

Metropolitan Human Relations Commission
Staff Members

Executive Director: Vern Summers

Assistant Director: Jim Sitzman

Human Relations Representatives:

Kal Szekely

Rita Clinton

Secretary: Brenda Joyce Knapper

Regular public meetings are held by the Commission every third Wednesday at 3 p.m., Room 321 City Hall. If you are in need of assistance or would like to know more about the Commission or the various programs, citizens are encouraged to call or visit the Commission office.

Metropolitan Human Relations Commission
208 City Hall, Portland, Oregon 97204
248-4187

mhrc
METROPOLITAN HUMAN
RELATIONS COMMISSION

Multnomah County — City of Portland
208 City Hall ■ Portland, Oregon 97204

■ 248-4187

"...working with government and institutions in response to the human needs of all our citizens"

In recognition of the need for a centralized agency with special authority to carry out programs in the field of human relations The Metropolitan Human Relations Commission was established by the City of Portland and Multnomah County. The fifteen commission members serve without compensation and work toward eliminating discriminatory practices, insuring human rights for all citizens and for improvement of human relations by involving all citizens; including members of every racial, ethnic, religious, age and socio-economic group in the Portland Metropolitan Area.

Primary Goals of the Commission

- . secure mutual understanding and respect among economic, religious, ethnic and social groups;
- . conciliate intergroup conflicts;
- . conduct positive programs aimed at improving intergroup understanding;
- . enlist support of civil, religious, industrial, commercial and educational groups in support of human relations activity, and
- . promote the objectives of local government, private groups and agencies throughout the community.

Areas of Concern

- . equal employment opportunity
- . effective police-community relations
- . provision of adequate housing
- . citizen complaints
- . education for individual citizens and groups in the area of human relations

The Commission Works Towards its Goals by:

- . examining underlying causes of problems or incidents;
- . analyzing how private industry, agencies, organizations, and government currently affect these problems;
- . searching for solutions from various sources, especially from communities directly involved;
- . developing recommendations or proposals for governmental expansion and new developments in the area of human relations and following through on implementation;
- . working collaboratively with other organizations to bring about social awareness.

Project Examples

- . act as liaison between general public and governmental agencies;
- . developed affirmative action programs in conjunction with City Council and County Board;
- . prepared background study which led to establishment of a City Information Office;
- . support efforts to provide citizen participation in local government;
- . developed non-discrimination ordinance regarding city contracts, franchises, permits and licenses.

June 25, 1974

James R. Sitzman, Assistant Director
Metropolitan Human Relations Commission
410 City Hall
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mr. Sitzman:

In order that the Commission may have a complete record of what transpired regarding the demand of Mr. Lanny Swerdlow for a proclamation to celebrate Gay Pride Week, I am outlining below what occurred.

1. When Mr. Swerdlow telephoned me on June 19, 1974, I informed him that I would need a suggested text from him that afternoon in order to process it before the Mayor left for San Diego to attend the U. S. Conference of Mayors where he would be until the evening of June 26. Mr. Swerdlow appeared in our office with a suggested text late that afternoon. I read the text and informed him that I could not assure him that it would be issued. In addition to the controversial nature of the matter, the text was, in my estimation, quite combative in tone and not at all in keeping with the type of proclamations we normally issue. I asked Mr. Swerdlow to call me the following day by which time I would have been able to discuss it with other members of the staff.
2. Apparently Mr. Swerdlow went directly from our meeting to the MHRC meeting and requested its endorsement of the proclamation as written.
3. He called on the 20th to inform me that he had taken this action and indicated that the Commission was writing to the Mayor requesting that a proclamation be issued. He did not inform me that the Commission had voted to request the issuance of a quite different proclamation.
4. I immediately contacted you in an effort to learn the extent of the Commission's concern and to inform you that the Mayor's time was extremely limited. As soon as you could, you came to my office with the letter from the Commission, signed by its chairman, Mr. Walter Sakai. We discussed the issue and at my suggestion you agreed to write a statement that evening which would incorporate the thoughts of the Commission.

