

**CEDAR RAPIDS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION (CRCRC)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 20, 2016 5:30 p.m.**  
Civil Rights Commission  
50 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

**Commissioners Present:** Mr. Keith Rippy, Chair  
Ms. Salma Igram, Vice Chair  
Dr. Emily Bowman  
Mr. Leland Freie  
Ms. Laura O’Leary  
Mr. Robin Tucker  
Dr. Ruth White  
Mr. Keith Wiggins

**Commissioners Absent:** Ms. Ashley Reynolds

**Staff Present:** Ms. LaSheila Yates, Executive Director  
Ms. Judy Goldberg, Investigator

**Guests:** Bret Nilles, Patricia Kropf, Yvonne Aubrey, Bailie Wiggins

**I. Call to Order**

Commissioner Rippy, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

**II. Roll Call/Introductions**

Commissioners, staff and guests introduced themselves.

**III. Public Response**

No public response.

**IV. Approval of Minutes from the March Meeting**

Commissioner Tucker moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Igram seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**V. Civil Rights History – Bailie Wiggins**

Bailie Wiggins, 3<sup>rd</sup> grader at Prairie Hill Elementary, provided a presentation on book report she completed on slavery and segregation. Ms. Wiggins spoke about the unfair conditions slaves endured including having inadequate clothing and being treated as property rather than human beings. Ms. Wiggins explained Harriet Tubman was the first conductor of the Underground Railroad and saved 300 people. Ms. Wiggins explained the efforts of Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**VI. Closed Session**

**The Commission may go into closed session to discuss the filing of one or more complaints, information gathered during investigation of such complaints, and attempts to eliminate such alleged discrimination pursuant to Iowa Code Sections 21.5(1)(a) and 216.15(5) (2012).**

*Pearson v. Seldin Properties, LLC*

Commissioner Tucker moved to go into closed session. Commissioner Bowman seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken. The motion carried on a unanimous vote and the Commission went into Closed Session at 5:35 p.m.

Commissioner Igram moved to return to open session. Commissioner Tucker seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken. The motion carried on a unanimous vote and the Commission returned to Open Session at 5:46 p.m.

Commissioner Tucker moved to accept the revised final order as discussed in closed session. Commissioner Wiggins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

## VII. **Action Items**

### *Election of Vice Chair*

Commissioner Rippy stated his three year term as Chair is complete. Commissioner Igram moved to vote Commissioner Keith Rippy as Vice Chair. Commissioner White seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Igram moved to approve the revised 28E Agreement between the City of Cedar Rapids and the City of Marion. Commissioner Freie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

## VIII. **Report from Chair**

Commissioner Rippy stated he wanted to reflect on what has been accomplished over the previous three years. The Commission had three executive directors, moved to a better location and now has a very high level executive director and staff. The Commission also has an improved relationship with the City and the school district, set performance matrix and measures and returned to the core mission of the Commission as per the City Ordinance and a successful State of Equity Summit.

## IX. **Committee Reports**

### *Outreach Committee Liaison*

Commissioner Bowman passed around a sign-up sheet for Commissioners to participate in summer events on behalf of the Commission. Commissioner Bowman stated the Commission has a public service announcement currently airing on KGAN and CBS. Commissioner Bowman stated the Commission received 14 poster submissions in the K-5 age group and 21 submissions with 29 students in the 6-12 age group. Commissioner Bowman stated social media is getting more views and specifically more Facebook likes.

### *Finance Committee Liaison*

Commissioner Igram presented a brief overview of the Commission's current stance with the budget stating the finances were looking good. LaSheila Yates, Executive Director, stated explained that there was a carryover in funds from last year to this year and there may be a possibility of having funds carried over to next year as well. Ms. Yates stated the Commission qualifies for \$15,000 in grant funding next year and she will be submitting a document with proposed items to spend the money on. Proposed items include another public service announcement, the fair housing poster contest, outreach materials, bus advertisements, etc.

### *Marion Civil Rights Commission Liaison*

Bret Nilles, Marion Civil Rights Commission, stated the Marion Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) met on April 6<sup>th</sup> and LaSheila provided a train-the-trainer training for outreach events. Mr. Nilles

stated they plan to approve the 28E Agreement with Cedar Rapids at their May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting and expect their City council to approve it May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Tucker stated the guest speaker had a presentation regarding the bottom 20% in education and the community's responsibility to that.

X. **Director's Report**

Ms. Yates stated she accepted the Fair Housing Month proclamation at the April 12<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. Ms. Yates stated a new performance measures document was created and stated she would like the Commissioners to provide any feedback on the report style. Ms. Yates stated staff is meeting the performance standards and the current open case average is 65 days old which is very good compared to where staff was a year ago.

Ms. Yates explained HUD issued guidance on criminal background checks and she is arranging a state-wide conference call with other directors to ask questions and learn with them the specifics. At this time, Des Moines, Davenport and Sioux City directors plan to be in on the conversation.

Ms. Yates stated the City's diversity and equity committee is continuing to meet and has set a schedule for the remainder of the year. Ms. Yates stated Kirkwood is hosting a job shadow and internship work shop and the Cedar Rapids School District will be hosting a public sector tour.

Commissioner White stated she is the lead of the Academy for Scholastic and Personal Success and has been for 27 years. If anyone is interested in the upcoming fundraiser they can ask LaSheila to forward them the invitation. Commissioner White stated the academy uses cultural information to help students achieve academic success. This year they are honoring Akwi Nji and she is becoming so well known that people know her by her first name like Oprah.

XI. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Igram moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m. Commissioner Tucker seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

*Respectfully submitted by Judy Goldberg and Alicia Abernathy*