Blank
Miya Burt-Stewart (phone)	Fayola Delica	Marta Estevez
Ellen Feiler	S.F. Makalani-MaHee	Michael Rajner
Phyllis Shaw	Ben Sorensen	
	Barbara Ann McGovern, Board Coordinator	Adam Katzman, Asst. Cty. Atty.

### Members Absent

Rob Gillette	Greg Milford	Jose Morera
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### Key Decisions

- 1/11/16 Agenda adopted; 11/19/15 Revised Meeting Minutes approved.
- 2016 Newly Elected Board Officers Take Oath of Office

### Action Items

	Description	Resource	Status
1.	Consider homelessness as a protected category in the Human Rights Act. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board was requested to draft questions and name stakeholders who will provide information in preparation for a special meeting on this matter.</li> <li>• Chair to communicate with stakeholders and invite them to a meeting.</li> </ul>	Board members/Chair	In progress
2.	Bylaws revisions	Ad hoc Bylaws Committee	In progress
3.	Request News Release on Domestic Partnership Amendments	Ms. McGovern and Public Communications	In progress
4.	Request to Records, Taxes and Treasury for update of Domestic Partnership website	Ms. McGovern	In progress
5.	Consider if Community Champions Award should be an annual event	Outreach Committee	In progress
6.	Prepare a News Release on the Broward County Inside Out Photo Project highlight the Human Rights Act diversity	Outreach Committee	In progress
7.	Presentation on annual Human Rights Section budget for 4/11/16, meeting	OIAPS	In progress
8.	Speaking points for members presentations at public venue or to media	Outreach Committee	In progress
9.	Recommendation on hosting public forums	Outreach Committee	In progress

### Discussion Points

▪ **REVISIONS TO 11/19/15 MEETING MINUTES:**

- 1) Election of Officers, *Note:* Add "...to which the Board agreed."
- 2) Chair's Report: Add "The remainder of the Chair's report was dispensed with in the interest of time."

▪ **PUBLIC INPUT:**

Jeff Weinberger, October 22<sup>nd</sup> Alliance to End Homelessness, discussed a proposed amendment to the Broward County Human Rights Act to include homeless individuals as a protected category. Professor Marc-Tizoc González, St. Thomas University School of Law, discussed his concerns relative to the anti-food sharing ordinances. He urged the reporting of any crimes directed against homeless individuals as state law does not provide such a mandate. Pastor Craig Watts of Royal Palm Christian Church stated that it is self-evident that the laws that have been instituted in Fort Lauderdale and elsewhere are discriminatory by focusing on a class of people and punishing them for behaviors that others are allowed to practice, for example food sharing: people picnic in public places and there is no restriction on who is invited to attend.

Ms. Feiler commented that the anti-food sharing ordinance is directed at mass food feeding that is not licensed, you have no idea where the food is prepared and stored. If people become ill, it becomes a problem. Mr. Sorensen asked which poses the most significant threat or under which there is the greatest discrimination: employment, public accommodation or housing. Mr. Weinberger responded that he would not single one out as more important than the rest. Mr. Sorensen asked for the definition of homelessness. Mr. Weinberger responded, a person with no residence or roof over their head that they can call their own in which they are autonomous.

Mr. Rajner advised that the HRB can only make recommendations to the Commissioners as the Board does not have the power to revise the Human Rights Act. The Board was requested to draft questions and name stakeholders they wish to have provide information in preparation for a special meeting on this matter.

**MOTION** by Ms. Shaw for consent to permit the Chair to send communications to various stakeholders as we identify them and invite them to a special meeting on this issue.

Seconded by Ms. Feiler. *Passed Unanimously.*

▪ **LITIGATION REPORT:** No update.

▪ **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

It is a challenge to establish quorum and commence the meeting as scheduled. There are some items that need to be cleaned up in the Bylaws, for example: an agenda template and verbiage on meeting cancelled after 20 minutes if quorum not established. The ad hoc committee: Ms. Delica, Mr. Blank, Mr. Makalani-MaHee, Ms. Estevez, Mr. Sorensen and Mr. Rajner.

▪ **HUMAN RIGHTS SECTION REPORT:**

Mr. Cohen advised that the section was involved in a lot of outreach for the last several months: October, Southern Comfort Conference; November, a major outreach activity at the *Wings and Wheels* event at the North Perry Airport; compliance trainings and outreach to housing providers in Fort Lauderdale and south Broward County, and La Mer which is a large condominium complex in Hallandale. Currently, the section has 67 act only cases, primarily employment; Worksharing Agreement with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and we are at the halfway point in the fiscal year and have closed approximately 34 housing cases.

Mr. Sorensen requested accompanying Mr. Cohen on some housing outreach activities. Mr. Cohen will provide notice of his upcoming activities to allow Board members to accompany him.

Mr. Blank asked if there was a need for additional investigators to handle the current caseload and would Mr. Cohen recommend the HRB to so recommend to the County Commission. Mr. Cohen responded that they always need more bodies, but must work within the current budget.

Mr. Cohen stated the section would like to have some presence at a Martin Luther King Day event and will provide

promotional items for Board members attending events throughout the county.