June 25, 1974
Page Two

5. Early the next morning, June 21st, you presented the new text which I approved. Such approval, as I informed you, was not final, I had my secretary type the statement for signature (a copy is attached for your files) and presented it to the Mayor at the earliest opportunity after discussing it with other members of the staff. Their response was negative and the Mayor concurred with their opinion.. .

6. Mr. Swerdlow telephoned me that afternoon, about 4:00 p.m., and I informed him that it would not be signed. Needless to say, Mr. Swerdlow was extremely disappointed, and about ten minutes later, he called me again to demand a letter of explanation. I had to refuse his request as every indication given me was that such a letter would be used for political purposes.

I trust this is the information you wanted.

Sincerely,

Ginna Deinum
Assistant to the Mayor

GD:cc

Attachment

June 25, 1974

James R. Sitzman
Assistant Director
Metropolitan Human Relations Commission
410 City Hall
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Jim:

In order that the Commission may have a record of the Mayor's response to your recommendation that he sign the statement proposed by the Commission for Gay Pride Week, I regret to inform you that his response, and that of his staff, to the request was a negative one.

We all deeply appreciated the efforts of the Commission to assist and advise the Mayor in this manner, and regret we could not accomodate the Commission in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ginna Deinum
Assistant to the Mayor

GD:cc



METROPOLITAN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Multnomah County — City of Portland
~~208~~ City Hall ■ Portland, Oregon 97204 ■ 248-4187
410

Walter Sakai
Chairman
Vernon Summers
Director
James R. Sitzman
Assistant Director

June 20, 1974

The Honorable Neil Goldschmidt
Mayor
303 City Hall
Portland, Oregon 97204

Dear Mayor Goldschmidt:

The Metropolitan Human Relations Commission considered at its June 19, 1974 meeting a request from Portland's gay community for an endorsement of a proclamation setting aside June 24-30 as Gay Pride Week.

The Commission considered the request and voted to request that the Mayor issue a proclamation in connection with national Gay Pride Week which endorses the right of individuals regardless of sexual orientation to pursue life without discrimination in regard to employment, housing, and public accommodation.

We respectfully request that a proclamation containing the spirit of the Commission's action be submitted from your office.

Sincerely,

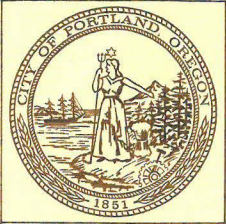
Walter Sakai
Chairman

WS:gp

6/20/74

MHRC: Commission asked by Gay group to support their request to the Mayor for their proclamation submitted to his office. Would not do that but Commission would recommend to the Mayor that a proclamation centering on non-discrimination, right to jobs, housing, etc., around national gay pride week.

THE CITY OF
PORTLAND



OREGON

S T A T E M E N T

OFFICE OF
THE MAYOR
NEIL GOLDSCHMIDT
MAYOR

1220 S. W. FIFTH AVE.
PORTLAND, OR. 97204
503 248-4120

AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF PORTLAND, I want to express support of the Portland ALLIANCE FOR GAY EQUALITY, its members and sympathizers as they participate in the June 24 - 28, 1974, celebrations of national Gay Pride Week.

The best of American tradition holds the highest regard for individual liberty and human rights. Much, in fact, of the nation's strength over the decades emanated from the diversity produced by the pursuit of liberty and the protection of rights.

Indeed, the very struggle to define the limits of liberty and the shape of human rights can today energize -- or threaten -- the spirit of our society. National Gay Pride Week affords the opportunity to recognize and advance yet another frontier in this struggle.

Each person's public life -- choice of employment, place to live, educational endeavor, social and cultural activities -- has a right to be protected by tolerance, non-discrimination and the law. I, for one, hope that the attention raised by Gay Pride Week will hasten the coming of such protection for the people of the minority sexual orientation community.

Those who lead this cause benefit not only themselves, but the City, the State, and the Nation as well.

Neil Goldschmidt

M E M O R A N D U M

12/24/74 Neil: There are currently two vacancies.

