



# LANE COUNTY

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W.G.A.

## AGENDA COVER MEMORANDUM

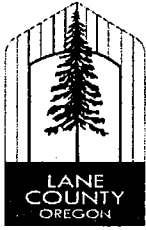
**AGENDA DATE:** March 15, 2006

**PRESENTED TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**PRESENTED BY:** Heidi Schulz, Chair of the Lane County Human Rights Advisory Committee (LCHRAC)  
Greta Utecht, Staff Liaison to the LCHRAC

**AGENDA TITLE:** **IN THE MATTER OF PRESENTING THE 2005 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LANE COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The 2005 Annual Report of the Lane County Human Rights Committee is attached for the Board's review and discussion. In addition, the committee has identified an action plan to implement their top priorities.



## **LANE COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2005 Annual Report to the Board of County Commissioners**

### **Networking and Outreach**

The LCHRAC continued to partnership with Community Mediation Services (CMS), who is under contract to receive and manage human rights complaints for Lane County. Lane County and the City of Springfield have continued with the contract initiated in 2004, to both respond to and compile statistics on human rights complaints in Lane County. Attachment A is CMS's 2005 annual report. The 'new' LCHRAC has identified the marketing of the CMS human rights complaint hotline as a primary goal for 2006. Strategies for achieving awareness of the hotline include:

- Public Service Announcements
- Phonebook listing
- HRAC Brochure Distribution
- Bus Ads (interior, cost effective)

Networking efforts in 2005 continued with the Health & Human Services Advisory Committee in Cottage Grove, OR. The HHSA Committee has provided ongoing, monthly input to the LCHRAC from the Cottage Grove Community, much of which concerns human rights. Networking has also continued throughout the year with the Eugene Human Rights Commission, the Sheriff's Office & the City of Springfield, with liaisons from each respective organization attending the majority of LCHRAC meetings on a monthly basis.

### **Sponsorships, Promotions and Events**

The LCHRAC promoted the "Amigos Multicultural Services Center" with guest speakers Viviana Martinez and Giannina Rotondo and we developed a community outreach strategy for connecting with rural communities in Lane County. Allies and points of contact have been established for a visit to Oakridge in 2006. Other communities identified for outreach efforts in 2006 include Springfield and Veneta.

Members attended the Juneteenth Celebration, which was sponsored in part by the LCHRAC. The family BBQ celebration at Alton Baker Park was a success and a very important event in the scope of human rights, particularly civil rights. The Committee again decided to approve funding for the African-American Cultural, Technological & Scientific Olympics competitions. Other approved funding requests included the 2006 NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner and the Martin Luther King Celebration (ongoing).

## **Lane County Activities & Relationships**

The Lane County Diversity Action Plan was reviewed by the committee at multiple meetings. Many suggestions were made for improvement of the plan and those suggestions were taken into consideration and acted upon.

The Sheriff's Office (SO) initiated a more focused effort towards recruitment of minorities and promoting diversity within the department and reported back to the LCHRAC on several occasions, outlining this effort, the intended outcomes and the results to date. This effort resulted at least in part due to the repeated requests made by the LCHRAC.

Committee member attendance issues were also addressed. In the event that a member is absent without excuse for two consecutive meetings, the Committee may declare the office of such absent Committee member to be vacant. The Committee had to act upon this by-law in 2005 as part of the process of moving forward with a viable membership.

In looking at other ways to make the committee more stable, the members reviewed suggestions for HRAC focus areas made by each County Commissioner and presented by Bobby Green.

During an all day work session/retreat held on Saturday December 3 at the Morse Ranch, ten new members along with two incumbent members identified priorities and had an opportunity to get to know one another. The retreat was a turning point for the committee, as well as a tremendous success that culminated after a nearly year long effort of recruiting and redefining committee structure. We move forward into 2006 from a place of strength, direction and resolve. This resolve is evidenced by the commitment which has already been exhibited by the new membership and the strong leadership in place, provided by Heidi Schultz (committee Chair) and Aaron Boyce (Vice-Chair).

With the limited staff support that the LCHRAC currently has, the committee has determined that the best course of action for 2006 is to narrow our goals down to several key areas, with benchmarks established that can be realistically accomplished. An action plan was developed and is included in Attachment B.

