

CEDAR RAPIDS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION (CRCRC)
MEETING MINUTES
January 21, 2015 5:30 p.m.
Civil Rights Commission
50 2nd Avenue Bridge
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Commissioners Present: Mr. Keith Rippy, Chair
Ms. Salma Igram, Vice Chair
Dr. Emily Bowman
Mr. Leland Freie
Ms. Paulette Hall
Ms. Laura O’Leary
Ms. Ashley Reynolds
Mr. Robin Tucker

Commissioners Absent: Ms. Tamara Cronin
Dr. Ruth White
Mr. Keith Wiggins

Staff Present: Ms. LaSheila Yates, Executive Director
Ms. Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson, Senior Investigator
Ms. Janet Abejo, Investigator
Mr. Johnny Alcivar-Zuniga, Outreach Coordinator
Ms. Alicia Abernathey, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Susie Weinacht

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Rippy, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

II. Roll Call/Introductions

Commissioners, staff and guests introduced themselves.

III. Public Response

No public present.

IV. Approval of Minutes from December Meeting

Commissioner Bowman moved to approve the December Meeting minutes. Commissioner Igram seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

V. Action Items

Election of Officers

Commissioner Rippy stated the Chair can remain the same for three consecutive years and this was his second year. Commissioner O’Leary moved to approve Commissioner Rippy as Chair for 2015. Commissioner Igram seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Rippy nominated Commissioner Igram for Vice Chair. Commissioner Tucker moved to approve Commissioner Igram as Vice Chair for 2015. Commissioner Freie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Appointment to Subcommittees

Commissioner Rippy identified what subcommittee each member was serving on and also identified each subcommittee's chair. Commissioner Igram moved to approve the subcommittee assignments. Commissioner O'Leary seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

28E Agreement Memo

LaSheila Yates, Executive Director, stated on February 12, 2012 a 28E Agreement was executed between the City of Cedar Rapids and the City of Marion. The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission was contracted to perform professional services for the Marion Commission. Ms. Yates stated as part of her onboarding process she wanted to better understand how to operationalize the 28E Agreement and establish a billing system. Ms. Yates stated the Cedar Rapids Commission will provide professional services to the Marion Commission. This includes determination of complaints, investigation of cases, technical and professional support at Commission meetings and educational outreach. Ms. Yates stated \$5,000 is provided to the Cedar Rapids Commission from Marion each year to cover the cost of setup. This includes Rules of Practice, Standard Operating Procedures, Commission Charters and conducting mutually beneficial public outreach. For other services provided the Cedar Rapids Commission will charge Marion 125% of the wage rate for staff. This includes determination of complaints, investigation of cases, meeting attendance and educational outreach activities.

Ms. Yates stated either party has the option to terminate the agreement upon at least 90 days' notice and through City Council action. Ms. Yates stated a further consideration includes the fact the current billable rate does not fully cover the actual costs under a true rate model.

Commissioner Reynolds arrived at 5:51 p.m.

Commissioner Hall asked why the \$5,000 is received beyond the first year if it is for setup. Ms. Yates stated the \$5,000 is an annual payment.

Ms. Yates pointed out the memo was provided to Marion Commissioners but they were unable to approve the document due to their January meeting being cancelled.

Commissioner Hall moved to approve the 28E Agreement Memo. Commissioner Freie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Weinacht asked if the memo replaced the existing agreement. Commissioner Rippy stated the memo clarifies the agreement, it does not replace it. Ms. Yates stated the memo establishes the scope of services and billing process.

VI. Report from Chair

Veterans Memorial Building Office Space

Commissioner Rippy stated staff is moved into the office space on the 7th floor and everything is completed. Commissioner Igram stated the carpet was done poorly and asked if it was fixed. Ms. Yates stated maintenance replaced several squares that had glue on them and staff is continuing to monitor for areas that need replacement.

State of Equity

Commissioner Rippy stated Al Rowe has been facilitating discussion with staff in regards to the 2014 State of Equity report. Commissioner Rippy stated Mr. Rowe, Ms. Yates and him will meet on February 5th to discuss the next steps. Mr. Rowe will meet with the commission in either February or March.

Commissioner Training

Commissioner Rippy stated training will be provided in the future to outline roles and responsibilities of commissioners as well as roles and responsibilities for the Commission as a whole. Commissioner Rippy stated there is an upcoming training in Des Moines Iowa on March 18th. Commissioner Rippy stated the Finance Committee will also receive Finance 101 training.

Executive Director Evaluation

Commissioner Rippy stated an evaluation of the Executive Director's six month probationary period needs to be held. Commissioner O'Leary stated she provided evaluation forms to commissioners and would like them returned by Friday. Commissioner O'Leary stated they are hoping to setup the evaluation for next week.

VII. **Committee Reports**

Outreach and Education

Commissioner Bowman stated the Outreach and Education Committee met on January 20th and had a meeting with Scott Ireland from Fox 28/CBS 2. Mr. Ireland presented an overview of work that will be done for the Commission to have two commercials that will run from February to April. One commercial will focus on the commission relocation and what the commission does. The other will focus on fair housing. Both commercials can be made available on the website. No action was taken on the advertising plan due to lack of quorum. Commissioner Bowman stated Train-the-Trainer was also discussed and trainings will be provided in the near future.

Marion Civil Rights Commission Liaison

Commissioner Tucker stated the January meeting was cancelled due to very cold weather. In February the commission will hold the election of officers and in March they are holding a Meet the Commissioners event.

VIII. **Mission Moment**

Ms. Yates stated each month a Mission Moment will be provided to highlight various accomplishments. The first Mission Moment will focus on Youth Education Outreach.

Janet Abejo, Investigator, stated her favorite part of Youth Education Outreach is seeing the children get the message. Ms. Abejo stated Paul Nemeth came up with the idea for Donald/Donna the Dolphin and it was funded in 2011. Ms. Abejo outlined the lesson plan including introductions, skit, discussion, reading of a book, quality time with Donald/Donna and the goody bag provided. Ms. Abejo explained how Donald/Donna the Dolphin ties into the mission and vision of the Commission and the City of Cedar Rapids. Ms. Abejo identified key outcomes and accomplishments of the Donald/Donna the Dolphin educational outreach.

IX. **Director's Report**

Ms. Yates reported on the following:

- The Commission now has a new e-submittal intake process where complainants can send in their intake forms electronically. This was launched on January 12th.
- Staff is working on updating the Commission's smartphone app and will be working with Commissioner Reynolds as well. Additional information on the app will be provided in the future.
- Stefanie is taking the lead on the Commission using a new EnerGov system to better manage our cases. The goal is to have EnerGov running by July 1, 2015.

X. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Tucker moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m. Commissioner Freie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

The next meeting will be held on February 18, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. at the Commission Office, 50 2nd Avenue Bridge.

Respectfully submitted by Alicia Abernathey