DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF JUNE 22, 2011
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Present: Chair Roy Sudler, Jr. Commissioners Ellen Wasfi, Thomas Steele. Phyllis Edamatsu arrived late.

Call to Order: Chair Sudler waited till 7:15 to call the meeting to order to see if there would be enough commissioners present to constitute a quorum.

Comments from Members of the Community: Ms. Calmetta Brinkley from Mt. Zion Church came forward to express concern about the graffiti that has been appearing on buildings around Dover. Her Social Action Committee at the church has some photos of the graffiti and they are concerned that it might be gang related. Commissioner Wasfi asked her if they reported it to the Dover Police, and she responded that they have not yet done so. Wasfi next asked if they brought it before the City Council, and Ms. Brinkley said they had not gone there either. Commissioner Wasfi then recommended that the church should send a letter to the Dover Police, the City Council, and also to their District Representative, Councilwoman Russell. She told her to enclose the photos, and ask if the police can interpret the graffiti to connect it to gang activity, and if they have measures to remove it from the buildings and clean it up. Chair Sudler asked in what area of town the graffiti is located. Ms. Brinkley said they saw some on the side of a building on Forrest Ave & Lincoln St. and also there were similar drawings elsewhere. She indicated that the Commission was her first contact and now she knew how to proceed in her inquiries. Commissioner Wasfi told her that if she does not get a response from the Police or the City Council, to please return to the Commission, and DHRC could make a recommendation to the City Council to investigate further.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: There were no additions or deletions.

Adoption of Minutes: The Minutes from March 17, 2011 were adopted with no corrections or additions. The Minutes from March 23, 2011 were corrected and approved as amended. The Minutes from May 25, 2011 were corrected and approved as amended.

Chair's Report: Chair Sudler passed around a hand written letter (see Attachment # 1) from Jeremy Kopp and Jackie Jones from 10 Mishoe St. Dover. They have a complaint with the City of Dover's Utility Customer Service employee, Corinne Mosher. Chair Sudler is referring the matter to Commissioner Britt as head of the Intake Screening Committee. Next Chair Sudler brought up the letter to the Mayor & City Council dated May 25, 2011. The commissioners reviewed it and made corrections. (Refer to Attachment # 2 of the May 25, 2011 Minutes). The Commission will review and vote to send the letter at the next DHRC meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed the Draft of the Annual Report. Several corrections were made, and discussed. (Refer to Attachment # 4 from May 25, 2011 Minutes). Chair Sudler said that Commissioner Britt has some things to add, and since she was absent tonight, they should wait and be ready to discuss and vote on the final report at the next meeting.

Committee Reports;

A. Intake Screening: Jeremy Kopp's letter will be forwarded to Commissioner Britt.
B. School Programs: Commissioner Wasfi said she has not had a meeting yet, but will have a report as soon as she does.
C. Community Programs: Commissioner Pyne was absent.
D. Assessment: Commissioner Edamatsu said she is working on tallying the responses from the Boys and Girls Club meeting, and will have a report ready soon.

Unfinished Business:

A. Mental Health Forum Update: (See Attachment # 2) Commissioner Wasfi circulated her draft of the letter, and a few corrections were made in the wording. Then she suggested that the recommendations from Chair Sudler should be incorporated into the draft (See Attachment # 3 from May 25, 2011 Minutes). At the next DHRC meeting it should be discussed and voted on after all the commissioners have had a chance to view all the revisions.
B. Status of Slavery Apology: DRHC will be drafting a letter to the City Council to follow up on the Apology for Slavery Resolution that was passed last year by the City of Dover. It is unclear if the resolution was sent to the State Legislature, and if so, what has become of it.

New Business: Commissioner Wasfi brought a report entitled "Spirituality and Governance" (See Attachment # 3). The underlined sections of the report were items that the commissioners discussed and reviewed. Commissioner Wasfi suggested that the DHRC should have a public forum on Native American Indian issues. She would invite the Native American Indians to help formulate the agenda, and plan and host the meeting so that the public can learn more about their concerns and issues. It was noted that the City Council, Dover State Representatives, the Dover Post, State News, and various agencies from city and state government should all be invited to attend. There are many points that could be incorporated into a resolution that the DHRC could make on behalf of the Indians. Commissioner Wasfi made a motion to investigate the possibility of holding a Forum for the Native American Indians to discuss their concerns for fair treatment in city and state government. Commissioner Steele seconded and the motion carried.

