

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 6, 2019, 6:30 pm**

Marion City Hall
1225 6th Avenue
Marion, IA 52302

Commissioners Present:

Mr. Dave Baumler
Ms. Danielle Brazant
Mr. Frederick Brown
Ms. Kim Gordon
Mr. Kent Jackson
Mr. Bret Nilles
Mr. Okpara Rice

Commissioners Absent:

Ms. Renae Forsyth-Christy
Ms. Selita Jansen
Mr. Chris Stoner
Ms. Jennifer Tibbits

Staff/Other Present:

Ms. Amal Eltahir, Assistant to the City Manager
Ms. Amanda Kaufman, Deputy City Manager

I. Call to Order

Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Nilles, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

II. Roll Call/Introductions

Commissioners and staff did roll call.

III. Public Response

There was no public response.

IV. Director's Report

Commissioner Nilles, Chair mentioned the Community & Cultural Expo event on March 9th and asked for volunteers.

V. Approval of Minutes from January Meeting

Commissioner Baumler moved to approve the January minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson, the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Report from Chair

Commissioner Nilles complimented the Marion State of the City and associated videos. He inquired about Marion's population estimates stats and whether we are at the bench mark for more funding opportunities. Amanda mentioned that benchmark would be reached at 50,000.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee-Commissioner Jackson

Commissioner Jackson, vice chair, stated he marked items on the strategic plan to be updated. Commissioners Rice and Brown volunteered to work on the strategic plan updates with him. He also shared there will be an upcoming speaker series in March on the LGBT Center in Cedar Rapids. We are working on solidifying a date for a Star Power train-the-trainer event.

b. Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison

Amanda Kaufman provided an update from Commissioner Forsyth-Christy, which was provided electronically. There will be an executive search to hire LaShelia Yates' replacement; the search will be national, but concentrated in the Midwest. The Cedar Rapids Commission elected a new chair (Leland Freie) and a new vice chair (Anthony Arrington); these positions will go into effect in May.

VIII. Old Business

a. Grant Program finalist discussion-Commissioner Brown

Commissioner Brown provided a recap on the grant program and shared that the application portal closed January 8th. A sub-committee met twice to review applications. Application were evaluated using a rubric scale. He stated that both applications are strong and deserving. Committee recommends awarding both \$5,000. Awards will be distributed in March after the recommendations are approved by the City Council on February 21.

i. Motion to recommend grant awards.

Commissioner Jackson presented a motion to recommend grant awards as discussed. Seconded by Commissioner Brazant, the motion passed unanimously. Commissioners thanked Commissioner Brown, Rice, and Nilles on their hard work on the grant process.

IX. New Business

a. Upcoming Events

- i. Black History Month Proclamation: February 7
- ii. Board & Commission Reception: February 11
- iii. Adam Foss – Presentation at Coe: February 15
- iv. Uncommon Allies -film screening at Coe: February 23
- v. Community Cultural Celebration & Expo – CR Public Library: March 9

X. Good of the Order

Commissioner Nilles mentioned a story pointing out that black students are at disadvantage, manifested in lower graduation rates and suspension frequency in a Cedar Rapids school district compared to white counterparts.

Commissioner Nilles mentioned the Marion homeless task force is a diverse group that is doing some great work; it is being organized by the Marion library.

Commissioner Gordon shared that 25 people will be out tonight for the annual homeless population count.

XI. Adjournment

Commissioner Nilles adjourned the meeting at 7:17

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

Respectfully submitted by Amal Eltabir, City of Marion

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