



PEACE & JUSTICE COMMISSION

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 25, 2011

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Peace and Justice Commission
Submitted By: Eric Brenman, Secretary, Peace and Justice Commission
Subject: Ending Racial or Ethnic Stereotypes in Team Names, Mascots and Other Public Titles

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution deploring and opposing the use of racial or ethnic stereotypes in the names or titles of businesses, professional, sport or their public entities when the affected group has not chosen the name itself; and that the City of Berkeley joins the call to eliminate the stereotypical use of American Indian names and images as mascots in sports and other events and to provide meaningful education about real American Indian people, current American Indian issues, and the rich variety of American Indian cultures in the U.S.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At its regular meeting of June 6, 2011, the Peace and Justice Commission unanimously adopted the following recommendation to the Berkeley City Council:

Adopt a Resolution deploring and opposing the use of racial or ethnic stereotypes in the names or titles of businesses, professional, sport or their public entities when the affected group has not chosen the name itself; and that the City of Berkeley joins the call to eliminate the stereotypical use of American Indian names and images as mascots in sports and other events and to provide meaningful education about real American Indian people, current American Indian issues, and the rich variety of American Indian cultures in the U.S.

M/S/C: (Kenin/Litman)

Ayes: Abdul-Khabir; Bohn; Deger (*temporary appointee*); Kenin; Lee (*temporary appointee*); Lippman; Litman; Maran; Meola; Nicely; Rabkin; Rueda; Siegel; Sherman

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Masri (excused); Mungovan

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Peace and Justice Commission, consistent with its mandate (B.M.C. Section 3.68) to promote peace and justice, locally, nationally and internationally, recommends Council approval of this recommendation.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager takes no position on the contents of the Peace and Justice Commission's report or recommendation.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

- 1) Resolution
- 2) Background Links and Reference Materials

RESOLUTION NO. –N.S.

ENDING RACIAL OR ETHNIC STEROTYPES IN TEAM NAMES, MASCOTS AND
OTHER PUBLIC TITLES

WHEREAS, it is the mission of the Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission to advise the Council and the School Board on issues of peace and justice; and

WHEREAS, the use of racial or ethnic stereotypes in the names, nicknames, or titles of business, professional, sport or other public entitles is frequently demeaning, whether intended as such or not; and

WHEREAS, demeaning symbols create an environment in which degrading acts become more acceptable; and

WHEREAS, many teams still sport names such as "Indians," "Braves," "Redskins," "Chiefs," "Redmen," etc.; and

WHEREAS, such names are degrading and promote practices that trivialize and demean people and religious beliefs and symbols; and

WHEREAS, the use of derogatory American Indian images such as mascots by public schools perpetuate a stereotypical image of American Indians that is likely to have a negative impact on the self-esteem of American Indian children; and

WHEREAS, negative images and stereotypes about American Indians as mascots contribute to a hostile learning environment that affirms the negative images and stereotypes that persist in America about American Indians; and

WHEREAS, American Indians as mascots is a negative means of appropriating and denigrating a cultural identity that involves the display and depiction of ceremonial symbols and practices that may have religious significance to American Indians; and

WHEREAS, to continue the negative use of American Indian's tribal names and images is an offensive and disgusting practice that would be considered intolerable were other ethnic groups or minorities depicted in a similar manner; and

WHEREAS, on April 13, 2001, the United States Commission on Civil Rights issued a Statement on the Use of Native American Images and Nicknames as Sports Symbols that called for an end to the use of American Indian images and team names by non-Indian schools; that stereotyping of any racial, ethnic, religious or other groups when promoted by public education institutions, teach all students that stereotyping of minority groups is acceptable, a dangerous lesson in a diverse society; that schools have a responsibility to educate their students; they should not use influence to perpetuate misrepresentations of any culture or people.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley deploras and opposes the use of racial or ethnic stereotypes in the names or titles of business, professional, sport or their public entitles when the affected group has not chosen the name itself.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley joins the call to eliminate the stereotypical use of American Indian names and images as mascots in sports and other events and to provide meaningful education about real American Indian people, current American Indian issues, and, the rich variety of American Indian cultures in the U.S. A record signature copy of said Resolution to be on file in the office of the City Clerk.

Background links and reference materials:

The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes, Resolution No. 2001 - 08,
<http://aistm.org/fr.2001.civilized.tribes.htm>

Statement on Team Names http://aistm.org/american_jewish_committee.htm

California Racial Mascots Act ftp://leginfo.public.ca.gov/pub/05-06/bill/asm/ab_0001-0050/ab_13_cfa_20050629_161321_sen_floor.html