Suggestions for Agenda Items for Future Meetings:

A. Finalize the Annual Report
B. Finish the Mental Health Forum Recommendations
C. Discuss having a Forum on Native American Indian Issues
D. Report on Boys and Girls Club Forum

Announcements:

A. There will be an African American Festival this Saturday at the Legislative Mall. Headliner singer will be Sharon Katz from 6 to 8.
B. PBS recently interviewed Commissioner Edamatsu's mother and sister for a TV documentary on the Japanese interment camps during WWII. Commissioner Edamatsu has a copy of the DVD.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

Minutes taken and submitted by Mary Walson

ATTACHMENT
1
6-22-11

6/21/2011

Kopp Jeremy & Jackie Jones
10 mishoe St
dover de 19901
302-883-3378
white

person to contact:
City of dover

On or about november 2010 we had some communication problems with the Coustmer Service Supervisor Kerin for the City of dover. we had went to get our electric turned on in our name and was told we had a past due Bill and even if we paid it we couldnt get it turned on and wouldnt give us a reason why and we asked to speak to someone higher then her she stated she was the boss.

on and around April-
we went to a humcin relations meeting I Jeremy was about to ask questions to the electric compeny and Kerin was present and me Deprimed by the time I was gonna confront her she left the

Meeting. Afterwards we spoke to Mr. DeprimA and he said we could get the electric in our name and he be checking into. Kenins actions.

We would like her communication skills checked into. We've have seen some changes in the electric bill and we highly appreciate that. There should be more details on how to get help with your electric bill if there's a problem paying it.

Jacob Jones

ATTACHMENT #2
6-22-11

DRAFT

June 22, 2011

City Council President
Dover City Council
City Hall, Dover, DE 19903

Dear Council President:

On May 26, 2010, the Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) held a Mental Health Forum in the Community Meeting Room at Dover Police Headquarters. This event followed a proclamation, May as Mental Health Month, which was unanimously approved by the Commission and issued by Mayor Carleton Carey. Please find enclosed copies of the proclamation and the meeting minutes.

The stated purpose of the forum was to share experiences, concerns, knowledge, and information about mental health issues. The event included professionals representing advocacy and treatment organizations in the mental health field, such as PSI-Dover, the Delaware Board of Mental Health, the Division of Substance Abuse for the State of Delaware, and the National Alliance on Mental Issues. Additionally, both individuals and families from the Dover community attended.

Unquestionably, the forum uncovered a number of challenges facing the mental health field, which were articulated by various speakers; these are outlined below:

(1) Lack of coordination between stages of treatment for mental illness;

(2) The need for augmented mental health services, particularly for specific groups like students and military veterans;

(3) Concern over violation of the rights of patients undergoing treatment, including but not limited to unauthorized restraining of patients, denial of medicine, and failure to inform caregivers or guardians about changes in patient care;

(4) Inadequate training of some workers in the mental health field and a lack of quality mental health professionals to make assessments of mental illness;

(5) Insufficient financial resources furnished to organizations and agencies offering mental health services;

(6) Difficulty in locating information about various mental illnesses and in securing assistance for same;

(7) Regional disparities in mental health treatment;

(8) Overall lack of transparency and accountability in administering regulations governing treatment of mental health patients and their families.

As a path forward in addressing the aforementioned problems, the Commission recommends that several actions be taken:

(1) Keep promoting the message that mental health is attainable;

(2) Institutionalize annual events concurrent with May as Mental Health Month;

(3) Simplify and expand outlets which provide information about mental health facilities, services, and treatment;

(4) Appointment of a mental health ombudsman, who could serve as a conduit between local, county, or state government agencies on the one hand and professional groups and patients on the other hand;

(5) Revision of present procedures which unfairly penalize the caregiver/guardian of patients undergoing treatment;

(6) Establishing a method of acknowledging and rewarding individuals and groups which initiate projects aimed at treating or preventing mental illness or promoting mental health;

(7) Regular evaluation of performance of mental health staff and continuing education opportunities for same, including periodic retraining and recertification of mental health professionals and caregivers;

(8) Educating police about mental illness and how to properly handle individuals displaying such traits;

(9) Creating a method for persons to report wrongdoing or violation of regulations in the mental health field and ensuring protection for them.

