



AGENDA

Civil Rights Commission

6:00 PM - Wednesday, November 3, 2021
City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue

Page

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC FORUM

This time is for comments from the public on topics listed on the agenda or general comments related to work of the Commission. Please understand the Commission will not take any action on comments that are unrelated to the current agenda due to requirements of the Open Meetings Law, but may do so at a future meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Motion to approve the October 6 and October 20, 2021 minutes 2 - 5
[Civil Rights Commission - Oct 06 2021 - Minutes - Pdf](#)
[Civil Rights Commission Special Meeting - Oct 20 2021 - Minutes - Pdf](#)
2. Executive Committee Report
3. Cedar Rapids Executive Director's Report 6 - 7
[MCRC ED Report 11.3.21](#)
[Marion Inquires & Intakes November 2021](#)
4. Community Equity Task Force Report
5. Outreach Meetings Topics:
 - Housing
 - Schools
6. Strategic Plan Discussion 8 - 10
[MCRC Strategic Action Plan Draft 10.2021](#)

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

During this portion of the meeting, Commissioners may bring forward communications, concerns, and reports on various matters.

ADJOURN

Any visually impaired or hearing impaired person needing assistance to participate in this meeting should contact the Civil Rights staff liaison at (319) 743-6301 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.



MINUTES

Civil Rights Commission

6:00 PM - Wednesday, October 6, 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, October 6, 2021, at 6:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Selita Jansen, Okpara Rice, Angelica Vannatta, Kent Jackson, Jennifer Tibbetts, Bret Nilles, Ann DiGiacomo, and Steven Moshier

ABSENT: Chris Stoner, Dave Baumler, and Renae Forsyth-Christy

STAFF PRESENT: Amal Eltahir

OTHERS PRESENT: Ana Clymer

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

PUBLIC FORUM

Ana Clymer, Marion Alliance for Racial Equity (MARE), stated there will be a follow up meeting with the school boards in November and she asked Commissioners to think about agenda items or recommendations that should be taken to that conversation. Clymer stated members of MARE met with Ashely Balus to discuss equity and housing conversations that will be held. MARE members will reach out to Commissioners to have a conversation on the topic.

PRESENTATIONS/GUEST SPEAKERS - None

REGULAR AGENDA

Motion to approve the September 1, 2021 minutes

Moved by Vannatta, seconded by Nilles, to approve the September 1, 2021 minutes.
Approved unanimously

Executive Committee Report

Vannatta stated agenda setting discussions included prioritizing recommendations for the Community Equity Task Force and understanding where the Commission can align with the task force and the recommendations. Vannatta stated the report out on the school board meeting was all deemed important for discussion.

Cedar Rapids Executive Director's Report

Eltahir stated the report is included in the packet. Eltahir stated three intakes were received in September. Tibbetts stated there was a shift from zero complaints in January 2021 through July 2021 to five complaints in the last two months. Commissioners expressed interest in receiving more detailed information on calls/complaints that come in for Marion. Eltahir stated the City is looking into bringing the complaint process in house. Jackson asked if existing staff would handle it or if new staff would be brought onboard. Eltahir stated existing staff will handle it for now and additional staff may be brought on in the future.

Community Equity Task Force Report

Moshier stated three documents were sent out prior to the meeting but there was confusion on what the documents were and the best approach to discussing them. Therefore, the documents will be shared again and discussed at the next meeting. Moshier stated the recommendations are not framed in support of a citizen review board, which will likely lead to a lengthy discussion.

Tibbetts stated no recommendations were voted on at the task force meeting for approval. Tibbetts requested feedback from the Commission to take back to the task force. Rice asked if the work with the consultant will end when the task force ends or if the consultant will continue to work with the City. Eltahir stated the consultant was hired to facilitate the task force conversation and based on his work with the task force he has suggested three recommendations. Nilles asked if there will be an opportunity for the public to comment on the recommendations. Eltahir stated when the recommendations go before City Council there will be an opportunity for public comment.

Commissioners provided feedback on the task force recommendations and agreed to email additional feedback to Commissioners Moshier and Tibbetts.

Vote Regarding Community Equity Task Force Recommendation

The Commission did not discuss this agenda item.

School Board Meeting Report Out

Jackson stated several members of the Commission participated in a meeting with the Linn-Mar and Marion Independent School Districts. Tibbetts, Jackson, Moshier, and Eltahir shared take-aways from the meeting. DiGiacomo asked if the school districts shared data on their cultural climates or shared any goals they have. Tibbetts stated it was not shared. Jackson stated it is reasonable for the Commission to request that data.

