



**Request for City Council Committee Action  
From the City Attorney's Office**

Date: May 11, 2005  
To: Ways & Means/Budget Committee  
Referral to:

**Subject:** Felicia Ricks v. City of Minneapolis  
MDCR File No.: A4163-PS-RP-1A  
Felicia Ricks v. City of Minneapolis  
MDCR File No. A2192-PS-1A  
James Ricks v. City of Minneapolis  
MDCR File No. 2336-PS-1A

**Recommendation:** That the City Council approve settlement of the above-captioned charges of discrimination for a total of \$3,700.00, plus certain non-monetary relief as described below and that the City Council authorize the City Attorney's Office to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the settlement.

**Previous Directives:**

Prepared by: James A. Moore, Assistant City Attorney Phone: 673-2063

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jay M. Heffern  
City Attorney

Presenter in Committee: Jay M. Heffern, City Attorney

**Financial Impact** (Check those that apply)

- No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.  
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Other financial impact (Explain): From Fund/Org 6900 150 1500 4000
- Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

**Community Impact:**

City Goals: Build Community

**Background/Supporting Information**

This matter involves three separate, but related, charges of discrimination filed with the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights against the Minneapolis Police Department by Felicia and James Ricks. Until recently, the Ricks resided at 2918 Morgan Avenue North. They were involved in an ongoing dispute with their neighbors. Police have repeatedly been called to the neighborhood by both the Ricks and their neighbors. On March 16, 2002, Felicia Ricks called Minneapolis police to report that she was being harassed by her neighbors. When the officers arrived some of the neighbors reported that Felicia Ricks had sprayed them with mace. Police officers approached Ms. Ricks and attempted to pat frisk her for the mace. Ms. Ricks resisted the effort to pat search and the officers struggled with her. Ms. Ricks' husband, James Ricks, stepped forward to help. In addition, Ms. Ricks also called to a large German shepherd in her yard which began trying to jump over the fence. Officers ordered Mr. Ricks to stand back and to control the dog. In the meantime, the two groups of neighbors continued to argue with each other and racial slurs were hurled. Complainants allege that the officers used excessive force and used racial language against Ms. Ricks. Ms. Ricks was arrested and taken to jail on a charge of obstructing legal process. Mr. Ricks was cited for obstruction without force. Ms. Ricks was not charged with using mace because the officers determined that she might have reasonably been afraid of the large group of hostile neighbors who confronted her.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Ricks filed charges of discrimination with the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights alleging that they had been treated unfairly based on their race. While those charges were pending in the Department of Civil Rights, one of the involved officers, Officer Taylor, issued Ms. Ricks a citation for assault based on a report from a Minneapolis animal control warden. Ms. Ricks filed a separate charge of discrimination alleging retaliation by Officer Taylor for her filing of the earlier charge. Complainants allege post-traumatic stress disorder for James Ricks and accompanying medical expenses. Complainants also incurred the cost of the defense of criminal charges against them. The criminal charges were dismissed. Complainants also claimed as damages the expense of moving from the neighborhood.

The Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights investigated the charges and made a finding of probable cause that discrimination had occurred. Pursuant to standard policy, the parties engaged in a mediation which resulted in a settlement, contingent on City Council approval. The proposed settlement calls for the City to conduct diversity training for police officers in the 2006 in-service training cycle, a letter of apology from Inspector Donald Harris of the Minneapolis Police Department and payment to the Complainants in the amount of \$3,700.00. This payment resolves all pending charges and any claims that may have arisen from the incidents in question. The City Attorney's Office and the Police Department recommend this settlement.