### **Other Activities:**

Members attended the Cesar Chavez Celebration in April, participated in the April 16<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Support System Training, and Dr. Edwin Nichols' presentation on Cultural Competency in September.

Thanks go to Commissioner Bobby Green for his work throughout 2005 in the effort to reorganize the committee, recruit new members and begin development of our 2006 Work Plan.

# CMS Human Rights Program for the Lane County Human Rights Advisory Committee

**Annual Narrative Report for the second year, 2005**

**By Ted Lewis, Community Mediation Services**

**Introduction.** In this second year of operation, Community Mediation Services (CMS) provided all follow-up services for incoming HR complaint calls dealing with Lane County and Springfield. This new service has not only relieved the time and energies otherwise spent in the respective county or city agencies, but has allowed richer opportunities for claimants to receive (as the new brochure indicates) 1) listening services, 2) referral services, and 3) mediation services.

**Challenges.** Compared to the 24 cases handled in 2004, (most of which were protected-class discriminatory cases), 2005 only saw 8 cases, most of which were not protected-class cases. (Refer to the spreadsheet with case log.) The primary explanation for the drop of cases is the lack of adequate publicity surrounding the service and its phone number. In part, the demise of the advisory council in the first half of the year may provide an indicator of the absence of efforts given to promotional activity. From the standpoint of the county and city agencies, the service remains to have value since time-consuming cases can be routed elsewhere, and thus CMS meets the needs of those agencies. But if the advisory council wishes for the service to more broadly meet the needs of citizens in Lane County and Springfield, it will have to take a proactive approach toward making this service known.

**Trends?** No specific trends stand out as one reviews the spreadsheet. It is difficult to track trends, especially with respect to locations, if there is not a large quantity of cases to draw from. One future project would be to combine all human rights related statistics for a year and pool them into a single set of outcome data. But who would do this? It is quite clear that numerous city and county agencies collect discrimination-related data, but do not combine this data. What is coming through CMS is only a very small fraction of annual cases involving discrimination.

**Referral Sources.** It is evident from the 8 cases this year (and the 24 from last year) that claimants are receiving the phone number through various local agencies such as

the ACLU and the Eugene HRC. It is worth noting that claimants in the rural towns of Lane County sought out various Eugene-based agencies and thereby received the new phone number. The future hope would be that people in Lane County rural areas would have more local resources for calling the 868-0700 number.

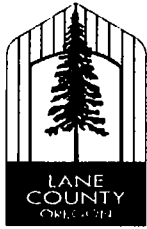
**Mediation.** As noted in last year's report, the cases that were most suitable for mediation were generally those which did not involve a straight-forward discriminatory action. In other words, they were not pure protected-class cases, but involved other factors involving dispute and conflict. These cases which were best suited for mediation (and had successful mediation results) involved dynamics where both sides had a story to tell, and both sides needed to listen to each other and understand things better.

Most cases that have come to CMS through the HR Program are a hybrid of two or three of the following elements: 1) discrimination, 2) two-way disputation, and 3) victimization.

Cases that do involve explicit discrimination (that is, wrongdoing, whether intended or unintended) have been less likely to go to mediation for several reasons. The claimant is not always that eager to meet with the accused, given the circumstances of power imbalance. Thus, they seek advocacy and empowerment, sometimes through litigation. Also, the accused party is in an ambiguous situation. On one level, he or she has no incentive to mediate because there is no criminal charge involved, and yet on another level they do have incentive for alternative resolution options because of the potential for a law suit against them. They also may be embarrassed if invited to resolve such a situation through dialogue processes. Finally, they have no precedent for meeting with a party that has experienced discrimination.

While CMS has first-hand experience with regular dispute-focused mediation as well as with harm-focused mediation with victims and offenders, it recognizes that HR cases involving harmful discrimination do not fit easily into either model of mediation. More work needs to be done to tailor a mediation process to HR cases, and this includes the preparation work to provide incentives for both sides.

