

September 10, 2014

## Education and Outreach Committee Report

Commissioner Wurzburg gave a report on the Education and Outreach Committee meeting noting that Chair McDaniel was unable to attend due to a death in his family. We discussed that three different reports were coming out at the same time. The Annual Report which was presented this morning by the Executive Director, which I think is a beautifully constructed report. And the issue is how we get it out to the public.

With over \$40,000 budget reduction possible we have got to use the internet, we have got to use the web. It would be good if we can get notices out to various entities, and constituent organizations. Commissioner Cocke is concerned about how we are getting these into the libraries of public schools and colleges and universities and public libraries. If we can afford it, we will send postcards to take them directly to the web.

There is also the Title VI Annual Report which was presented this morning as well. This also needs to be on the web for anyone interested in reading it.

And lastly we talked about the Status of Human Rights in Tennessee report and the committee voted to postpone the release of the report until the November Board of Commissioners meeting. This report is 211 pages long and an executive summary was needed of the findings that we compiled to make it easily digestible. This report was compiled from all the hearings that we had across the state last year. It contains a lot of the testimony that was heard and the executive summary will be very important.

The question is now, what do we do with it? The committee decided that after the release of the report at the November board meeting we should stay and have a round table discussion about it. One of the questions brought up at the meeting was so many people are saying that when it comes to civil rights we are back to square one. Obviously we cannot go out in the world today and not know that it is a different world than the 1950's and 60's.

When you go out to eat and you see folks from various religions out and about and having a good time it is a different world than I grew up in. But with the frustration that is in the news about Ferguson Missouri and for so many folks voter suppression we feel like we are fighting battles all over again that we thought we had fought and won a long time ago.

About three or four years ago the Commission conducted roundtable discussions around the state and brought different organization together and let them talk about where they were in their communities. And then we had the official hearings last year. Maybe we should go back to the roundtables now and just have conversation to get the civil rights community around the table and go through the report with them.

Executive Director Watts noted that because of the nature of the issues we are looking at the report will be in sections as opposed to just one report. We have a section on Human Rights Initiatives across the United States; Issues of Employment Discrimination facing Tennesseans; Housing section; Access to Programs and Services; Justice and Law; New Americans and Immigrant; Human Rights LGBT; Human Rights on voting Rights; Homelessness; Disability; Education; Violence against Women; General and Global Human Rights issues.

I intend to do executive summaries by section for it to be easier to write and read it. The general/global summary will talk about all of these and where everything is. There will be a final section on general recommendations at the end of the report. For each section there will be recommendations as well which will be included at the end to include recommendations by the speaker and recommendations that we think the organization given authority might be able to undertake.

We anticipate the report to be completed around mid-October and that all commissioners will receive a copy of the report before the commission meeting in November. I will do a PowerPoint to make it easier to go through. We will not be printing the report since it will be available online. If people ask for it we will have to figure out how we can provide hard copies. We will publicize it online also. Because it is at the November meeting we will have a presentation and invite people and then send it out to the press. At the November meeting we will have recommendations for action by other bodies, the state in general as well as other places that need to get it and we will talk about recommendations that THRC can undertake given our authority.

All four hearings are on YouTube and we want to publically thank Commissioner Houston and her staff for providing transcripts for speakers that did not provide written testimony to us. We have not received any word about the State Audit that was conducted and concluded in June.

We have not had our official Exit Conference and the last time I spoke with them they said they were still reviewing it. We know that they will conduct the Exit conference, give us the purposed report, allow us to respond, and then they will finalize it. In both instances we will have the opportunity to respond. We will call a meeting of the Budget and Audit Committee for a review of the audit and our responses prior to submitting to the Comptroller.

The HUD Performance Assessment will be discussed later in the Housing report.

Commissioner Houston made a motion to accept the Executive Directors report. It was seconded by Commissioner Pierce. A vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner McDaniel made a motion to accept the Education and Outreach Committee report and it was seconded by Commissioner Houston. A vote was taken and passed.