Community Outreach

- **Indigenous People Day**

- **Election Day Outreach**

Vannatta stated these are two suggestions for community outreach and requested feedback from Commissioners. Commissioners agreed to meet in a small group to discuss possibilities for outreach.

Annual Chair & Vice Chair Election Update

Jackson stated elections will take place in January for the Chair and Vice Chair positions. Jackson suggested Commissioners with interest in either position let staff know. Commissioners discussed how elections were held in the past.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vannatta stated the strategic plan meeting scheduled for October 20th will be held virtually based on how the City is handling open meetings. Vannatta asked if Commissioners wanted to continue to have the meeting virtually or postpone it. Commissioners expressed interest in moving forward with the meeting.

ADJOURN

Moved by Nilles, seconded by Rice to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m.
Approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted by:
Alicia Abernathey, Administrative Assistant



MINUTES

Civil Rights Commission

6:00 PM - Wednesday, October 20, 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, October 20, 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, Bret Nilles, Dave Baumler, Renae Forsyth-Christy, and Steven Moshier

ABSENT: Selita Jansen, Okpara Rice, Chris Stoner, Jennifer Tibbetts, and Ann DiGiacomo

STAFF PRESENT: Amal Eltahir

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m.

REGULAR AGENDA

Strategic Plan Discussion

Commissioners discussed goals and initiatives for the strategic plan.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Alicia Abernathey, Administrative Assistant

Marion Civil Rights Commission (MCRC)
Executive Director's Report
November 3, 2021

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Past Events

- **African American Museum of Iowa History Makers Gala**
October 7. The Museum's only fundraiser recognizes individuals from across the state who exemplify leadership and have made a positive impact in their communities.
- **Domestic Violence Awareness Panel Discussion**
October 12. Partnered with Waypoint, Thrive Together, Amani Services, and Friends of the Family to provide information about domestic violence and how we can be better allies.
Thank you to Marion Civil Rights Commissioner, Angelica, for moderating this event!

Upcoming Events

- **Racial Equity Allyship Panel**
November 9, 6-7:30pm
Downtown CR Library downtown and streamed live on CRPL's Facebook
Learn how to combat racism and how to be an ally. Discuss how our community can be a more just and equitable place. The event includes presenters: Anthony Arrington and Stefanie Munsterman-Scriven, moderator Anne Harris Carter, and panelists Jeffrey Disterhoft, Donna Barnes, Okpara Rice, Erika Brighi, and youth representatives.
Thank you, Marion Civil Rights Commissioner Okpara Rice for participation in panel discussion.

OFFICE/ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

- Waldemar Rodriguez-Sanchez has joined the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission as an Investigator
- Interns joining in fall 2021 and potentially spring 2022

INTAKES/INQUIRIES

- List of received intakes, calls, emails, or walk-ins from January 2020 to present included in meeting packet.

Respectfully,
Stefanie Munsterman-Scriven, Executive Director

Marion Intakes/Inquiries Received Since October 1, 2021				
Complaints were referred to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, HUD, or another agency				
	Date	Area	Basis	Details
1	January 2, 2020	Education	Race	Child being harrassed, followed, and "grabbed" by teachers
2	February 11, 2020	Housing	Association, Mental Disability, Physical Disability, Sex, National Origin	Feels harassed regarding emotional support animal, such as receiving notices regarding barking; feels landlord is monitoring her unit, activities, and guests; getting in trouble for smoking when males don't
3	April 23, 2020	Housing	Race	Landlord accusing tenant of dealing drugs from unit because of numerous visitors. Visitors are bringing supplies/food due to COVID-19. Landlord threatened to report tenant to Leased Housing if visitors continue
4	May 4, 2020	Housing	Physical Disability	Landlord requiring tenant to pay for accessible parking sign and indicating parking space cannot be located near the entrance, but would need to be 10 spaces away
5	May 4, 2020	Housing	N/A	Tenant is having issues with a "nuisance neighbor" and landlord will not do anything about it
6	June 5, 2020	Public Accommodation	Race	Differential treatment of children based on race
7	June 26, 2020	Employment	Race	Differential treatment based on race
8	July 14, 2020	Housing	N/A	Tenant is having issues with a neighbor and indicated the HOA will not do anything. No protected class. Referred for legal advice
9	November 20, 2020	Housing	Disability/ESA	Tenant states she was denied her ESA by her HOA. She will officially request the ESA and follow up with our office with the results
10	December 31, 2020	Public Accommodation	N/A	Caller stated she felt discriminated against but did not indicate protected class or basis of discrimination.
11	August 4, 2021	Employment	Sex	Differential treatment based on sex; has not been paid for several hours of work
12	August 31, 2021	Housing	Service Animal	Landlord is asking tenant to pay a monthly pet fee for her service animal
13	September 1, 2021	Housing	N/A	Water is shut off for several hours several times each month during the spring and summer months; tenants have been unable to reach landlord
14	September 24, 2021	Public Accommodation	Physical Disability	Local business does not have adequate wheelchair access to the building
15	September 24, 2021	Housing	N/A	Mobile home park manager asked tenant to give them the title to his mobile home so they can tear it down; told him they would charge him for tearing it down if he doesn't give them the title