TO: Ginna
FROM: George

WJR
revised me @ June of vacancies

Ginna

DATE: November 22, 1974

RE: Appointment of Shirley Tanzer to the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission

Shirley Tanzer has expressed interest in serving on the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. She has been involved in an oral history project focused upon the Jewish community and believes that it is imperative that similar projects be commenced in all of Portland's ethnic communities.

She has a great interest in seeing that some agency encourages this (at a very small expense) and is anxious to utilize the MHRC as a sounding board for the project.

In any event, she is anxious to serve on the Commission for that and other reasons. I think she'd be a good appointment if a vacancy does occur.

GAR:pjr
cc: Neil and Phil

Pam

February 27, 1974

Mrs. Carl Diebold
4265 N. E. Halsey
Portland, Oregon

Dear Mrs. Diebold:

Thank you for taking the time to share your opinion regarding the recent appointments to the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. Unfortunately, your letter was received after the City Council had confirmed the appointments, but you may be assured that your views will receive consideration when further appointments are made.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

Neil Goldschmidt

NG:pds

Pam

Febr. 14th 1974.

Mayor of Portland
City Hall.

Dear Sir:

We very much resent and oppose the naming of a homosexual person to the Board of Welfare and Humanities for our city. It is an insult to those needing leadership.

This is an immoral activity and certainly should not be given Committee appointment. 'Acceptance is approval.'

There are many honorable young people in our community without this characteristic.

We ask for reconsideration of this appointment.

Thanking you in advance

Yours truly,

Mrs Carl Diebold

4265 N.E. Halsbey
Portland, Ore.

RECEIVED
FEB 15 1974
MAYOR'S OFFICE

RECEIVED

FEB 11 1974

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Pam
CARL E. DALBEY
1060 N.W. DALE
PORTLAND ORE.

MAYOR GOLDSCHMIDT:

THE FEB 7 "OREGONIAN AND JOURNAL BOTH CARRIED AN ARTICLE "GAY LIBBERS GET A PLACE ON BOARD", REFERING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF DAVID VAN WAGNER TO THE METROPOLITAN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION.

I WOULD SUBMIT TO YOU THAT IF THIS IS THE ONLY CALIBER OF PEOPLE THAT WE HAVE LEFT TO CHOOSE FROM FOR THIS COMMISSION THEN THE CITY OF PORTLAND AS WELL AS OUR NATION IS TRULY ON THE DOWN SIDE OF THE "RISE AND FALL OF CIVILIZATION'S CURVE".

THIS IDEA THAT ALL MINORITIES AS GROUPS MUST BE REPRESENTED IS BEING CARRIED TO EXTREMES WITH MR. WAGNER'S APPOINTMENT, WHO ACCORDING TO THESE ARTICLES APPEARS TO BE MORALLY AND EMOTIONALLY CONFUSED. WHAT IS WRONG WITH CONSIDERING "THE WHOLE PERSON", ONE WITH A CHARACTER THAT TENDS TO ENHANCE THE POSSIBILITY OF CIVILIZATION'S SURVIVAL RATHER THAN THOSE THAT TEND TO HASTEN ITS EXTERMINATION.

I AM NOT BEING CRITICAL OF HIS RIGHT AS AN INDIVIDUAL FOR APPOINTMENT, BASED UPON HIS QUALIFICATIONS, BUT ADVERTIZING ONES SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND MAKING THIS BE JUSTIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT NEEDS RECONSIDERATION

Sincerely
Carl E. Dalbey

Pam

3204 N. E. Broadway
Portland, Oregon
February 11, 1974

Mayor Neil Goldschmidt
City Hall
Portland, Oregon

Dear Mayor Goldschmidt:

This letter comes as a response to an article I read in Thursday's edition of the Oregonian regarding the approval of an appointment to the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission recommended by the "Portland Assoc. for Gay Equality".

I find it difficult to express in words my distaste and disgust for such action and the loss of respect for the action of the City Council! I am certain my feelings represent the majority of people in Portland, not only in my age bracket, but the many young people with whom I come in contact ~~with~~ nearly every day not only as employees but also as customers.

