

CEDAR RAPIDS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
September 17, 2014, 5:30pm
Civil Rights Commission
425 Second Street SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Commissioners Present: Dr. Emily Bowman
Ms. Tamara Cronin
Mr. Leland Freie
Ms. Barb Gay, Vice Chair
Ms. Paulette Hall
Ms. Salma Igram
Ms. Laura O'Leary
Mr. Keith Rippy, Chair
Mr. Robin Tucker
Dr. Ruth White
Mr. Keith Wiggins

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Ms. LaSheila Yates, Executive Director
Ms. Janet Abejo, Investigator
Ms. Virginia Sipes, Investigator
Ms. Elizabeth Macias, Investigator
Mr. Johnny Alcivar-Zuniga, Outreach Coordinator
Ms. Andrea Darnell, Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent: Ms. Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson

Guests: Ms. Susie Weinacht, Cedar Rapids City Council Liaison
Mr. Bret Nilles, Marion Civil Rights Commission

I. Call to Order

Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Rippy, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

II. Roll Call/Introductions

Commissioners, staff, and guests introduced themselves. Welcoming new Commissioner Mr. Keith Wiggins.

III. Public Response

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes from July/August Meetings

The minutes moved to approve by Ms. Igram and 2nd motion by Ms. Cronin.

V. Report from Chair

Commissioner Rippy, Chair, discussed the Veterans Memorial Building relocation of the Civil Rights Commission. The new space provides a formal office space where the Commission can acquire the entire 7th floor instead of one suite. There is more space and security for confidential

information. The current lease expires November 31st at the 425 Plaza Building. The new space requires repairs that are expected to be completed by the end of November, at no charge to the Commission. A motion to authorize Ms. Yates to move forward on the space passed unanimously.

The State of Equity report will move towards a plan after the 1st of the 2015 year. Further discussion is needed over the next few months giving Ms. Yates the appropriate time to settle into her position.

VI. **Committee Reports**

Finance

The Finance Committee met earlier this evening. Mr. Casey Drew provided a FY14 Summary for the Civil Rights Commission. The previous deficit of over \$88,000 was now closed down to under \$2,600, clearing most of the deficit in one year well under the 3 year plan previously in place. The vacancies in staff and savings in operation costs closed most of the deficit.

Outreach and Education

The Committee met September 9, 2014. The Committee met with the new Outreach Coordinator Johnny Alcivar-Zuniga. The poster/video contest was discussed and ways to bring in entries. The contest may be looking to split into separate contests coinciding with Fair Housing Month in April next year.

LGBT Capacity Building

The Summit was held on September 4, 2014 from 6-9pm at the Veterans Memorial facility. There was a good turnout of approximately 65 attendees. A evaluation handout was provided from the summit. The main stands out, the summit was received well and LGBT youths in foster care and shelters are a concern for the community.

Personnel Committee

Commissioner Igram reported that the committee has not met at this time and planning to meet early December.

Marion Civil Rights Commission Liaison

Marion Civil Rights Commission progressing along. Mr. Nilles thanked the Cedar Rapids Commission for their continuing support.

Friends of the Civil Rights Commission Committee

Mr. Rippey, Chair, discussed whether the Friends Committee will be a conflict of interest to the Civil Right Commission. As a neutrality, the Commission accepting donations from businesses around the community for fundraising would potentially conflict with future complaints.

VII. **Director's Report**

LaSheila Yates, Executive Director, provided handout and reported on the following:

- **Current Staff Changes:** The Administrative Assistant II position is down to 3 candidates after receiving over 100 applications. Ms. Yates will work with Human Resources to conduct further interviews.
- **Informational Items:**
 - Former staff member, Darryl Lipscomb, has passed away. The arrangement information will be forthcoming.
 - The department has a backlog of complaints under investigation. The development of solutions and increase in investigators will close the gap.

- Ms. Munsterman-Robinson and Ms. Abejo will be recognized, at the 4th Annual Employee Service Awards, for over 5 years of service.
- Staff is reviewing Memorandums of Understanding.
- The Benny Tapia v. Collins Community Credit Union Public Hearing is Monday, September 29, 2014 at 8:30am.
- Investigators Ms. Macias and Ms. Sipes are participating in week 2 of National Fair Housing Training online.
- Ms. Yates will be placing a resolution on September 23rd at the City Council meeting, to approve the agreement with Iowa Civil Rights for processing cases.
- Upcoming Events: A proclamation will be accepted by the Outreach and Education Committee on October 7, 2014 at the City Council meeting at 12pm. Video/Poster Contest will still be accepting participants. The Latino Professional Development Institute is October 3, 2014 from 8:30am-4:30pm at the University of Iowa.
- Hud FY2014 Cooperative Agreement: The signed agreement is due September 22, 2014 with additional supporting documents due October 31, 2014. The agreement increased in training and administrative areas.

VIII. Old Business

- Rules of Practice: Ms. Sipes, staff, provided handout. The Committee will be meeting in the next few weeks.
- Committee Charter Revision: A handout was provided.

IX. New Business:

None.

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Rippey, Chair, asked that the meeting be adjourned. Moved to adjourn by Mr. Tucker with a 2nd motion by Mr. Freie. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm.

The next meeting will be held on October 15, 2014 at 5:30pm at the Commission Office, 425 2nd Street SE, Suite 960.

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Darnell