

From: ROBERT & Margie READ <bread1@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 7, 2023 8:24 PM
To: BOS-Clerk of the Board; BOS-District I; BOS-District II; BOS-District III; BOS-District IV; BOS-District V
Cc: ROBERT & Margie READ
Subject: Agenda Item 23-0618
Attachments: Ltr BOS 09May2023.docx

Importance: High

To Clerk of the Board, El Dorado County Supervisors-
Please make sure that the Board members receive this attached letter before the Board Meeting on
Tuesday, 9 May 2023.
Thank you for your assistance in this.

Margie Lopez Read

Letter to El Dorado County Board of Supervisors;

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 23-0618, Consent Calendar

I have been a resident of El Dorado County for more than 41 years, and have been engaged in multiple volunteer efforts to improve the community through the schools, public events, regular columnist on running and health in the Mountain Democrat, and so much more. I've always felt safe in the governing of this county, but the last few years, this sense of safety has gone.

The actions that this Board of Supervisors has taken have continued to make me believe that we are headed in a wrong and dangerous direction. The elimination of Implicit Bias Training for the majority of County appointees is one. The elimination of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) is another.

Based on the testimony presented by the public at your Board Meeting about the HRC, overwhelming opposition to your action was clear. Yet, without articulating any specific reasons, you did it anyway.

To be clear, it is equally appalling that you believed that the addition of One Sentence into the BOS Good Governance Manual should be sufficient to appease us. I find it insulting that you would think this miniscule and meaningless non-action should give us any comfort.

It is clear that all but two of you are opposed to the HRC for unarticulated reasons and that you are determined to continue down this path. I suggest that you consider what you have done again and reconsider your actions. OR, at the very least, I suggest that you additionally incorporate the following:

1. Include the mention of relations with all genders and LGBTQ. It was notable that you left that out in your one-sentence governance description.
2. Define a specific method and contact to whom individuals that have become victims of human rights violations can safely report them.
3. Determine what minimal steps will be taken by the Board when such violations occur.
4. Find a way to publicly share now – and at periodic intervals – the adoption by the BOS of their commitment and actions that have been taken.

These four suggestions will give your one sentence a bit of credibility. Without them, your one sentence addition to the Governance Manual will become forgotten in less time than it takes for a child to blow a bubble and for that bubble to make its way to the ground and pop.

Regards,

Margie Lopez Read
Placerville

From: Ruth Michelson <ruthmichelson@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 11:58 AM
To: BOS-Clerk of the Board
Subject: BOS Agenda item 5 (23-0618) , May 9, 2023

Dear Kim- Will you please distribute this email to the Board of Supervisors, the CAO, and attach this email to **item 23-0618, Consent item 5**, on tomorrow's agenda. Thank you. - Ruth

Dear Board of Supervisors and CAO-

As Chair Wendy Thomas promised, the Human Right's Commission's by-laws purpose statement is being inserted into your Good Governance Handbook. I appreciate the promise kept.

"1. Embody and promote tolerance and mutual respect among all persons and be committed to fostering peaceful relations between residents and visitors of different races, religions, national origins, and other characteristics listed in Government Code section 11135 in order to increase good will and public peace in El Dorado County."

As Chair Thomas stated previously at a BOS meeting, the buck stops with you, the Board, when it comes to Human Rights issues. **The question is, besides this one sentence in your handbook, what in practical terms does the BOS plan to do?** How can the public inform the BOS of their concerns, since you're in charge? Who can they call in confidence? Not everyone is a letter writer, not everyone is a public speaker, not everyone wants their problems made public. And, once the Board is informed, what do they plan to do? A statement without an implementation plan lacks meaning.

Looking back, your idea of marrying the Human Rights Commission to an existing non-profit was a mis-match. Your plans to hand over the HRC commission to high school youth through their Amnesty International organization is an over-reach.

The whole process of disbanding the HRC commission was dis-heartening. I spent an hour talking to my supervisor about this and heard a long list of purported commissioner and supervisor missteps over the years. My supervisor had a prescribed idea of what would have been appropriate for the HRC; to compile a list of county resources related to human rights. This is a very limited task. If the commissioners were acting in a manner out-of-bounds, it was up to each supervisor to counsel their appointee. If that failed, then the appointee should have been replaced. The failure of the HRC, if in fact there was a failure, is your failure.

The process of disbanding the HRC brings up the question of **"who are your constituents?"** And, when do you choose to listen to them, and when not. And, when you don't, when are you simply acting on your personal preferences and biases? Thinking back to times you've taken action, and responded to constituents on divisive issues, I wonder if your constituents are the people who fill the board room, yell and interrupt, call names, threaten others, bring in offensive banners? Is that what it takes to be heard and represented?

75 letters asked you not to disband the HRC, and one supported disbandment. **But, I was told those letters didn't count.** Why not? Because, they were a result of a "call to action", they weren't specific

enough, and the public didn't understand the issue. How demeaning is that? And, there were all of those who came to tell their painful personal stories of discrimination to the BOS. What outlet for resolution will you provide them? Madame Chair, I ask you, what process are you and the Board offering your constituents of the county?

All types of inaccurate claims were made about the HRC; that they only represented one agenda, that they were racist. This was unfounded. These claims created a partisan issue of the HRC. Claims were made that all commissioners were of a particular party; not true. For example, Commissioner Carla Carr is a Republican. It was shameful that the central and universal importance of human rights was minimized to petty partisan politics by a few loud detractors and sometimes by the BOS. One Supervisor repeated response to HRC related questions was "it's become too political." Really? No further explanation was provided.

To close, the legacy of this board is not only in its accomplishments, but also in the work noticeably not done, the work not recognized as important, and the destruction of government facets not to the board's liking. I am grateful to the two board members who recognized the societal importance of not only the Human Rights Commission, but also Implicit Bias Training. To the others; you have unfortunately taken us a step backwards.

Sincerely,

Ruth Michelson
District 4