



## DUBUQUE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF August 8, 2023

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**DATE:** Monday August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**TIME:** 4:37 PM

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

Chairperson Anderson called the meeting of the Equity & Human Rights Commission to order at 4:37 p.m.

### **Roll Call**

Secretary Lauren Link led roll call.

**Commissioners Present:** Carla Anderson, Matthew Zanger, Theresa Sampson-Brown, Jake Kurczek, Maitha Jolet, and Lauren Link

**Commissioners Absent:** Aaliyah Herrion, Enoc Sanchez

**Staff Present:** Ann Marie Jannette, Jason Lehman

**Others Present:** Telegraph Herald reporter

### **Reflections**

Not done.

### **Approval of July 10th Meeting Minutes**

Zanger motioned to approve the minutes. Sampson-Brown seconded. All in favor.

### **Reports**

#### **Caseload Report**

Gisella Aitken-Shadle is out for an emergency, so Ann Marie Jannette provided a summary for the caseload report. A request was made to learn more about the oldest open case. Information will be provided at the next meeting.

#### **Chairperson's Report**

Anderson reported that Aitken-Shadle had not heard back on the Doodle poll from herself, Sanchez, or Jolet. Aitken-Shadle will send out a new Doodle Poll. Anderson also mentioned the upcoming Black Expo and invited all

commissioners to attend, though it's not mandatory. She also mentioned the upcoming Latinx Festival. Jannette confirmed that name tags had been ordered.

### **Director's Report**

Upcoming and past events were discussed, along with encouraging participation and attendance from board members. There was discussion on sending out sign-up sheets with dates/times of events to ensure the commission is being represented at community events. Alanda Gregory (observer) mentioned the upcoming Black Business Expo August 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> at the Q Casino. Aitken-Shadle will reserve a table for the EHR department to hand out flyers. Jannette will send out a Doodle Poll for any commission members who may want to volunteer. Other upcoming events include the Latinx Fiesta at the end of September and the BBQ in DBQ in September.

Other topics included the finalization of the Job description to fill Collins' position. Aitken-Shadle attended EEOC training last month, and Jannette will attend next month. The visit from the ICRC has been rescheduled for Thursday, September 7. There is a tentative plan for time in the afternoon for commissioners to meet with the ICRC.

### **Old Business**

#### **Date setting for 2023-2024 Commission goals and onboarding.**

Jolet and Sanchez have not responded to the Doodle request for onboarding/orientation and goal setting meeting. Discussion was had on whether onboarding shouldn't be a separate meeting from goal setting. Aitken-Shadle will send out a new Doodle poll to determine meeting dates for both orientation and goal setting, with goal setting to be delayed until the new commission members have joined. For orientation, new members should send Aitken-Shadle and Anderson questions as to what topics should be covered.

#### **Discussion about the role of the commission**

Jannette provided a summary of what the role of a commission is:

- educate public on knowing your rights (housing, employment, protected classes, what things are covered/not covered)
- make our office known to the public that we exist and we're here to take complaints, and we're here to assist people with their complaints.
- to do basic outreach/presence within community
- to refer people to department who may need help.
- do public hearings for complaints.

#### **Discussion about the role of the designated staff to head the department**

Anderson discussed the relationship between the department staff and the commission. We don't work for each other, but we work together. The

commission does need to go through the department to access city council, and importance was placed on following procedures and processes as detailed in Title 8 ordinance.

## **New Business**

### **Discussion-Housing and landlords**

Alexis Steger, Housing and Community Development Director, came in to speak about the department. She explained the numerous divisions within the department, such as community development, grants, inspection, and assisted housing (Section 8 vouchers). She then went on to explain how a tenant complaint is handled by the department and detailed the coordination bridge between housing and homeless. She encouraged members of the commission to reach out to the department with any questions or issues they see within the community.

### **Attendance of Commissioners**

Commissions need to be mindful of attendance, and let Anderson know if they can't make it. Commissioners are not supposed to miss more than 3 meetings unexcused – make sure communication exists between Anderson and Commissioners.

## **Other business to be discussed**

Zanger wanted an update on plans to increase public involvement. Anderson stated we're currently in the building stages to increase activity in community. Commissioners will be encouraged to attend community events. Anderson questioned commissioners attending trainings along with the department, Jannette confirmed that there aren't a lot of training opportunities available, but she will inform commissioners as they come up. Zanger would like to explore educating employees (illegal, mistreated) on their rights.

## **Adjournment**

Sampson-Brown motioned to adjourn; Zanger seconded. All in favor. The meeting ended at 6:02 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.

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

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