

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 24, 1967

Members of the Community Relations Commission met on Friday, February 24, 1967, at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall. The following members were present:

Mr. Irving Kaler, Chairman  
Rev. Samuel Williams, First Vice Chairman  
Miss Helen Bullard, Second Vice Chairman  
Mrs. Fred Patterson, Secretary  
Mrs. Eliza Paschall, Executive Director

Mrs. Sara Baker  
Mr. Hamilton Douglas, Jr.  
Rev. Joseph L. Griggs  
Mr. Al Kuettnner  
Mr. Rolland Maxwell  
Rabbi Jacob M. Rothschild  
Mr. M. O. "Buzz" Ryan  
Mrs. Mary Stevens

The Chairman called the meeting to order. He commented on the Public Hearing of the night before and expressed his pleasure in the interest that was shown by the number of groups present, 35 instead of the expected 20, and also his regret that time did not permit hearing from all of them.

The Chairman then introduced representatives from three organizations who were not able to speak at the Public Hearing. They were Mr. W. Wrenns of Equal Health Opportunity, Rev. John Morris of the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, and Mr. Ralph McCrotsky of Planned Parenthood Association. They were given three minutes to speak.

Mr. W. Wrenns: Mr. Wrenns serves Region IV of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U. S. Public Service, including South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and Tennessee. He gave a brief description of his duties then he told the Commission what he thought it could do to help: Divide into committees and conduct a study of the Health, Education, and Welfare programs to see if they are complying with the rules. Miss Bullard asked if they deal with Government Agencies, he said yes, federal, state, and local. He would like to receive a copy of what the Commission is doing every thirty days. He expressed his support and interest in the program.

Mr. Ralph McCrotsky: Mr. McCrotsky gave a brief situation report of PPA. It came into being January 1, 1965. Its first year was dealing with getting organized for developing resources, for family planning, and birth control. It worked with various

neighborhoods in the community and with the local BOA. The first family planning center was at the Bethlehem Center, January 6, 1966, with three additional ones since then serving approximately 80 patients per month. The Pap test for cancer is given each patient (plus a general physical examination) and the PPA has been shocked at the high incidence of cancer among their clients revealed by the Pap tests. Mr. McCretsky then reported on a matter of concern to him as a citizen, emphasizing that he was not speaking for the PPA. This is the lack of organization through which health services can be coordinated. There is no automatic, "built-in" coordination between the Fulton County Health Services and Grady services. Cooperation depends upon the personal cooperation and coordination of staff members; none on policy making level. He is distressed at the prospect of BOA establishing neighborhood health service centers in unsuitable places, like warehouses, when there are Fulton County Public Health Centers, well equipped nearby. He expressed his interest and support in the program of the Commission.

Rev. John Morris: Executive Director, The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity. He commended the Commission on the meeting of the night before. Then he gave some examples of the way the Society has involved itself in Atlanta to provide for cultural and racial unity. He asked the Commission to try and reach the people of high-society in the church. The Rev. Morris expressed his disappointment at the lack of leadership on the part of the religious community in matters of concern to the Commission and urged that the Commission challenge the churches and synagogues to participate in its programs.

The Chairman opened the house for business: Mrs. Paschall called the roll, the following members were not able to attend:

Mr. C. G. Ezzard  
Mr. A. L. Feldman  
Mr. T. M. Alexander, Sr.  
Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan  
Mr. Robert Dobbs  
Mr. James O. Moore

The Chairman called for approval of the minutes of the last meeting which were passed to each member at the beginning of the meeting. It was moved that the reading of the minutes be waived. The following correction was made: The salary of the Executive Director listed at \$12,000 should have been recorded at \$12,500. After the correction it was moved that the minutes be received.

Mrs. Stephens reported that Alderman Leftwich had investigated some complaints about police service in the Pittsburgh area which had been made at the February 16 meeting and had found that the crime rate there is lower than in many parts of the city, but he wanted the Commission to know that two additional police officers had been assigned to that area.

