

MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday October 2nd, 2019, 6:30 pm

Marion City Hall
1225 6th Avenue, Marion, IA 52302

Commissioners Present:

Chris Stoner
Dave Baumler
Frederick Brown
Jenifer Tibbets
Kent Jackson
Bret Nilles

Commissioners Absent:

Okpara Rice
Danielle Brazant
Kim Eiler
Renaë Forsyth-Christy
Selita Jansen

Staff/Other Present:

Amal Eltahir, City of Marion
Deb Krebill, Fire Chief

- I. **Call to Order**
Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Nilles, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:37pm.
- II. **Roll Call/Introductions**
Commissioners, staff, and the public introduced themselves.
- III. **Speaker & Discussion: Health and Equity Disparities among Immigrants-** Nicole Novak, PhD, Social epidemiologist and community health researcher- University of Iowa Immigrant and Refugee Health and Well-being Research Group.
Introducing the speaker, Commissioner Nilles stated he heard about the researcher and social epidemiologist, Dr. Novak on NPR. She was talking about federal policy implications on the community and the state of Iowa.
Speaker shed some light on a humanitarian need, a consequence of recent federal immigration policy. Researchers studied impacts of the policy on Iowa communities and economies asserting that stressful events such as ICE raids have financial repercussions and serious health implications on families especially in-utero and infants. To help with outreach Nicole will share a list of organizations in Iowa that help Immigrants with the Commission.

IV. **Public Response**

The was no public response.

V. **Director's Report**

Commissioner Baumler expressed need for more data and analytics on complaints' categories to direct commission education efforts.

Commissioner Baumler moved to approve CRCRC invoice for administrative work, seconded by commissioner Jackson, motion passed.

VI. **Approval of Minutes from September Meeting**

Commissioner Baumler moved to approve the September minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Stoner, motion passed.

VII. **Report from Chair**

Commissioner Nilles shared invitation regarding Protecting Places of Worship event. Event will be held on October 22nd at Cedar Rapids public library. Commissioner Baumler shared interest in hosting similar events locally.

Commission received a letter and an agreement from Iowa Civil Rights Commission. The letter talks about a change in procedure for case intake and resolution reimbursement. Commissioner Baumler expressed concern and a need for a detailed case history report with past expenditure to make an informed decision on budget. Commissioner Tibbets explained that the terms are nonnegotiable, and that the agreement is an acknowledgement and an understanding of new procedure and funding limit. Commissioner Baumler moved to approve agreement with the state Civil Rights Commission, seconded by Commissioner Jackson, motion passed.

VIII. **Committee Reports**

a. *Executive Committee*- Commissioner Nilles

Commissioners suggested moving the regular meeting date a week earlier to have enough time for correspondence and speaker's coordination.

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

No report.

c. *Grants & Strategic Planning Committee Update*

Jene Peterman, Director of Homeless and Housing at Waypoint gave an update on homelessness grant, as part of grant process. Waypoint received \$5000 grant to serve homeless Marion households with minor children in the school system. Fund is applied to help category three homelessness, defined as households that are doubling up with other families and identified as homeless through homelessness liaison at the school. The organization does coordinated entry and help with housing down payment. The intent is to divert and avoid families going through the process to shelter. So far, Waypoint received 5 referrals from Linn Mar, one is already housed.

Barrier that the organization running into is the stigma around receiving financial assistance.

Commissioner Tibbets stressed the need for reaching out and educating landlords. Committee updated and finalized grant timeline and will work with communication committee to roll out.

IX. Unfinished Business

- a. MCRC 5-Year Anniversary
Commissioners will think about ideas for a spring event.
- b. Events:
 - i. Festival Latino Sept 15th - No one was able to represent the commission
 - ii. Marion Swamp Fox Parade-Sept.28th 9:30 AM. No one was representing the commission

X. New Business

- a. Upcoming Events
 - i. History Makers Gala – October 3rd Commissioners Brown and Nilles will attend on behalf of MCRC
 - ii. Protecting Places of Worship- October 22nd

XI. Good of the Order

Commissioner Tibbets invited the commission to a two-part homelessness event hosted by the Linn County Public Awareness Committee and sponsored by the Housing Trust Fund for Linn County.

XII. Adjournment

Commissioner Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Stoner, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.

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

Respectfully submitted by Amal Eltabir, City of Marion