• **NEW BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS**

**B. Domestic Partnership Act – Recommendation for County to Issue Communication Promoting the Amended Act for Valentine’s Day:** Questions from the community: Is there an Act after marriage and what does an individual have to do to add burial rights. Suggestion for the Office of Public Communications to post a News Release for Valentine’s Day reminding people of the Domestic Partnership Act.

**MOTION** by Ms. Shaw for the Office of Public Communications to issue a News Release reminding people of the Domestic Partnership Act amendments and include a reference to Valentine’s Day and the fact that many people enter a domestic partnership for a number of reasons and many couples become engaged on Valentine’s Day. Also, to add burial rights for those currently in a domestic partnership relationship, they must complete another Domestic Partnership application. Seconded by Mr. Blank. *Passed Unanimously.*

**MOTION** by Ms. Feiler for Records, Taxes and Treasury to update the Domestic Partnership website with a box to highlight the recent amendments to the Act and update the Domestic Partnership Affidavit to include the burial rights benefit. Seconded by Ms. Shaw. *Passed Unanimously.*

*Note: Include link to Domestic Partnership Affidavit page.*

**E. HRB Community Champions Award: Should this be an annual event.**

Mr. Rajner stated it was very time consuming. Ms. Delica stated it is important to highlight the work people are doing in the community. Mr. Sorensen stated he likes the idea of an annual award which is good visibility. The Outreach Committee will review this matter and submit a proposal to the Board.

**C. Follow-up Discussion: Inside Out Championing Human Rights Project**

The website has not been updated with the project. Mr. Rajner suggested the Outreach Committee prepare a News Release around the project to highlight the Human Rights Act and the diversity it represents. The Outreach Committee will prepare a draft News Release.

**A. Identify Goals for 2016**

Mr. Rajner stated that the Board should focus on the powers of the HRB and the mission. For example, the Board has input on the budget and when the Human Rights Section budget comes up, to have the section provide the HRB with a budget presentation on what budget is submitted so the Board can provide recommendations. Mr. Blank requested a preliminary understanding of last year’s budget and how it worked out. The Board would like this information for the April 11, 2016, Board meeting. Mr. Blank suggested the investigators attend so they can discuss their jobs and what they need more help with. The HRB can then find some target points for Board recommendations to the County Commission.

Mr. Rajner requested the Board to send questions they may have on this matter to Ms. McGovern.

Communications and Outreach: Mr. Rajner stated that the public does not know about the Human Rights Board. He stated the Board has to meet more frequently. Mr. Blank responded, you think more people will come to more meetings. Mr. Rajner suggested workshops and public hearings. Mr. Katzman to provide an opinion on whether a quorum is required for a workshop or public hearing. Mr. Blank stated that rather than increasing the number of meetings to schedule a special meeting to address a specific issue.

Ms. Feiler stated that every Board member that will be presenting to the public needs to be trained to provide a consistent message to the community. She noted that only one member on the Board should be speaking to the media. Mr. Rajner suggested the Outreach Committee come up with talking points. Mr. Blank stated that the Board should be working with the Office of Public Communications for a public speaking outline. Mr.

Rajner asked if the Outreach Committee should begin the conversation and provide the recommendations to the Board. The Board concurred. Mr. Rajner is the Chair of the Outreach Committee and Ms. Feiler, Vice Chair.

**D. Hosting Public Hearings as part of 2016 Broward County Human Rights Day**

Mr. Rajner suggested, instead of public hearings, hosting meetings for specific stakeholder groups. For example, meet with the business community and invite the Chambers and any business owners for a presentation on the Human Rights Act and have them provide their comments. Mr. Rajner also suggested meetings with lawyer groups and meetings with social services agencies. Ms. Feiler advised that conducting this outreach to stakeholders throughout the county will result in a backflow of voluminous complaints to the Human Rights Section. Ms. Feiler noted the County could be divided up into six sections and have Board members contact stakeholders in each. Ms. Shaw advised the importance of meeting with the municipalities. Mr. Cohen will assist in this outreach. Mr. Rajner advised he will schedule an appointment with Commissioner Bogen to request an appointment from a representative on the League of Cities board.

Alternatively, Mr. Rajner suggested instead of hosting stakeholder groups to host two public forums in central east and central west venues; utilize the *Advantage Marketing Program* for funding for food; use a public building that would not charge a fee. The Outreach Committee will provide a recommendation to the Board on this matter.

**F. Discuss and Approve 2016 Meeting Calendar and Meeting Time**

**MOTION** by Ms. Shaw to reschedule the final quarterly meeting to November 14, 2016.  
Seconded by Ms. Ann. Voice Vote: 10 – Yes; 1 – No.

The meeting time will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/CONCERNS/REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Delica noted that January 11, 2016, is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

Tuesday, February 16, 2016, LGBT Visitor Center, Discussion on Discrimination. Monday, January 18, 2016, King Holiday Celebration, Fort Lauderdale.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6 PM.

*The next scheduled Board meeting will convene:*

**Monday, April 11, 2016, 4 PM, Governmental Center, Room 301.**

***These minutes are summarized from the recorded compact disk of the Human Rights Board Meeting. If any Board Member or other party would like more detailed information about the contents of these summarized minutes, the compact disk will be available by contacting the Human Rights Section at 954-357-7800.***