

**CEDAR RAPIDS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 16, 2009**

Commissioners met on September 16, 2009 at 5:30pm  
Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission office  
425 Second Street SE, Suite 960  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

**Commissioners Present:** Ms. Miriam Amer, Chair  
Ms. NancyLee Ziese  
Mr. Rick Zingher  
Mr. Bob Rush  
Ms. Laura O’Leary  
Mr. Momodu Kamara (arrived at 5:35p.m.)  
Mr. Eric Lam

**Commissioners Absent:** Mr. George Holmes  
Dr. Ruth White  
Mr. Anthony Arrington  
Mr. Kavi Parupally

**Staff Present:** Mr. Darryl Lipscomb, Investigator  
Ms. LaSheila Yates, Investigator  
Karl Cassell, Executive Director  
Ms. Stefanie Robinson, Investigator  
Ms. Shylo Bundy, Vista volunteer

**I. Call to Order**

Noting a quorum, Miriam Amer, Chair, called the meeting to order precisely at 5:30p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Commissioners and staff related names.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Bob Rush moved to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2009 regular meeting.

NancyLee Ziese seconded the motion.

Correction to August meeting minutes: NancyLee Ziese stated her classes are *often* at least 30% African American.

The minutes were passed unanimously.

**IV. Old Business**

- ◆ *Ordinance Revisions Status Report*  
No update at this time
  
- ◆ *Update on Office Lease*

Karl reported that he spoke to Jim Arenson. He is agreeable to a year to year lease after 2010. We are getting water in offices from rain. The drywall will be removed and fixed. Memo from Liz Jacobi set out a couple of courses of action regarding lease. Bob Rush made a motion to authorize the city attorney to send a formal letter to landlord and requesting documentation  
Ask the city attorney to examine the extent of which we have not received documentation  
Nancylee Ziese second  
The office Furniture does belong to the Commission.  
Motion carried

- ◆ *Commission Retreat*  
ActionCoach has given a proposal  
Available dates are 10/8, 10/9, 11/13 in the afternoon  
It is not as imperative that staff attends the retreat.  
Stefanie will poll the staff and commissioners via e-mail for availability. Response will be due by Friday, September 18 at 5pm.
- ◆ *Commission Vision and Goals for year*
- ◆ *Revising Rules of Practice discussion*  
Review handout of changes and if have any comments please write it down for future discussion  
Chapter 1 and 2 changes are contingent upon passage of changes of ordinance.  
Bob urges the city attorney to give their response and critique.  
How much energy should be placed on revamping if we may need to rewrite due to passage of changes in ordinance. Many changes are not dependent upon the ordinance change.

## V. **New Business**

- ◆ *Select Nominating Committee*  
Nominating for chair and vice chair for next term.  
Bob Rush volunteered  
Kavi and Ruth were suggested/selected as members of the nominating committee
- ◆ *Discussion: Meeting Locations for next six months*  
Outreach committee does not have suggestions.  
Momodu stated there is a need to reconstitute this committee before take on any responsibilities.  
There is a desire to move meetings to different quadrants in the city.  
Bob thinks we should reconsider this as a goal; believes meetings should be at a central place each month. Eric and Nancylee agrees with Bob on this topic  
This topic will be tabled for future discussion.  
  
Laura volunteered to be on the Outreach committee.  
Ruth and Anthony are assigned to Outreach committee. Stefanie will contact them.
- ◆ *Gender Inequality, Nancylee Ziese*  
Tabled until next meeting

- ◆ *Need a panel of three commissioners to review case*  
Eric Lam, Laura O’Leary, Rick Zingher volunteered

## VI. Committee Reports

- ◆ Personnel  
**Staffing Change:** Michelle Olmstead resigned as an an Investigator. Stefanie Robinson was promoted to Investigator I with the Civil Rights Commission as of September 16, 2009  
Human Resources were integral in the process with making sure that the job description and her skill sets matched.
- ◆ Outreach Committee, no report

## VII. Director’s Report

**FHAP Training:** Due to the reduction in HUD training dollars and the change in staff, Karl Cassell will temporarily refrain from training. Upon completion of training or an increase in funding from HUD, Karl will attend the training.

### **HUD Contract:**

The Commission signed contract with HUD for the next fiscal year. Amount is lower than previous fiscal year.

### **Analysis of Impediments:**

RFP’s are being submitted to the Commission for the project to be completed. Funds will come out of CDBG funds. The due date is June 30, 2010.

### **Mediation:**

The Commission will continue to do mediation for the City of Cedar Rapids. We are working to develop a stream of revenue to cover any and all costs associated w/the service.

The grants funds through Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation given for advertising of this service have begun to be used. The Commission filmed a commercial through KWWL, which will be viewed through the next several months.

Looking to make our department more approachable for the public.

Commissioners Lam and Chair Amer and others expressed concerns about staff time that might be consumed in the mediation project, and also the concern that moneys ear-marked for Commission usage in the budget should not be spent on the project. For the time being, the project apparently is being funded by a grant, and the project is in its infancy, and so the project should proceed, although it should be monitored and duly reported to the Commission.

### **Upcoming Travel Dates:**

#### **October 1**

*Iowa League of Human Rights*

Combined annual League meeting and commissioner training in Des Moines.

Commissioner training: 10:00 – 2:00

Annual League meeting: 2:00 – 3:30 in the Rose Room at Prairie Meadows.

#### **October 6**

*Mediation Training (ICN)*

1:30 – 3:30p.m.

Department of Human Services  
411 3rd Street, SE  
5th Floor, Room 550  
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52401  
Room Location: Room 550

**October 14 – 16**

*RECCR*  
Kansas City, MO

**October 28 – 29**

*Grant Writing Training*  
Iowa City  
Karl, Stefanie, and Shylo attending

**VIII. Public Response, none**

Commissioner Kamara announced his intention to resign from the Commission, and discussion was held among various Commissioners, who urged Commissioner Kamara to reconsider his decision.

**IX. Adjournment**

Eric made a motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Nancylee seconded the motion.  
Motion carries; the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on October 21, 2009 at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Stefanie Robinson