

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday December 2nd, 2020, 6:30 pm
Location: Zoom Webinar ID: 850 8484 8847**

Commissioners Present:

Frederick Brown
Jenifer Tibbets
Bret Nilles
Chris Stoner
Okpara Rice
Kent Jackson
Selita Jansen
Kim Eiler
Danielle Brazant
Renaë Forsyth-Christy

Commissioners Absent:

Dave Baumler

Staff/Other Present:

Amal Eltahir, City of Marion
Stefanie Munsterman-Scriven, Executive Director
Ana Clymer

- I. **Call to Order**
Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Jackson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.
- II. **Roll Call/Introductions**
Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.
- III. **Public Response**
None

IV. **Director's Report**

Staff continue to work remotely due to COVID-19. Director gave presentation to health care workers about Unconscious bias impact on quality of care and will be partnering with United Way on 21-Day Equity Challenge.

Outreach and education activities:

Civil Rights virtual book study continue to discuss "So you want to Talk about Race" and "How to be Anti-racist" every third Wednesday of the month

Commissioners gave a positive feedback on the director report new format.

In terms of statistics, the department received comparable calls from Marion residents however, higher complaints from Cedar Rapids residents than from Marion.

V. **Approval of Minutes**

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

VI. **Report from Chair**

Commissioner Jackson is grateful for the people who showed interest in Civil Rights meetings and issues.

Out of concern about its impact, Commissioner shared news about an airline redefining "service animals" limiting the definition to dogs.

VII. **Committee Reports**

- a. *Executive Committee*- Commissioners met on November 20th to set the agenda. Taskforce, Housing Grant Community, Equity survey, and Vacancy.
- b. *Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison* - Renae Forsyth-Christy No report
- c. *Communication and outreach Committee* -Commissioner Stoner
Commissioner will work on a post promoting the Marion Low Income Housing grant.

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

- a. Community Equity Taskforce
Inaugural meeting was held on November 12th. To help with gender balance in the Taskforce, Commissioner Tibbetts is permanently holding a seat along with Commissioner Brown, on behalf of the commission. Commissioner Tibbetts and Brown reported that the meeting was an introductory one. Taskforce went over the purpose, focus, and ground

rules. Great ideas were discussed that will be narrowed down and prioritized the following meeting. Proxies are needed as backup for the two commission seats. Commissioners Jackson and Jensen will serve as the two commission proxies. Update on the taskforce will be a standing agenda item.

Amal stated that the two serving members will be representing the commission. It's critical that the commission deliberate and vote on priorities. Proxies are expected to be up to date regarding the taskforce business.

Commissioner Rice recommended that commissioners serving on the taskforce bring back to the commission's evaluation priorities and initiatives discussed at the taskforce upcoming meeting.

IX. Marion Low Income Housing Assistance Grant

Commissioners Brown stated that last year the commission awarded four organizations a total of 20 thousand dollars. Still there is a significant need for assistance in the community. Applications will open soon. Commissioner Tibbets stated that last year's reports were helpful. Commissioner Brown confirmed that reports are expected this year as well, and he will be working with Commissioner Stoner to schedule previous grant recipients as guests for future meetings to speak about how the funds were used.

X. Good of the Order

Commissioners Rice shared that Kelly Dybvig is currently serving as interim public library director and that the Marion Public Library will be launching a national search for a director.

Commissioner Eiler just completed her term as a commissioner. She served on the commission for five years and leaving because of relocation. She is grateful for the commission and sad to leave the team. The commission very much appreciates her contribution.

XI. Adjournment

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

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 6th, 2020 at 6:30 pm Via Zoom