In all honesty, the many people who have discussed this with me are upset, outraged and are fast losing faith in the city administration.

Unless it is too late to make a change, will you be good enough to give this matter more thought and consideration as well as the people recommended before final confirmation?

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. Paul W. Arter

Mr. Mrs. Paul W. Arter

RECEIVED

FEB 12 1974

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Pam

6805 S. E. 48th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97206
January 24, 1974

Mayor Neil Goldschmidt
1220 S. W. 5th
Portland, Oregon

Dear Mayor Goldschmidt:

Regarding the nomination of Dave VanWagner for consideration to fill a commission vacancy. For a sex deviate to have a position, and influence, in the governing of our city is unthinkable; other types of work is alright but not a position of influence.

For someone from the ethnic races, or of the poor, to serve on the Human Relations Commission, or on any of the governing boards of our city, would be good and could be very beneficial. We are for it. And such a one would more truly represent the minority groups, for they could all identify with him, or her. But they, and all of us, would be poorly served, to be represented by a gay blade who would be there specifically because of his lifestyle.

Very truly yours,

Mrs. Lucille Baker

file

February 1, 1974

G. Robert McCreary
7058 N.E. 7th Place
Portland, Oregon 97211

Dear Mr. McCreary:

I very much appreciate your taking the time to share your opinions regarding appointments to the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. It is always helpful to have recommendations from the people of the community when filling vacancies on the City's boards and commissions, and I assure you your letter will be given consideration.

I'm grateful for your kind words of encouragement. Again, thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Neil Goldschmidt

NG:pd

Pam

7058 NE 7th Place
Portland, Oregon 97211
1-25-74

The Honorable Neil Goldschmidt
Mayor of Portland
Portland City Hall
Portland, Oregon

RECEIVED

JAN 28 1974

My Dear Mr. Mayor,

MAYOR'S OFFICE

It seems from what I have read in the paper and heard on the radio that you are no more in favor of appointing 'gays' to The Metropolitan Human Relations Commission than we are. We thank you for your stand.

You probably have different reasons for objecting than we do, but if homosexuals can be kept out of government by any reasonable means, the good of the city and the country will be served. For one thing, homos are more subject to blackmail than 'normal' folks. Perhaps not too much of concern in city and/or county government but in international relations can be tragic.

Our basic reasons for opposition are found in the Bible which we believe to be the very word of God. I recognize that you may not believe as we do on this point but I think you may be interested anyway. In the New Testament in I Corinthians 6:9 are found these words: Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind Also Romans 1:34 to 32 puts in strong language a description of those who place themselves under condemnation of God because of their vile 'styles of life', verse 27 applying specifically to homosexuals. The Old Testament likewise makes it very clear that homosexuality is condemned by God. You will recall that the city of Sodom was destroyed supernaturally by God because of its great wickedness, homosexuality possibly being the worst evil in the city.

Furthermore, as you say, it would be impossible to have minority groups represented on every board and commission. We feel, however, that the most logical reason for non-appointment of homosexuals is that given in the preceding paragraph.

We would appreciate it if you would share the contents of this letter with the other Commissioners.

We should write to you oftener to let you know that in general my wife and I feel that you are doing an excellent work in your position as Mayor. We appreciated your fine public example of taking bus transportation in order to help save gasoline during the present shortage of fuel. (We live at the NE terminal - close to rather than at - of 'your' bus line, the Irvington-Jackson Park line).

Thank you, Mayor Goldschmidt, for your time and for what you are helping to do to improve our city!

