



MINUTES

Civil Rights Commission

6:00 PM - Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Library, 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, February 7, 2024, at 6:00 PM, in the Boardroom of the Library, 1101 6th Avenue, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Kent Jackson, Denise Bridges, Cody Crawford, Renae Forsyth-Christy, Katie Tanner, and Brian Chubb

ABSENT: Mary Beth O'Neill

STAFF PRESENT: Kim Downs and Kara Bullerman

OTHERS PRESENT: Christina Lumm, Stefanie Munsterman, and Ana Clymer

CALL TO ORDER

Forsyth-Christy, Vice-Chair, presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Chubb shared his background and was welcomed as a new Commissioner.

PUBLIC FORUM

No one from the public wished to speak.

REGULAR AGENDA

Motion to approve the November 1, 2023 minutes

Moved by Crawford, seconded by Tanner, to approve the November 1, 2023 minutes.
Approved unanimously

Election of Chair

Moved by Jackson, seconded by Crawford, to elect Commissioner Forsyth-Christy as Chair of the Commission.
Approved unanimously

Election of Vice-Chair

Moved by Jackson, seconded by Crawford, to elect Commissioner Tanner as Vice Chair of the Commission.
Approved unanimously

Discussion regarding House File 2082

Commissioners discussed House File 2082 and how to issue a statement. It was stated there is potential to join Cedar Rapids or others to make a statement in opposition or support. Crawford asked if a letter can be sent to legislators to share the Commission's opinion or position. City Attorney Kara Bullerman stated this is something that can be drafted and then can be sent to legislators and the Governor.

Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC) Report

Stefanie Munsterman, CRCRC Executive Director, shared information on CRCRC outreach efforts and thanked the Commission for their support. Munsterman stated they saw a large number of cases in 2024 related to housing. CRCRC will be revisiting their community engagement which includes working with non-profit entities to help bring awareness.

Staff Liaison Report

Downs provided the monthly staff liaison report including an update on the remaining vacancies.

Discussion regarding Low to Moderate Income Housing Assistance Grant (LMIHAG)

Downs provided an overview on the LMIHAG. The application period will open on February 12 and closes March 10. Up to \$62,000 is available which is partially funded through designated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars and the remaining balance in the Winslow Road Urban Renewal LMI funds. Bridges volunteered to serve on the application review committee.

Strategic Plan Check-In

Commissioners had no updates to share.

Community Outreach Discussion

- Member for Subcommittee - Jackson volunteered to serve on the outreach subcommittee.
- March Social Media Posts - Forsyth-Christy and Tanner stated they will reach out to the Heritage Center for more information on Women's History in Marion.
- April Fair Housing Event Discussion - Forsyth-Christy and Tanner stated they will reach out to Marion Cares and Waypoint Services for information on fair housing to be shared through a social media post. A Fair Housing Event will be held at the Marion Public Library on April 24.
- May Activities - Commissioners discussed the desire to work with the Marion Parks and Recreation Department and Chamber of Commerce to create a Pride Month Event. Okpara Rice from Tanager Place has offered to invest \$1,000 in the event. The Outreach Subcommittee will meet with staff from Parks and Recreation and the Chamber of Commerce in March to discuss possible activities for May 8 and 9.

PUBLIC FORUM

Ana Clymer stated she is glad to hear the agenda topics discussed. She shared positive feedback regarding the equity statement and is glad the Commission is active with State legislation.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Jackson stated he has served on the Commission for ten years. The first meeting of the Commission was held on May 6, 2014 so the ten year anniversary is coming up.

ADJOURN

Forsyth-Christy adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Rachel Bolender, City Clerk