

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday November 4th, 2020, 6:30 pm  
Location: Zoom Webinar ID: 824 2037 4171**

**Commissioners Present:**

Frederick Brown  
Jenifer Tibbets  
Bret Nilles  
Chris Stoner  
Okpara Rice  
Kent Jackson  
Selita Jansen  
Kim Eiler  
Dave Baumler

**Commissioners Absent:**

Danielle Brazant  
Renaë Forsyth-Christy

**Staff/Other Present:**

Amal Eltahir, City of Marion  
Stefanie Munsterman-Scriven, Executive Director  
Mike Kitsmiller, Marion Police Chief  
Sunshine McDonalds

- I. **Call to Order**  
Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Brown, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.
- II. **Roll Call/Introductions**  
Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.
- III. **Guest Speaker-** Marion PD Data Analyst-Sunshine McDonalds & Chief Kitsmiller  
  
Marion Police Chief, Mike Kitsmiller followed up on a data request presenting detail on incident response statistics. The commission previously requested details on the demographic's breakdown of the use of force data particularly on the African American group and further details on charges. Chief pointed out the inadequacy of the available data due to limitation of the existing record management system and the steps that the department is taking to upgrade/invest in a new system. The department is planning on collecting demographics data on all traffic stops to get ahead of racial profiling. The

process is expected to take 18 months. In the meanwhile, Data Analyst, Sunshine McDonalds is working on a transparency dashboard. Marion PD is open to feedback and welcome suggestions. Sunshine presented the under-development transparency web platform and the department's plans on engaging the community. The page includes diversity and use of force demographics stats and expected be a resource for all crime stats and calls for service. Information is put in a user-friendly format such as dashboards. Data Analyst is asking for the commission's feedback on the content and design. The platform will be ready for roll out soon.

Commissioners discussed the Use of Force Policy.

Foundation 2 are interviewing next week for the mental health liaison program.

Chief anticipates a full-time resource working alongside staff by January 1<sup>st</sup>. The Commission expressed gratitude for the department's commitment to the civil rights issues and appreciates the chief's partnership.

#### **IV. Public Response**

On behalf of the Marion Alliance for Racial Equity, Circe Stumbo appreciates the progress that the city is making. In her comment Circe touched on: the Marion Independent School mascot decision, the City's quick response to the insensitive behavior from a P& Z Commissioner, and eagerness for the upcoming inaugural Equity Taskforce meeting on November 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### **V. Director's Report**

Staff continue to work remotely due to COVID-19 impacts. The department hired a new investigator and is interviewing in November to refill the vacant senior admin assistant position. The Department has not received any intake or inquiry for Marion since July.

Outreach and education activities:

1. Speaking engagements: presentation to landlords and an Iowa Ideas Conference
2. Civil Rights virtual book study discussing "So you want to Talk about Race" through October and "How to be Anti-racist" every third Wednesday of the month
3. A 21-Day Equity Challenge in partnership with United Way on a community conversation around equity challenge and focusing on next steps, is planned for the second week of November

#### **VI. Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Rice moved to approve the November minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Tibbets, motion passed.

#### **VII. Report from Chair**

None

**VIII. Committee Reports**

- a. *Executive Committee*- Commissioners met on October 2<sup>nd</sup> to set the agenda. Community survey was discussed.
- b. *Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison* - Renae Forsyth-Christy  
No report
- c. *Communication and outreach Committee* -Commissioner Stoner  
Commissioner reported on Civil Rights branded social media posts went out reminding people about voting and the executive order restoring voting rights.

**IX. Unfinished Business**

- a. Community Equity & Inclusion Survey  
Commissioners discussed survey responses and expressed interest in publishing the survey results and rolling out a second survey with adjusted questions and the hope of getting more responses.
- b. Community Equity Taskforce  
First meeting will be held on November 12<sup>th</sup>. To help with gender balance in the Taskforce, Commissioner Tibbetts will permanently hold a seat along with Commissioner Brown, on behalf of the commission.

**X. New Business**

- a. Commission Reappointments  
Three members are up for reappointments. Commissioners Rice and Brown expressed interest in renewing their commitment to serve. Commissioner Eiler will not be seeking reappointment after her term ends on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Applications to fill her seat are now open for those who are interested in serving. Interviews will be held in December.

**XI. Good of the Order**

Commissioners Tibbetts mentioned Linn County Continuum of Care putting together a virtual event and an interest in two City proclamations for National Homelessness and Hunger Week awareness and a Day of remembrance of those who lost their lives to homelessness held on the longest night of the year, December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Commissioner Nilles motioned to support the proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Eiler, motion passed.  
Commissioner Rice reflected on the lesson learned from the intensive incident from the Planning & Zoning Commissioner and that commissioners should keep in mind that they are representing the City.

**XII. Adjournment**

Commissioner Rice moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Bauml, the meeting adjourned at 7:41 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 at 6:30 pm Via Zoom