

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday September 4th, 2019, 6:30 pm**

Hickory Hall, Lowe Park  
4500 N 10th St, Marion, IA

**Commissioners Present:**

Danielle Brazant  
Dave Baumler  
Frederick Brown  
Kent Jackson  
Bret Nilles  
Renaë Forsyth-Christy  
Selita Jansen

**Commissioners Absent:**

Okpara Rice  
Jenifer Tibbets  
Kim Eiler  
Chris Stoner

**Staff/Other Present:**

Amal Eltahir, City of Marion  
Janet Abejo-Parker, Cedar Rapids CRC Interim Director  
City Mayor, Nick AbouAssaly

**I. Call to Order**

Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Nilles, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

**II. Roll Call/Introductions**

Commissioners, staff, and the public introduced themselves.

**III. Public Response**

City Mayor, Nick AbouAssaly, spoke passionately about the commission's role in equity and contribution to the quality of life in Marion expressing his appreciation to the work being done and congratulating the commission on this milestone.

Ex-Mayor Paul Rehn highlighted the positive impact of volunteerism on the community and thanked Marion Civil rights Commission for their dedication and accomplishments.

Library Director, Holli Trenary, expressed her appreciation for the support that the commission been giving the library and celebrated library/commission partnership.

IV. **Director's Report**

CR Interim Director, Janet Abejo-Parker, introduced herself and her relationship with the commission. She stated that she has been with the CRCR Commission for 9 years and she helped assist in the MCRC formation. Janet spoke highly of the city staff and commissioners. She gave an update on Cedar Rapids recruitment efforts to fill in the Executive Director position and shared a highlight of upcoming outreach activities and events.

V. **Approval of Minutes from August Meeting**

Commissioner Baumler moved to approve the August minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Jensen, motion passed.

VI. **Report from Chair**

Commissioner Nilles spoke about the purpose and the role of the commission in protecting civil rights. The chair gave a brief history and an overview of what the commission been focusing on in terms of outreach and accomplishments congratulating and recognizing fellow commissioners on their hard work and positive impact.

VII. **Committee Reports**

*Executive Committee*- Commissioner Jackson

The committee met to plan the agenda and the 5-year Anniversary event. Briefly, Commissioners discussed planning for upcoming community events.

*Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison* - Renae Forsyth-Christy

CRCRC met on August 21<sup>st</sup>, commissioners discussed assignments and a process for selecting commissioners and chair.

Stefanie Munsterman shared success with social media and news about working with the school district on conflict resolution and discrimination training.

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

- a. MCRC 5-Year Anniversary
- b. Events:
  - i. Farmer Market-Uptown Marion-August 10<sup>th</sup> Commissioners Forsyth-Christy & Jansen represented the commission
  - ii. Intercultural Festival-Tuma Soccer Complex-August 24<sup>th</sup> - Mayor, Commissioners Nilles & Baumler represented the commission. Event was well attended event.

IX. **New Business**

- a. Upcoming Events
  - i. Five Seasons Stand Down - September 6th. – Commissioners Eiler & Jackson
  - ii. Marion Swamp Fox Parade-Sept.28<sup>th</sup> 9:30 Am-Commissioners Baumler & Rice

X. **Good of the Order**

Mayor Nick AbouAssaly attended the Intercultural Festival at Tuma and read proclamations of Support for both Victims of Hate Crime and Intercultural Day.

Commissioner Brown gave an update on the grant program. The sub-committee is planning to meet to discuss grant application process and timeline.

XI. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Jackson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Brazant, the meeting adjourned at 7:26pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 2nd, 2019 at 6:30 pm at Marion City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, Marion, Iowa.

*Respectfully submitted by Amal Eltabir, City of Marion*