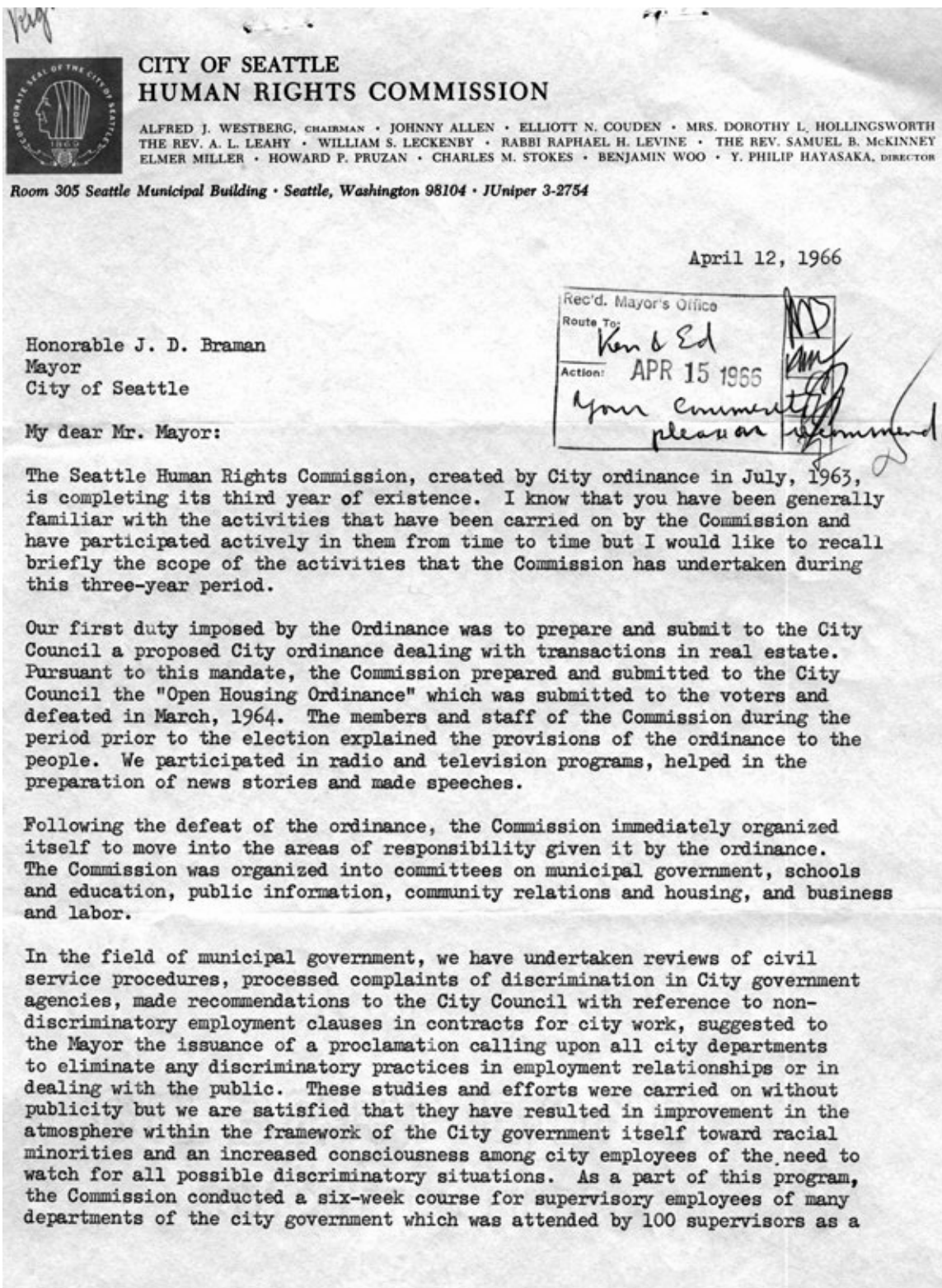


Citation: Alfred Westberg to Mayor Braman, April 12, 1966. Folder "Human Rights Commission 1966," Box 35. Seattle Office of the Mayor Records, 5210-01. Seattle Municipal Archives.



