



*Masterpiece on the Mississippi*



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**EQUITY AND**

**COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**July 10, 2023**

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

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**DATE:** Monday July 10, 2023

**TIME:** 4:35 PM

**LOCATION:** Ruby Sutton Building, 1157 Central Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001

Commissioner Anderson called the meeting of the Equity & Human Rights Commission to order at 4:40 p.m.

**Commissioners Present:** Carla Anderson, Matthew Zanger, Enoc Sanchez, Teresa Sampson-Brown, Jake Kurczek

**Commissioners Absent:** Aaliyah Herrion, Lauren Link, Maita Jolet

**Staff Present:** Gisella Aitken-Shadle, Ann Marie Jannette, Crenna Brumwell, Gina Bell, Anderson Sainci

**Others Present:** KCRG (Mark Bauer, camera; Mollie Swayne, reporter), Telegraph Herald (John Kruse)

**Roll Call**

Commission Chair Anderson led those in attendance through introductions.

**Reflections**

Anderson asked commissioners to share a positive personal reflection. Kurczek asked that we skip reflections so that we can get more done in the meeting. Anderson agreed.

**Approval of the May Meeting Minutes**

Sanchez moved to approve the June meeting minutes and was seconded by Kurczek. All in favor.

**Reports**

**Caseload Report**

Gisella gave the caseload report and reminded commissioners that the City of Dubuque's fiscal year ends on June 30 so the total number of complaints for FY23 was 73 with 9 open cases that will be carried forward into FY24. Anderson asked for more details on what the numbers meant. Brumwell gave general details cases that are open, many of which are just waiting on signatures, etc.

**Chairperson's report**

Nothing to report because the commission has been unable to how quorum.

### **Director's Report**

Director Gisella Aitken-Shadle reported that most of what she needed to cover would be discussed during new business. She also reported that the department has been approved to hire a replacement for Collins Eboh within the next month or two. She noted that the position's duties may look somewhat different but could not provide details at this time.

### **Old Business**

Kurczek motioned for the removal of Dereka Williams for lack of attendance. The motion was seconded by Sanchez. All in favor. Brumwell said that if they could get the paperwork by tomorrow, then the motion could be added to the city council meeting scheduled for next week.

Zanger motioned to pause presentations and training (outside of the new commissioner's onboarding) until October. Motion was seconded by Sanchez. All in favor.

Zanger motioned for Kurczek to be nominated as the vice chair; the motion was seconded by Sanchez. All in favor.

Anderson assigned the role of secretary to Lauren Link.

Sanchez moved to change the commission meeting date to the second Tuesday of the month at the same time and place. Kurczek seconded the motion. All in favor.

### **New Business**

In May, graffiti was found near the highway 151/61 overpass. Swastikas and other racist language was used. The graffiti was immediately painted over and cameras were installed to monitor the area. The police investigation for this incident has been closed due to a lack of leads.

Also in May, graffiti was found in and near Allison Henderson Park. This graffiti contained Swastikas and other racist language directed specifically at a named individual. A police investigation is ongoing for the incidents near Allison Henderson Park. At this time, the intended victim of the Allison Henderson Park incident has declined to file charges.

Kurczek concerned that the commission will only hear about similar incidents at their monthly meeting. Zanger motioned that the commission be informed at the time of such incidents and that a special meeting of the commission take place so a response can be formulated. Sanchez seconded the motion. All in favor.

Gina Bell gave a presentation on the intersection between sustainability and human rights in the city. Front-line communities such as the Black, Marshallese, Latino, and low-income communities will be hit the hardest. Bell asked to form a partnership between her department and the commission to get more people civically involved. The commission agreed to a partnership.

Aitken-Shadle told the commission that in early June a video had surfaced showing a teacher at Hempstead High School using a racial slur against a student. At this time, the student's family has declined to file charges. No other information about the incident is currently available. Kurczek voiced his concern over the silence and lack of action taken to address this incident. Aitken-Shadle explained that because this is an ongoing investigation, and because there is a victim involved, the commission cannot participate at this time. Sanchez asked that the topic be revisited in the August meeting.

New commissioner onboarding will be scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of August.

Setting of commission goals will be determined by survey to pick a date for a special meeting to be held.

Discussion about the role of the commission was tabled due to lack of time and will be added to the August agenda.

Aitken-Shadle asked for volunteers for commissioners to sit on the Dubuque Community Police Relations Committee (DCPRC) and the Housing Committee. Anderson will be the primary for the DCPRC and Sanchez will be the alternate. Sampson-Brown will be the primary for the Housing Committee, and Zanger will be the alternate.

Discussion about the role of the designated staff to head the department was tabled due to lack of time and will be added to the August agenda.

### **Adjournment**

Anderson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Zanger. All in favor. The meeting ended at 6:03pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Tuesday, August 8, at 4:30pm.

Minutes approved as submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes approved as corrected: \_\_\_\_\_