



MINUTES

Civil Rights Commission

6:00 PM - Wednesday, December 7, 2022

Marion Public Library, Boardroom, 1101 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, December 7, 2022, at 6:00 PM, in the Boardroom of the Marion Public Library, 1101 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Kent Jackson, Denise Bridges, Jennifer Tibbetts, Bret Nilles, Dave Baumler, Renae Forsyth-Christy, and Steven Moshier

ABSENT: Okpara Rice, Angelica Vannatta, and Jo-Smith Brizard

STAFF PRESENT: Alicia Abernathey and Kim Downs

OTHERS PRESENT: Ana Clymer and Gary Sneller

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Moved by Steven Moshier, seconded by Denise Bridges, to have Bret Nilles preside over the meeting as Chair.

Failed by the following votes:

Ayes: Renae Forsyth-Christy, Steven Moshier, Denise Bridges

Nays: Kent Jackson, Bret Nilles, Dave Baumler

Moved by Kent Jackson, seconded by Steven Moshier, to have Dave Baumler preside over the meeting as Chair.

Approved unanimously

ROLL CALL

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

Tibbetts arrived at 6:07 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM

Gary Sneller commended the Commission on the equity statement options and requested the Commission move forward with option three.

REGULAR AGENDA

Motion to approve the November 2, 2022 minutes

Moved by Forsyth-Christy, seconded by Jackson, to approve the minutes from November 2, 2022.

Approved unanimously

Cedar Rapids Executive Director/Liaison Report (Stefanie/Renae)

Forsyth-Christy provided an update on information shared at the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC) December meeting. Tibbetts shared information on a conference she attended as an investigator for the CRCRC. Forsyth-Christy shared the CRCRC has seen an increase in intakes, which has prompted the CRCRC to request additional funding in their budget for an additional full time employee. Alicia Abernathey, staff liaison, stated Stefanie Munsterman was unable to attend but her report was provided as a handout.

Abernathey stated after a review of the Commission's Rules of Practice, Tibbetts should preside over the meeting now that she is present. Tibbetts began presiding over the meeting at 6:14 p.m.

[MCRC ED Report 12.7.22](#)

Staff Liaison Report (Alicia)

Abernathey provided the monthly staff liaison report including updates on the the 28E agreement with Cedar Rapids for staffing services for the Commission, the update to the Commission's ordinance, the Commission's Rules of Practice and the City's personnel policy review.

Equity Update (Alicia/Kim/Steve)

- **Review of Equity Statement Recommendations**
- **School Districts Partnership Report**

Abernathey shared some background as to how staff came up with options one through four as presented. Abernathey pointed out that although these options are different than the Commission's original recommendation, the intent is to have a shorter statement so it can be used on City branding with the City's mission and vision statements. Abernathey pointed out staff has attended various trainings on diversity, equity and inclusion and they indicated diversity statements should be short and concise.

Jackson stated he prefers either options three or four.

Moved by Jackson, seconded by Baumlner, to approve option four as the Commission's recommendation.

Moshier and Nilles spoke in opposition of option four and indicated they preferred option three.

Failed by the following votes:

Ayes: Jackson and Baumlner

Nays: Bridges, Tibbetts, Nilles, Forsyth-Christy, and Moshier

Moved by Nilles, seconded by Forsyth-Christy, to approve option three as the Commission's recommendation.

Approved unanimously

Moshier provided an update from the October meeting with the school districts and stated the main focus of the meeting was the equity statement. Moshier requested staff share the equity statement options with the school districts before the options proceed to City Council for review.

Outreach Committee Update (Committee members)

Baumler provided an update on the recent outreach committee meeting stating the committee reviewed various outreach trinkets and discussed the possibility of including an informational flyer in utility bills. Nilles indicated other options should be considered because utility bills do not go to every resident. Baumler stated the committee is also considering putting a write up in the Marion Messenger. Tibbetts stated the discussion of the committee was limited because it was not clear what the membership of the Commission would be after the new year.

Moshier asked if there were any discussions on the informational card that was previously discussed at a Commission meeting. Abernathey provided an update on what the committee discussed for an informational card and indicated it will return to the full Commission for approval once the committee agrees upon the content.

Low & Moderate Income Housing Assistance Grant Update (Kim/Alicia)

Abernathey and Downs shared a tentative timeline for the next round of grant funding and requested feedback from the Commission. The Commission was in agreement with the timeline as presented. Nilles recommended the agencies applying for grant funding present to the Commission so they have an understanding of what the agencies do before awarding funding.

Chair and Vice Chair Nominations (Jennifer)

Tibbetts stated annual elections for Chair and Vice Chair will be held in January and asked if any one is interested in either position. Abernathey stated nominations can also be emailed to her before the next meeting and indicated if there are several nominations for either position the Commission can do a ballot vote like last time.

The Commission discussed gender balance of the Commission, gender balance of ex officio members and when reappointments or new appointments will take place. A request was made for the Commission's Rules of Practice to be discussed at the January meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

Ana Clymer commended the Commission on working on the equity statement and continuing to educate the public on their rights. Clymer requested additional attempts be made for the public to be educated about the equity statement and its review by City Council.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Moshier stated at a future meeting he would like the Commission to discuss providing a Know Your Rights presentation to the Mayors Youth Council.

Baumler indicated it was fun serving on the Commission and thanked everyone for their support.

Jackson expressed gratitude to Nilles and Baumler for their time on the Commission.

Nilles thanked everyone for their contributions to the Commission over the years and indicated he was grateful for his time on the Commission.

Bridges requested the Commission do more to thank Commissioners for their time served such as providing them with a plaque or certificate of appreciation. Abernathey stated City Council provides that recognition.

Tibbetts shared information on National Homeless Persons' Remembrance Day and shared information on a blanket drive happening at the Veterans Memorial Building in Cedar Rapids.

ADJOURN

Moved by Nilles, seconded by Baumler, to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

Approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted by:

Alicia Abernathey, Executive Assistant