-2-

pilot course and which has generally been regarded as a successful effort. Plans are underway for the expansion of this type of course so that it can be made available to a larger number of people and in a fairly short period of time. Modifications in the subject matter of the course are being made in accordance with recommendations which grew out of the analysis of the course given.

In the field of community relations, the Human Rights Commission has moved into emergency situations whenever they arose. The office staff has processed and reported upon a number of instances of claimed improper practices by law enforcement agencies. Our staff has participated in the training of police officers in the Police Cadet Academy. We have begun the gigantic task of organizing neighborhood or community advisory councils in various parts of the city as a source of information from the various communities as well as a means of conveying to the communities the educational materials and efforts of the Commission.

In the field of housing, the defeat of the ordinance temporarily arrested the progress hoped for in that direction but we have met with representatives of real estate organizations and, perhaps, have been influential in the adoption of a code of practices by the real estate boards of the State of Washington, which is an expression of a policy that the real estate brokers have a duty to remain neutral on questions of maintenance of racial composition of neighborhoods.

In the field of employment, our Business and Labor Committee has been very busy and has only recently established a Job Market in the central area of the city which is being financed by contributions from interested members of the business community. This should help find people available for employment or training for employment to which they can be referred.

At the time of the shooting incident in June, 1965, members and staff of the Commission promptly met with the Mayor and leaders of local civil rights groups, and called the Community Relations Service for counsel. We made recommendations for action by the Chief of Police, creation of a Community Relations Unit in the Police Department, and modifications in the content of the Police Cadet training curriculum. These recommendations have been approved and are now being implemented in most respects.

The above brief review only hints at the scope of the activities that the Commission has carried on. With a staff of two professionals and two clerical people, I am sure you realize that a great deal of this work was done by Commission members who are totally volunteers. I doubt that any group of people who accepted a public responsibility have dedicated more of their personal effort and time to their public duties without any compensation whatever. We have been considering ways in which we believe the ordinance creating the Commission and the Commission could be strengthened and we submit the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

We would like the ordinance to be amended to increase the size of the Commission from its present 12 to 21 members, appointed for terms of three years each, the 12 members to be appointed in 1966 to be appointed with staggered terms of one,

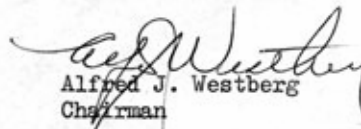
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two and three years so that one-third of all the positions would become vacant each year. We believe there should be a broader representation of the community than it is possible to obtain with only 12 members. As long as it is going to be expected that the Commission members themselves will have to actively participate in the Commission's work, it will be easier to get able people to accept appointment to this Commission if the work is more divided than it is at the present time. The Commission should truly represent the whole community geographically, as well as bring to bear upon this problem the talents of more varied experiences than it has been possible to enlist on a 12 member board. We respectfully request that the City Council and the Mayor request the Corporation Counsel to prepare, and that they pass, an amendment to the ordinance creating the Human Rights Commission, increasing its size to 21 persons to be appointed in the same manner as presently and serving the three year terms as above outlined.

The foregoing is the unanimous recommendation of the Human Rights Commission, based upon a report from our Committee on Municipal Government.

In the field of human relations, it is often impossible to point to achievements or even recognizable progress. We do believe that the Commission has helped in the last three years by providing an official agency to advise the Mayor and other public officials, and by carrying on an almost continuous public information program. In these ways I hope we have contributed to general public understanding of the realities of the community problems of a multi-racial society. This should prepare Seattle people to meet these serious and immediate needs with intelligence and understanding.

Sincerely yours,


Alfred J. Westberg
Chairman

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