Rev. Samuel Williams moved that the Commission show appreciation to the Council on Human Relations for releasing Mrs. Paschall to assume her duties on the Commission immediately, as they did. It was adopted.

Mrs. Fred Patterson read the minutes of the Executive Committee, which are attached. They were received.

The Executive Director reported that the City Comptroller had informed her that the money from the city would be paid to the Commission in quarterly allotments, that the Commission is responsible for its own purchasing, budgeting, etc.. Upon the recommendation of the Director, after consultation with the City Comptroller's Office, the following action was taken:

1. The Capitol Area Branch of the Citizens & Southern National Bank shall be designated as the bank for the Commission.
2. The Secretary (Mrs. Fred W. Patterson) or the Executive Director (Mrs. Eliza K. Paschall) shall be authorized to sign checks.
3. A tentative budget (attached) was adopted, subject to final adoption next month, after matters of personnel, etc. have been cleared up with the City Attorney's office.

It was agreed that the effective date of Mrs. Paschall's appointment should be February 8, the day following the approval by the Board of Aldermen. Other conditions of employment, such as leave, benefits, etc., are to be settled at the March meeting, retroactive to the time of appointment, after the position of the Director relative to city benefits, etc., has been clarified.

Rabbi Jacob Rothschild gave his report of the Committee on Committees. This report was adopted. A copy is attached.

There was some discussion about the meaning of the term "prestigious". It was agreed that this would mean persons most competent and efficacious in any particular situation, not necessarily from any one group; that the term is relative and the selection of such person would depend upon the context.

The Chairman appointed the Committee on Committees, which was empowered to ask people to serve on the committees and was asked to report at the next meeting of the Commission. The committee consisted of the following:

Mr. Rolland Maxwell, Chairman  
Mr. M. O. "Buzz" Ryan, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Hamilton Douglas, Jr.  
Mr. T. M. Alexander, Sr.  
Miss Helen Bullard  
Rabbi Jacob Rothschild  
Mr. Byron Attridge

The Chairman appointed a Special Ad Hoc Committee consisting of the following:

Mr. Joseph Haas, Chairman  
Rabbi Rothschild, Vice Chairman  
Archbishop Paul Hallinan  
Rev. Sam Williams  
Mr. Al Kuettner

The committee was asked to be prepared at the March meeting with preliminary plans.

Area Meetings: Area committees were named as listed below, and the Chairman urged that each chairman work with the Executive Director in scheduling these meetings early in March.

Area: Edgewood-Mirkwood

Committee: Mrs. Mary Stephens, Chairman  
Rev. Joseph L. Griggs  
Mr. Hamilton Douglas, Jr.  
Mr. M. O. "Buzz" Ryan

Area: Cabbage Town

Committee: Mr. Robert Dobbs, Chairman  
Rabbi Jacob Rothschild  
Mr. A. L. Feldman

Area: Mechanicsville-Pittsburgh

Committee: Miss Helen Bullard, Chairman  
Rev. Samuel Williams  
Mr. Rolland Maxwell

Area: Summerhill-Peopletown

Committee: Mr. C. G. Ezzard, Chairman  
Mr. Al Kuettner  
Mr. Joseph Haas

Area: Vine City-Lightning

Committee: Mr. T. M. Alexander, Sr., Chairman  
Archbishop Paul Hallinan  
Mrs. Fred Patterson  
Mrs. Sara Baker

The Chairman stated that when a meeting is scheduled, if all the members cannot be there, they should report it so someone can take their place.

It was agreed that a letter of appreciation be written to Miss Rosena Flint for preparing the minutes of the February 16, Public Hearing and Mr. Theodore Freedman for mailing out announcements of the meeting.

The Director of the Bethlehem Center sent word that the center was available for use by the Commission, if needed.