Sincerely yours,

G. Robert McCreary
G. Robert McCreary

of the homosexual and the need for acceptance.
The group varies in age from those not long out of college to those who have retired. The question and answer period was informal and open. The response to his presentation was definitely favorable. He should be a knowledgeable addition to the Human Relations Commission.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

Jean S. Hamar
(Mrs. Clifford C. Hamar)

Neil Goldschmit, Mayor
Mayor's Office
1220 S.W. 5th
Portland Oregon 97201

Dear Mr. Goldschmit,

Dave Van Wagner has been nominated for a position on the Human Relations Commission, and I would like to urge his placement on that commission. He is an able person, has good ideas and presents them well using reason rather than noise to make his points. He spoke to my P.E.O. Chapter on the problems

per
0236 S.W. Palatine Hill Road
Portland, Oregon 97219
January 24, 1974

RECEIVED

JAN 28 1974

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Pam

RECEIVED
JAN 29 1974
MAYOR'S OFFICE

4060 N. E. 29th
Portland, Oregon 97212
January 25, 1974

Mayor Neil Goldschmidt
City Hall
1220 S. W. 5th
Portland, Oregon

Dear Mayor Goldschmidt:

I recently read an article in the Oregonian on the nominees for the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. It is interesting that at the request of Portland Association for Gay Equality three persons posts went unconfirmed and a homosexuals name was included. Today the abnormal gets the hearing. As our society is continually exposed to what some feel is sickness, others sin, and others sane; homosexuality becomes accepted as the norm. Homosexuality spreads into the community and our children are exposed. In the future homosexuals may control schools, banks, public services, and the government (then as a minority I may be trying to get a position on the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission).

I am not saying homosexuals should be put into prison or persecuted, but I am saying they should not hold positions in society where they can use their position as a sounding board for the virtues of homosexuality, which is wrong. They should not hold these positions any more than a paroled convicted rapist or murderer who has not renounced his former crime.

It is interesting to note that a prominent part of past civilizations fall has been homosexuality. Nero was a homosexual. Also with these recent homosexual killings in Texas and the possibility of a nationwide ring, homosexuality continues to gain credulity.

So if you want to take one of the seemingly small steps for the climb of homosexuality in our city, approve the appointment of a homosexual to the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. I feel there are many other minorities that need the hearing.

Respectfully yours,

Rudy I Hansen

Rudy I. Hansen

2/11/74

from the desk of
LINDA SCHOFFMAN

Jerry Downing

won't get his vote because
being homosexual

being there @ city Hall while
~~making~~ pros

enforcing pr laws prohibiting
prostitution

one's okay & the others not

Somebody's mixed up

Van Wagner Opposition

Phone calls

2/7/74 Phil McLawin talked w/ lady opposed to Van Wagner appt. She's organizing mothers group to meet w/ Mayor

Mrs. Rausch objects - "A mistake which will lead to lesbians, bagues & all narrow interest groups demanding representation

2/8/74 Gentleman saw D. Van Wagner on channel 2, purporting to represent & serve homosexuals only on MHRC - bums need representation. Inquired of MHRC function. "We'll see how it goes & throw the Mayor out when he runs for City-County."

Portland Association for Gay Equality *pan*

December 13, 1973

Mayor Neil Goldschmidt
City Hall
Portland, Oregon

RECEIVED
DEC 13 1973
MAYOR'S OFFICE

Dear Mr. Goldschmidt,

For some time now the Portland gay community has been attempting to get representation on the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission. Given the size of this city's gay community, and given the fact that gays are often left out of Portland's various civil rights measures, representation on the MHRC would be extremely helpful to us.

Last year we submitted a list of 11 names. None were selected by the MHRC. We were told that none showed interest in any area other than that of gay rights and that furthermore, vacancies had been promised to other groups. We were also promised a seat the following year.

This year, however, we were not informed that the recommendations had been drawn up by the MHRC until the MHRC's actions had been completed. We were again bypassed. The recommendations then went to Commissioner Mildred Schwab's office. She informed us that she could do nothing if gays were not on the list submitted to her by the MHRC.

Subsequently we held a meeting with Phil McLoren of your office. McLoren suggested that, given the three vacancies on the MHRC, you could select only two people and inform the MHRC that you would like some representatives from the gay community selected for the third seat.

Such a move may be the only way gays ever get representation on the MHRC. The claim that none of the people on the list showed interest in anything beyond gay rights is false. Furthermore there is no one on the MHRC that has had any involvement in gay rights.

Mr. McLoren told us that he would submit to you our list of recommendation for the MHRC. We hope to hear from you soon on this matter.