(10) Recognition of regional disparities in the quality and availability of health care.

The Commission appreciates the participation of Councilman Thomas Leary at the mental health forum. With the commitment of City Council as a whole, this issue will receive the attention it deserves and the improvements necessary.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of these suggestions.

ATTACHMENT # 3
6-22-11

"SPIRITUALITY AND GOVERNANCE"
A Conference Presented by
The Interfaith Council of Central Delaware
And
Native American Tribal Leaders of Delaware
January 6, 2011
Christ Episcopal Church, Dover

In her introduction to the program, moderator Ellen Wasfi of the League of Women Voters of Kent County raised the question of how local Native American tribes and their ongoing contributions to American life can be better integrated and recognized by the State of Delaware. She highlighted the theme of "Spirituality and Governance," and shared what she had learned from Lenape Chief Dennis Coker that in traditional Native American culture, spirituality and governance were one and the same, involving interaction with nature and treating fellow human beings with respect and friendship. This spirituality guided relationships between individuals and communities without formal governing structures until these were required in order to deal with state and federal governments, especially with respect to land ownership. Today, the major issue of "Governance" revolves around official state recognition of local Native American communities. A parallel concern is the lack of acknowledgment of tribal identity throughout the state educational system where indigenous cultures and history have not been adequately documented or appreciated.

The first speaker was Chief Dennis J. Coker, Chief of the Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware. Chief Coker pointed out that the Lenape were an aboriginal people of northern Kent County who were still thriving intact as a native community. They insist upon maintaining their status as a native people, and their religion is based on their symbiotic relationship with Mother Earth which insures the survival of all of creation. Although contemporary spirituality is now expressed primarily through Christian form of worship, many in the native community still prefer traditional forms of worship. He reiterated the confluence of governance and spirituality as respect for each other and the land. To adapt to contemporary governance, the Lenape developed a constitution.

Chief Coker stressed that the State of Delaware's tacit recognition of the Lenape is insufficient for the tribe to receive full government benefits. He brought this concern to the attention of Governor Markell, and urged the governor to pay special attention to the neglect of Native American history and culture in Delaware's educational system. He also emphasized the critical role of the faith community in rectifying these wrongs. Other issues that must be addressed include: 1) the need for an official disavowal by contemporary Christian churches of the 15th-century Papal Bull, the Doctrine of Discovery, which laid the basis for the oppression and enslavement of native peoples by the Catholic colonial powers; and 2) the United States affirmation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the aim of which is the elimination of human rights violations against the planet's 370 million indigenous people and assisting them in combating discrimination and marginalization.

The second speaker was Chief Bill Daisey, Assistant Chief of the Nanticoke Indian Tribe of Southern Delaware. Chief Daisey described the close relationship between the Nanticoke and the Lenape, and expressed his concern that state census reports tried to eliminate the category of Native American despite the tribes' existence in Delaware. He criticized the fact that Native Americans in Delaware had received inferior education due to years of segregation. He revealed that in their need to adapt to the dominant culture, Native Americans had to blend into the greater society in order to circumvent negative media images and the fact that at times it was "dangerous" to be Native American. Indian students were often ridiculed in the school environment for their heritage. He cited the widespread belief held in the indigenous community that Delaware was reluctant to grant code (legal) recognition to the Lenape and the Nanticoke because of the fear that once such recognition was granted, the tribes would qualify to receive federal recognition of their nation status and would then be free to open casinos which would compete with the state's existing gambling industry. He expressed his indignation that in order to be counted in the census, Native Americans had to prove their identity, a requirement that is not applied to any other ethnic, racial or national group.

