Carbondale Human Relations Commission
Meeting - Monday, March 7, 2011
Carbondale Civic Center ~ 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Daphne Grigsby, Erin Dickson, Sidney Logwood, Hugh Muldoon, Lori Sailiata

Commissioners Excused:

Commissioners Absent: Jeraldine Brown, Sylvester Woodhouse

Study Circle Staff Present: Sarah Heyer

Guests Present: Kiaundra Clark, Linda Flowers, Tommy Hamilton, Patricia Johnson, Tod Kington, Steve Murphy, De'Anna Nunley, Sharifa Stewart, CPD Lieutenant Keith Stiff, Alison Torres

Staff Present: Deborah McCoy

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Commissioner Muldoon and guests were introduced.

Minutes

Motion was made by Commissioner Sailiata and seconded by Commissioner Dickson approve the minutes of the February 7, 2011 meeting.

Announcements

CCHS Principal Steve Murphy announced that Mair Alight would be conducting an in-service training from 2-3 pm for Districts 165 & 95 on April 15.

A "Carbondale Remembered" display was being featured at the Civic Center on March 27 from 2-4 pm. The display is sponsored by the Preservation Commission.

Chair Muldoon stated that he received a letter from Alice Winters resigning from the Commission. Anyone interested in serving as a Commissioner should send a letter to the Mayor making your interest known.

Public Comments - None

Study Circles Report

Coordinator Heyer reported the Housing & Neighborhood Group met. The safety of the Polar Bear event was discussed at their February meeting. The City's is hiring someone to review

zoning ordinances. They have pictoral presentations of good and bad zoning. Train the Trainer is scheduled for April 25-26 as part of the Map Your Neighborhood to make neighborhoods/blocks safe. The training would be most useful in situations such as an emergency or disaster so individuals would know where to go and what to do. The training will be held at the Civic Center on April 25 and at John A. Logan on April 26.

Commissioner Sailiata announced that the PYD had asked the HRC to provide a resolution in support of their grant proposal to training agencies/organizations/groups on community collaboration efforts in communicating positively with youth. The title of the federal grant is Community Anti-Drug Agency (CADCA) and is for five years. SIRSS will serve as the fiscal officer for the grant. Commissioner Sailiata moved and Commissioner Logwood seconded the motion to provide the resolution supporting PYD's grant proposal.

Non-Violent Communication Progress Report

Chair Muldoon commented that Tod Kington will be making a presentation on April 4. Chair Muldoon distributed notes from the February 24 meeting and the NVCP subcommittee will continue its efforts on education.

Other Reports

Chair Muldoon stated that he had made contact with the Carbondale Police Department regarding the annual report of complaints and how they are handled. Lieutenant Stiff shared pictures of the new Public Safety Center which will be handicap accessible. An open House is scheduled for the public on Saturday, April 23 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. with a dedication ceremony at 2:00 pm.

Presentations

Dr. Linda Flowers, Principal of Thomas Elementary School in District 95, spoke about their Behavior Management Plan. She highlighted the school environment and how changes in that environment impact students in a positive way. Things as simple as 1) having teachers in the hallways to greet students as they arrive and depart, 2) encouraging students who have problems or 3) just asking how their day is going, can make a huge difference. There are two main areas of focus for the faculty and staff: education and relationships. Thomas begins the year involving parents, inviting them to come to the school every day in August. The goal is to allow them to see what is considered appropriate behavior on the playground, in the classroom and in the cafeteria. Students should be taught the appropriate behavior and it should not be assumed by the teachers and staff that all children know the appropriate behavior. The school utilizes "Tiger Talk" on closed circuit television where there is a different theme each month. Daily announcements are made in the morning. Different approaches to encourage appropriate behavior must be taken. Far too much time is spot writing detentions, etc., and that takes away from the time for education.

Relationships are important. Thomas has adults who mentor the students. Students are to check in with the adult in the morning and check out in the evening. The mentor is not the same person the student had the problem with. Thomas tries to build a sense of community through teams,

each having a particular job for the month, e.g. leading the Pledge, reading the Cool Tool, wiping tables in the cafeteria. A social worker has groups during lunch time with the goal of making friends and problem solving.

The staff divides behavior problems into minor and major and from there decides what approach to take. Behavior can be traced back to academics. In this society, bad is good, so most kids want to be bad instead of dumb. At Thomas, nobody is sent to the office or gets to sit in the hall. Early intervention is the key. It is easier to stay caught up rather than to have to catch up. Dr. Flowers stated that it is important to teach kids that it is okay to be angry and that there is a proper way to express it. Some children have developed habits that need to be broken. Sometimes it's necessary to help the family as well as the child. In some cases, kids may not know what respect looks like. They need to be taught about respect and what it looks like in the mall, at school and in other environments. The community needs to get involved to help kids and families with some of the things they need. At Thomas, what is taught is:

Respect Others
Respect Yourself
Respect Property

Dr. Flowers distributed handouts on *Becoming a 'Power School': Ten Ways to Reduce Violence* and *Strategies for Responding to Misbehavior.* Following the presentation there were many questions and interesting discussion.

Next Meeting

Monday, April 4, 2011, Civic Center, 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Recorded by Deborah McCoy, Administrative Services Director