



MINUTES

Civil Rights Commission

6:00 PM - Wednesday, November 3, 2021

City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue

Minutes are in draft format until approved at the next meeting

The Civil Rights Commission of the City of Marion, Linn County, Iowa met on Wednesday, November 3, 2021, at 6:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Angelica Vannatta, Kent Jackson, Chris Stoner, Jennifer Tibbetts, Bret Nilles, Renae Forsyth-Christy, Ann DiGiacomo, and Steven Moshier

ABSENT: Selita Jansen, Okpara Rice, and Dave Baumler

STAFF PRESENT: Amal Eltahir and Alicia Abernathey

OTHERS PRESENT: None

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

PUBLIC FORUM

No one from the public wished to speak.

Moshier asked why the public forum is framed the way it is with only one public comment section at the beginning of the agenda when City Council has a section at the beginning and the end. Eltahir and Abernathey explained the thought behind having it at the beginning of the agenda. Commissioners provided feedback and decided to have public comment sections at the beginning and end of the agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

Motion to approve the October 6 and October 20, 2021 minutes

Nilles indicated the October 6, 2021 minutes should indicate it was a virtual meeting, not in person at City Hall.

Moved by Nilles, seconded by Moshier, to approve the October 6 and October 20, 2021 minutes, as amended.

Approved unanimously

Executive Committee Report

Jackson stated the executive committee met to discuss the agenda and the strategic plan was the main part of the discussion. Vannatta stated there was also an in depth conversation on outreach opportunities.

Cedar Rapids Executive Director's Report

Jackson stated the reports are included in the packet and the last inquiry or intake was September 24, 2021.

Moshier stated he doesn't believe the report adequately aligns with the issues in the community as there are needs for low income housing and senior housing.

Eltahir stated the intake and inquiry process has been brought in house and will no longer be handled by the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC). Abernathey asked if there is information the Commission would like to see on the report going forward. Commissioners provided feedback on the things they would like to see in the report.

Vannatta stated the CRCRC director was not able to attend the meeting and with the Commission recently deciding to get rid of the Cedar Rapids liaison there isn't anyone to communicate what is going on with the CRCRC. Following discussion, the Commission agreed to go back to having a Cedar Rapids liaison who will attend CRCRC meetings and report back to the Commission.

Community Equity Task Force Report

Tibbetts stated the task force reviewed recommendations at the last meeting and voted to combine two sets of recommendations into one set. Tibbetts stated one set was from staff and the other was from two task force members. Tibbetts stated a discussion was held regarding a recommendation on a certain number of hours of training that should be required for staff each year, but no specific amount was set. Moshier stated some of the task force members did not agree with setting a specific number and wanted to allow staff to work through the necessary process to determine the set amount. Moshier stated the consultant and staff want to move recommendations along in order to make requests in the current budget cycle.

Outreach Meetings Topics:

- **Housing**
- **Schools**

Vannatta stated Ashley Balius with Linn County is having community conversations with stakeholders to hear what concerns there are in Marion regarding housing, including what groups are impacted. Eltahir stated the thought behind it is to put together a list of a wide variety of resources that will assist all of Linn County.

Jackson stated Linn-Mar and Marion Independent schools have had two meetings. Jackson stated MARE invited the Commission to work with them to determine recommended priorities to present to the school. Moshier stated the schools are struggling

with the definition of equity and are looking for a unified statement on equity. Tibbetts stated there was also discussion on how all of the groups can be connected. For example having the civil rights website linked to the schools websites.

Strategic Plan Discussion

Vannatta stated a draft document for the strategic plan was put together based on discussions at two special meetings regarding the strategic plan. Vannatta stated she would like the Commission to evaluate the objectives and action steps outlined in the draft to ensure the Commission is in agreement. Commissioners discussed the draft plan and provided recommended changes.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Tibbetts stated some students have safety concerns in their school due to being part of the LGBTQ community. Tibbetts shared there was a recent incident that resulted in a LGBTQ student getting a concussion.

ADJOURN

Moved by Moshier, seconded by Nilles to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m.
Approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted by:
Alicia Abernathey, Administrative Assistant