

Dearborn backs down, removes JC billboards

DETROIT — Suburban Dearborn's controversial anti-colored bulletin boards were down Thursday and the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was expected to issue its first "cease and desist" order at its next full meeting, Jan. 26, to ban such material permanently.

Co-chairmen John Feikens and Damon Keith, and Secretary of the Commission Sidney M. Shevitz, sat as a panel Thursday in the first such hearing held by the commission, to inquire into the Dearborn complaints, at the University of Michigan Dearborn campus.

It had been charged by the Dearborn Community Council, a citizens group, that Mayor Orville L. Hubbard and James B. Dick, director of public works, were responsible for maintaining bulletin boards in the Dearborn City Hall, Youth Center and Police Headquarters for no

other purpose than to degrade and defame colored people.

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THE HEARING PANEL ruled that that charge was true. Neither Hubbard nor Dick appeared. Feikens ordered the commission counsel, Assistant Attorney General Carl Levin, to contact Ralph B. Guy Jr., Dearborn city attorney, when the 10 a.m. hearing hour had passed, and Levin reported that no appearance was planned because the boards had been taken down and Guy considered the issue "moot," or disposed of.

The panel ordered the case to proceed and Levin examined 10 witnesses and produced 21 exhibits.

After recessing to consider the case, Feikens, speaking for the panel, said that "the overwhelming evidence" showed the allegations to be true.

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HE ADDED that "the very compelling reason" why the Council proceeded was that "there are countless thousand and thousands of decent, good-hearted people throughout the State who agree with the great aims of civil rights.

"It is essential," he continued, "that the public be advised of all sides of this question. Each may draw his own conclusion as to why the boards came down."

Levin explored the "sides" with commission witnesses and exhibits and with statements, depositions and legal replies made at various times by Hubbard and Guy.