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Marion Civil Rights Commission is to "To secure for all individuals within the City of Marion, freedom from discrimination because of age, color, creed, disability, familial status, gender identity, lawful source of income, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation."

To this end, the Commission will:

- Administer [Chapter 31](#) of the Municipal Code of the City of Marion, which covers the civil rights laws of the State of Iowa within the corporate limits of the City of Marion;
- Initiate, receive, investigate, conciliate, and determine the merits of discrimination complaints;
- Serve as a source of information relative to civil rights;
- Report to the Mayor and City Council on work performed by the Commission.
- By fulfilling this purpose, the Commission envisions a Marion community that is welcoming, inclusive, and preserves the personal dignity of all people, particularly in the areas of employment, housing, credit, public accommodations, and education.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION:

The Commission shall consist of 11 members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of City Council. Membership on the Commission shall be broadly representative of the City's population and shall have diverse representation of the City's population and its protected classes. The term of office is three years and members shall continue to serve until reappointed or replaced.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The Commission agrees to review the strategic action plan at least once per quarter during a regular Commission meeting to assess progress and make recommendations to achieve our objectives.

Objective 1 Protect the personal dignity of all individuals from discrimination

Action Item 1.1 Speak up on behalf of protected classes as outlined in Chapter 31 of the of the Municipal Code of the City of Marion

- including age, color, creed, disability, familial status, gender identity, lawful source of income, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation

Action Item 1.2 Enforce civil rights ordinance to prevent discrimination in areas of employment, housing, credit, public accommodations, and education

Action Item 1.3 Recommend policies, processes, or procedures that advance equity and create a community of belonging

Objective 2 Educate the public about human and civil rights

Action 2.1 Generate list of community stakeholders who value diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice to learn more about their priorities

Action Item 2.2 Build and strengthen relationships with community organizations to learn how they connect with their stakeholders about civil rights and discuss the needs & barriers they face as it relates to equity and belonging , specifically

- school districts
- nonprofit organizations
- faith-based organizations
- coalitions

Action 2.3 Train Commissioners to deliver presentations around the following topics:

- Know Your Rights
- Fair Housing
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

Action 2.4 Participate, sponsor, and organize community outreach events in partnership with City of Marion and City of Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission

Objective 3 Engage in open and meaningful dialogue with protected classes and marginalized communities

Action 3.1 Identify neighborhoods where residents represent marginalized communities at a higher than local [census rate](#) or where housing discrimination complaints have been filed

- Age 65 years & over – 16.6%
- With a disability – 6.9%
- Race;
 - Black or African American alone – 1.7%
 - Asian alone – 1.3%
 - Hispanic – 2.5%
 - Two or more races – 2.7%

Action 3.2 Build and strengthen relationships with affinity groups aligned with protected classes to discuss the needs & barriers they face as it relates to equity and belonging

Action 3.3 Create opportunities for inclusive conversations such as focus-groups, community forums, and discussion groups

Action 3.4 Plan and facilitate community events that celebrate culture, justice, diversity, and inclusion

Objective 4 Elevate the purpose of the Marion Civil Rights Commission to residents, businesses, and community members

Action 4.1 Create annual outreach plan which includes proclamations, social media posts, and press releases that focus on protected classes, issues related to civil rights, and creating a community of belonging

Action 4.2 Develop process to handle media requests, interviews, and presentations and create speaker's bureau of trained, qualified Commissioners to speak on behalf of Marion Civil Rights Commission

DRAFT