

Meeting with Rich  
St Cloud City Hall Rich's Office

Tues August 18, 2015  
2 pm – 3 pm

Attendees: Eunice Aadjei, Rich Cousins, Judy Foster, Rachel Wexelbaum

Updates re: Procedures for Investigating Claims: A Level 2 investigator can receive a call or a visit in regard to a complaint or claim. The Human Rights Officer may fill out an intake form, but this information is sent to the State. The State Dept of Human Rights will then receive those cases and disseminate them back to the Level 2 investigators. Rich is a Level 2 investigator.

Updates re: Rich's Duties and Operating Procedures: Rich is a MAPE union employee. Their union contract is very strict in regard to working a set number of hours / schedule per week. Anything that falls outside of those working hours, Rich must apply for permission from the State Dept of Human Rights to do. Most of the time those extra things are rejected, because the MAPE union contract states that Rich must get time and a half for those extras off his regular working schedule. This includes outreach activities, and is the reason why Rich abruptly stopped attending events. Now he has to ask permission to do them. The State Human Rights Commissioner wants to be *the* face of outreach. The Human Rights Commission can request his attendance from the State Dept of Human Rights, and see if that would be more successful.

Funding for Rich's Office: Senators Pedersen and Knoblach both voted to keep the Human Rights Office in St Cloud, and funded. Because funding now comes from the state (which affects Rich's caseload, now making him responsible for cases all over the state and not just the region) the cities have pulled back their funding. For this reason, the Joint Powers Board has been disbanded, as those cities used to have some say in the Human Rights Office affairs if they provided funding.

Community Relations: On a state level, NAACP and Council of Black Minnesotans currently in conflict with Officer Lindsey. Rich advised us to talk to Denise Fale about this. Eunice is scheduling a meeting with the Commissioner himself, to find out if he can meet after the September SCSU forum.

Role of Human Rights Commission? No response in regard to the future of the commission. The Commission will be sure to communicate the appropriate claims process to those who ask, and will continue to do outreach events for the office, until further notice.

Meeting Adjourned 3:00 pm