Sincerely,

George T. Nicola
George T. Nicola

c.c. The American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon, Portland Chapter.

January 23, 1974
3 PM
321

Pam

CITY OF PORTLAND
INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
(NOT FOR MAILING)

December 17, 1973

RECEIVED

DEC 19 1973

MAYOR'S OFFICE

From Vernon Summers
To Mayor's Office
Addressed to Mayor Neil Goldschmidt
Subject Gay Representation on the Human Relations Commission

I am enclosing to you copies of a letter from the Portland Association for Gay Equality addressed to our Chairman, Walt Sakai and Mr. Sakai's response addressed to Lanny Swerdlow regarding representation of the Gay Community on our Commission.

The list of proposed Commission members forwarded to you was submitted by our Nominating Committee chaired by Dave Abram. The committee screened and interviewed these people during the month of October, 1973. In his letter, Mr. Sakai assured Lanny Swerdlow that consideration will be given to their nominations when the next vacancies occur at the end of 1974.

We have on file resumes of candidates submitted by the Gay Community which were considered and will be considered again next year.

As stated in Mr. Sakai's letter: "Our objective is to protect the rights and improve the quality of life for all citizens in our community. Toward this end we seek for membership on the Commission persons who by virtue of their activities and "track record" clearly demonstrate sensitivity and commitment to the cause of human rights for all of our citizens, plus the ability to get things done."

We hope that you will follow through with the names we have submitted and make your appointments as soon as possible.

Respectively,

VS 

cc: Commissioner Mildred Schwab
Chairman Walt Sakai
Committee Chairman Dave Abram
Mr. Lanny Swerdlow

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

(NOT FOR MAILING)

October 18, 1973

From Vernon Summers
To Mayor's Office
Addressed to Mayor Neil Goldschmidt
Subject City Commission Appointments

RECEIVED
NOV 20 1973
MAYOR'S OFFICE

It has come to my attention that additional information on the Commission candidates may be needed in order for you to make your appointments. As you may know, the vacancies that were created by death or resignation are being recommended for immediate reappointment.

Additional information on the candidates is provided below:

Position #1

Charles Landskroner

Mr. Landskroner is the past deputy director of the Portland Housing Authority and has been involved in a number of civil rights and human rights organizations. He was referred to the Commission by Richard Brownstein whose term will be expiring 12/31/73.

Charles Williamson

Mr. Williamson is a legal aid attorney and is very active in the community. He has worked on several legislatures dealing with minorities. The Commission feels that Mr. Williamson's participation as a Commissioner would be an asset.

Position #2

Lowell Curley

Mr. Curley is an American Indian and is chairman of the Urban Indian Commission. He is a graduate student at Portland State University, and is employed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. It is the feeling of the Commission that support from the Indian community is needed and Mr. Curley would represent them well.

Position #3

Roy C. Hill

Mr. Hill is the Labor Council's choice for their representative. He is the Legislative Representative for Painters Union Local #10 and works closely with the building trade unions. The Commission that Mr. Hill would be replacing is an ex-labor representative.

Position #4

Norene Saltveit

Ms. Saltveit is an attorney and has been active in civil rights legislations. Her prime interest has been with the Chicano community. Her name was submitted by the Chicano organization.

Pablo Cidio

Mr. Cidio is an attorney and is also president of CISCO, a state-wide Chicano organization.

Position #5

Julie Sterling

Mrs. Sterling is the wife of Don Sterling and it is the Commission's feeling that the previous experience of Mrs. Sterling would be a great asset to the Commission.

Position #6

Don Hayashi

Mr. Hayashi is president of the Japanese American League and has served on MHRC committees in the past. The Commission feels that is input concerning the Japanese community would be of great value.

Dr. La Guardia

Dr. La Guardia is of Cuban descent and is a medical doctor. He was recommended for the Commission by the Confederation of Cubans in Exile.

The Commission hopes that these appointments will be made by its November meeting.

If further information is needed please give me a call.

Respectfully,



Vernon Summers