Follow-up of February 16 meeting:

Mrs. Paschall reported that the most urgent situations had been followed up with letters to the appropriate offices. Mr. Delius, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, had been optimistic about restoring the services of Mr. Eddie Murphy in the Vine City recreation center. Mr. Gilbert Boggs, of the Atlanta Housing Authority, had reported that he had investigated the case of Mrs. Charity Murray and had found that she had been warned about her grandchildren visiting at the project, and that he felt the decision of the manager to evict Mrs. Murray was justified. The Commission agreed that more details should be sought (lease agreement, authority of the managers, etc.) and that the Housing Authority should be requested to hold up the eviction until more facts could be obtained.

There was a discussion about the manner of handling individual complaints, and it was agreed that the Executive Director should be empowered to take whatever action was appropriate in her judgement, and should come back to the Commission if it was not possible to work out an arrangement with the offices concerned.

Neighborhood Stabilization: Mrs. Paschall reported that she had been in touch with representatives of the 2 areas represented at the February 16, meeting asking for assistance in neighborhood stabilization.

She attended a meeting in Gilbert Heights on Monday, February 20, which was also attended by Alderman Leftwich, and an investigator from the Georgia Real Estate Commission, who explained the regulations regarding sale of real estate and the risks of dealing with other than a licensed real estate agent. Real Estate representatives present assured the group that anyone who had listed their property for sale and would like to reconsider the matter would be permitted to do so. The group was assured that there are no urban renewal, etc., plans for the area and that the city services will be maintained without any regard to the racial composition of the neighborhood. The persons present (all white) seemed to feel that panic selling would stop. Informal plans were made for individuals present to meet with Negroes living in the general area, to plan together for future activities.

Mr. Haver, who spoke at the February 16 meeting, had asked for advice for a meeting on March 9. Mrs. Clayton of the American Friends Service Committee, has been meeting with the group. Mrs. Paschall has sent some material to members of the group, discussed their meeting, and plans to attend the March 9 meeting.

Meeting with City Officials: The original proposal of the Program Committee that a day long seminar be held with selected city officials was discussed and it was felt that perhaps that was too much time for Commission members to give and that there might be substituted 2 meetings of 3 hours each, with individuals invited to appear at specific times. It was decided that different departments will take longer than others and should be scheduled likewise.

Ku Klux Klan: Mrs. Stephens brought up the matter of the KKK pickets and protests against the Commission and urged that some way be found to counter the accusation that their point of view was not represented. The Chairman pointed out that all meetings are open to the public and to representatives of groups, but he questioned the desirability of the Commission singling out any one group for special attention.

Agnes Scott College: A letter from the Rev. Kim Driesbach sent to the February 16 meeting about the employment policy of Agnes Scott College was read and discussed. It was agreed that the location of the College placed the matter outside the jurisdiction of the Commission, but because of the importance of Agnes Scott to the community, the letter should be forwarded to President Wallace Alston with a request for information for the Commission.

National Conference on Christian and Jews: Mrs. Paschall reported that the Rev. Don McEvoy, Director of the National Conference of Christian and Jews, had asked to have the following reported:

1. The National Conference of Christian and Jews had begun discussions with the Atlanta Police Department about a grant from the Justice Department for a Police Community Relations Program but that he felt this should now be turned over to the Community Relations Commission and he would do so.
2. Mr. McEvoy, acting on the challenge of the Rev. McCloud and others at the February 23 meeting, has issued an invitation to leading religious persons for a meeting on March 13 to consider an Inter-religious Convocation on the Inner City.
3. The National Conference of Christians and Jews will pay a full scholarship for a "lay" representative chosen by the Commission to attend a national conference on police community relations in Michigan May 20-26. The Police Department usually provides transportation so there would be no cost to the Commission or the individual.

Mrs. Paschall said she hope to be moved into the City Hall within a week or so, as soon as the bank account could be opened, etc., and the necessary furniture, etc., secured.

The next regular meeting of the Commission will be Friday, March 24, at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room 2.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Mrs.) Minnie Thomas

See Minutes of February 23, Public Hearing for statements from other organizations.