Chief Daisey repeated Chief Coker's description of the Native American relationship to the land as an integral part of their spirituality, and the importance of not wasting resources. He reiterated that Native American churches were diverse, blending Christianity with traditional religion. He mentioned the annual Nanticoke Powwow in Millsboro attended by 30,000, as a means of familiarizing the public with the traditions and practices of Nanticoke culture as well as communicating Nanticoke traditions to the young who face pressures of assimilation into the wider society. The preservation of Nanticoke heritage is reflected in the effort to retain their native language with its Algonquin roots. The concern with not losing their heritage is critical in a society where many believe and are taught that there are no Native Americans in Delaware.

The third speaker was Chief Mark "Quiet Hawk" Gould, Chief of the Lenni-Lenape Indian Tribe of New Jersey. He referred to the Bible's teaching to love and respect as the essence of governance. He also emphasized the need to preserve the Native American heritage and to maintain communication between tribes. He pointed out that Delaware's tribal genealogy is mixed due to generations of tribal intermarriage, and that tribes needed unity to survive and counteract the forces pulling them apart, i.e., the lack of support for their heritage in school or the workplace and the resultant fear of admitting that heritage. In order to combat these centrifugal forces, Native Americans had to bring Jesus Christ into the worship circle since the traditional church was no longer being respected by all traditional peoples. Tribal members are now spread out among various, mostly Protestant denominations (and some Catholic) which maintain a mutual respect for each other's Christian beliefs. Chief Gould described the need to acknowledge Jesus Christ in religious ceremonies in order to engender unity and to teach love and respect. He concluded that although Native Americans are being listened to now more than before, there still exists a mutual distrust between the Native American community and the government. He stressed the need to forgive the past.

The final Native American speaker was the Reverend John Norwood of the Sovereign Nentego-Lenape Tribal Confederation. He confirmed that the Nanticoke and Lenape were genealogically-linked tribes that collaborated on issues of tribal governance and survived through informal family and tribal structures. They elect tribal councils that run Native American affairs with a structure that ensures that neither member tribe dominates the other. Member tribes have evolved a structure to adapt to governance and define the scope of tribal authorities. They share the history of confederated tribes which is preserved in expanding museums of Native American culture and history. The Confederation Charter mandates that a prayer invoking the Creator's guidance begin every meeting. While there is a strong Christian link between the tribes, there is no single spiritual belief system and traditional values are expressed across tribes throughout the country.

The first response to the concerns expressed by tribal leaders came from Debora Hansen, Education Associate for Curriculum, Instruction, and the Professional Development Working Group of the State Department of Education (DOE). She commented that the national focus on education formed the backdrop for discussion with the goal of improving educational outcomes for all children. She reviewed the development of New Standards comprising the priorities of the State Department of Education which were intended to fuse a common core of initiatives into the state's program and, thereby, blend Native American concerns into the educational infrastructure. The standards were developed by states across the country establishing learning targets. Ms Hansen reiterated that this process created the opportunity for indigenous peoples to be incorporated into the standards, known as the Delaware Prioritized Curriculum. She also cautioned that the DE Department of Education was entering "uncharted waters" with its budget reduced by one-third. The recent "Race to the Top" grant awarded to Delaware by the US Government was a challenge to improve all levels of education for life after high school.

The final presentation was made by Dr. Steven Newton, History Department Interim Chair and member of the Office of Community Relations and Organizational Development at Delaware State University (DSU). In order to establish a plan of action, Dr. Newton advocated inviting tribal leaders to the University to discuss issues of upgrading the status of Delaware tribes and enhancing tribal leaders' ability to apply for federal Native American preservation grants. He estimated that $49,000 – $70,000 in grant funding was available. He indicated that DSU could apply for grants on behalf of the tribes. He also stated that mini-grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) were available for summer classroom workshops and that Native American expertise was required to develop curriculum. DSU also expressed an interest in discussing preservation projects and could make internships available to research local history. The point is to bring education to local communities which have been locked out. Dr. Newton also indicated that the New Jersey tribes would be included and that it was important to emphasize what we share as a community and to move from conversations to work.