**The Future.** CMS has renewed its contract for 2006 with Lane County and Springfield to continue as it has done over the first two years. CMS would like to continue offering mediation services for any and all cases where the bridge-building of good communication can bring resolution to all involved; however, CMS increasingly recognizes that we do not have the capacity to offer advocacy-oriented services to claimants with a complaint. It is hoped that in the future, there can be greater collaboration with the Eugene Human Rights Commission, whereby such an agency can handle all the advocacy and referral type services throughout Lane County, and when needed, CMS can handle mediation services throughout the county, including all cases within the jurisdictions of Eugene and Springfield. In this way, both agencies can primarily do what they do best, while working in partnership.



## **LANE COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2006 ACTION PLAN**

### ***EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, AND BE A VOICE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN LANE COUNTY***

#### **Education/Outreach**

- Distribute HRAC Brochure
- Table at community events
- Activate Hotline with PSA publicity
- Interface with other agencies
  - Develop Human rights curriculum to be used by area educators.
  - Establish proactive training and education opportunities for:
    - Community organizations
    - Schools
    - Citizen groups taskforce
  - Create a business initiative to identify and assist businesses in developing of human rights plans.
  - Foster the development of local and rural human rights organizations to meet the needs of individual communities.
  - Identify and attend county events pertaining to human rights.
  - Be visible and approachable as human rights allies

#### **Rural Needs Assessment/Action**

- Hold 3-5 rural meetings for needs assessment
- Develop action plan based on information gleaned from meetings

#### **Allies/Resources!**

- Establish contacts throughout the county
- Establish contacts in a variety of sub-cultures/populations
- Identify and list community resources supporting human rights
- Interface with Eugene HRC (joint meeting, liaison to their meeting?)

### **BCC Relations**

- Have regular HRAC presence at BCC meetings
- Give quarterly HRAC report to BCC in writing and in person

### **Committee Development**

- Develop a systematic training procedure for new members (e.g. committee history, purpose, charge, work plan, strategic directions, etc.).
- Budget Development
  - Create a comprehensive budget plan
  - Provide annual development benchmarks.
  - Identify income sources
    - Fundraising
    - Grant writing
    - County general fund increases
  - Explore staffing possibilities
    - Internships (UO P.P.P.M. and Political Science departments)
    - Employment opportunities
- Establish a Culture of Accountability
  - Internal accountability
    - Identify industry best-practices.
    - Provide evidence based practice to demonstrate effectiveness of committee efforts.
  - Community accountability
    - Design highly visible meetings that are attended by citizens.
    - Processes are transparent and readily available to communities.
    - Maintain a visible presence in public media.

## CMS Human Rights Case Log for Lane County 2005

Case #	Open Date	Close Date	Bias Type	Complaint Type	Incident Type	Location	Outcome Type	Resolution Status
1	Mar. 1, 2005	Jul. 5, 2005	Criminal Background	Law Enforcement (County Sheriff)	Unfair Treatment	Florence	Referral	No Resolution
2	Mar. 3, 2005	Jun. 11, 2005	Criminal Background	School (High)	Unfair Treatment	Cottage Grove	Referral	Partial Resolution
3	Mar. 2, 2005	5-May-05	Racial (?)	School (High)	Unfair Policy/Treated Unequally	Springfield	Referral	No Resolution
4	Mar. 28, 2005	5-Jul-05	Misidentified suspect	Law Enforcement (County Sheriff)	Treated Roughly/ unfairly	Swiss Home (County)	Referral	With Resolution
5	Jul. 6, 2005	Jul. 25, 2005	Racial	Workplace (County Fair)	Treated Unequally	Lane County	Shuttle Mediation	With Resolution
6	Sep. 12, 2005	Dec. 29, 2005	Racial	Housing / Police	Intimidation / Treated unequally	Springfield	Referral	Partial Resolution
7	Oct. 17, 2005	Dec. 13, 2005	Learning Disability	School (High)	Restricted services	Cottage Grove	Referral	With Resolution
8	Oct. 10, 2005	Dec. 5, 2005	Physical Disability*	School (LCC)	Misleading information	Lane County	Shuttle Mediation	Partial Resolution
			Legitimate Protected Class cases:		Referral Sources for 2005 Cases:		Clients Served: 15	
			#5 and #6		ACLU – 3			
					Eugene HRC – 1			
			*(claimant said this was secondary to the dispute)	Springfield Cases = #3 and #6	CMS – 1		Prepared by Ted	Lewis of CMS-1/06
					Govt. Official – 1		868-0700	344-5366
					County Court – 1			