In the discussion that followed the presentations, Chief Coker stated that the DSU initiative was long overdue and welcome. Many Native Americans never attended high

school and it was extremely important to get the youth involved in projects of sustainability, e.g., returning to the traditional diet to improve health, reemphasizing the Lenape farming tradition, restoring the Lenape language and refamiliarizing children with techniques that enable them to move into a sustainable future. Chief Daisey recalled that the previous generation was denied a high school education, and that education proved inferior even after integration with limited and often primitive facilities. Chief Gould cited his work with the New Jersey Office of Indian Affairs in changing the content of what is being taught in public schools, i.e., bringing Indian education into the present in order to depict an accurate picture of the history of local tribes, e.g., why massacres occurred.

When queried on the specific nature of the DOE focus on indigenous people, Ms Hansen admitted that the DOE has no programs in the pipeline geared specifically to Native Americans but she agreed bring this need to the attention of the Secretary of Education, with special focus on the initial exposure to Delaware history in the fourth grade. She cited the opportunity for using the visual arts and appreciated the opportunities opening up to collaborate with institutions of higher education. She further suggested that such curriculum initiatives be developed at the local level and cited the example of the Nanticoke Powwow as an opportunity to insert local content into the standard of "Celebrations."

Dr. Newton commented that it was insufficient simply to change curriculum. It was necessary to use federal grant money to create multimedia resources for teachers, citing the Sojourner Project in New Jersey as an example. All schools and teachers in the state should have access to these resources. He added that DSU is in a position to identify such resources as it has done with African-American studies. It is important to encourage institutional involvement in the pursuit of funding for these projects.

RuthAnn Purchase, coordinator of the day's event, provided all the guest speakers with publications detailing highlights of Delaware's Native American culture, including a poster that featured a stone tablet engraved with a quote in the Munsee dialect of the Lenape language taken from a Civil Rights Monument in Ontario, Canada. The quote included the words for "Civil Rights" translated literally as: Equity (To treat one another the same), Dignity (Pride in Oneself) and Rights (Honest Heart). Ms Purchase suggested that this tablet be replicated in Dover, Delaware. Ms Purchase also expressed the appreciation of all the attendees to Jeanine Kleimo and Ted and Mary Torsch for arranging the Christ Episcopal Church venue to host the event.

Moderator Ellen Wasfi also thanked the program organizers, presenters and the audience for their enthusiastic participation, and concluded by urging local faith institutions to pursue within their religious communities the formal disavowal of the Doctrine of Discovery as a step towards the restoration of justice. She also encouraged all those in attendance to press their state and federal representatives to join the rest of the global community in affirming the principles of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Wasfi

Subj: **Delaware National Coastal Heritage Park**
Date: 2/18/2011 3:26:47 P.M. Eastern Standard Time
From: EWasfi@aol.com
To: larry.windly@carper.senate.gov

Dear Senator Carper:

Earlier this week, I spoke with Olivia in your Capitol Hill office about your proposal for a Delaware National Coastal Heritage Park. Although the proposal contains the following language, "Delaware is rich with the history of Native American tribes such as the Nanticoke and Lenni Lenape," there does not appear to be a provision in the themes section for a specific area devoted solely to Native American culture. In my view, it would be a travesty to dedicate such an historical monument to the early Swedish, Finnish and Dutch settlers without also honoring the heritage and legacy of the Native American tribes who were the earliest inhabitants of what eventually became the State of Delaware, and whose descendents continue to reside in the State and the region.

On January 6, 2011, the Interfaith Council of Central Delaware and the Native American Tribal Leaders of Delaware cosponsored a forum entitled, "Spirituality and Governance." I am attaching the summary of the conference, which was held in Dover, and which presented the views and concerns of Delaware's Native American leaders, as well as the responses of representatives from the Delaware Department of Education and Delaware State University. Although the conference did not touch specifically on the Park proposal, Native American concerns about their history and contributions being better integrated and recognized throughout Delaware's educational system should be considered when planning a project of this historical significance. I hope you will incorporate their views and perspectives as you proceed with plans to create the Delaware Coastal Heritage Park. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ellen O. Wasfi

286 Pine Valley Road

Dover, DE 19904-7111

(302) 734-1545