

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
October 8, 2024

DATE: Tuesday, October 8, 2024

TIME: 4:30 PM

LOCATION: Multicultural Family Center, 1157 Central Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm.

Commissioners Present: Jake Kurczek, Dave Heiar, Matthew Zanger, Rick Baumhover, Michaela Freiburger, Theresa Sampson-Brown

Commissioners Absent: Maita Jolet, Enoch Sanchez, Nikkole Nutter

Staff Present: Gisella Aiken Shadle, Chief of Equity and Human Rights; Ann Marie Jannette, Equity and Human Rights Specialist

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Heiar motioned, Baumhover seconded, to approve the minutes from the September 10, 2024. All in favor.

Public Input

No members of the public were present to provide input.

Reports

Caseload Report

Report was adjusted to now include data for the following categories:

- Complaints filed – number of complaints that were signed during the month
 - September amount: 2
- Active investigations – investigations that are currently active but in various stages (active, administrative review, initiated, on hold, etc.)
 - September amount: 18
- Incidents in mediation – complaints currently in mediation
 - September amount: 1
- Incidents in full hearing – complaints in full hearing process
 - September amount: 0
- Inquiries – calls/inquiries that don't result in an official complaint being filed (including outreach events)
 - September amount: not provided
- Complaints closed during the month – signed complaints that were closed during the month (doesn't include inquiries or complaints that were never filed)
 - September amount: 1
- Total inquiries and complaints FY25 – signed complaints filed in FY25
 - September amount: 12

Jannette provided an example of a complaint received in September. The complainant was on a month-to-month lease. He asked his landlord for an application so his girlfriend could

move in and also informed the landlord his girlfriend had an emotional support animal (ESA). The landlord took several weeks to provide an application because he claimed that he needed to check with his lawyer on whether he had to allow an ESA. Soon after receiving her completed application, the landlord served the complainant with a 30 day notice to vacate, however on the same day he approved the girlfriend to move in. The complainant feels he was retaliated against, and both were harassed by the landlord due to the girlfriend's disability.

Director's Report

The department had a resource table at LatinX. Traffic at the table was low but turnout to the event seemed good. Jannette attended the League of Iowa Civil and Human Rights Agencies conference in Davenport, IA. Attendants included investigators, intake specialists, and commissioners from Davenport, Iowa City, Sioux City, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, and Des Moines.

Aitken-Shadle and Jannette completed the first stage of the FY26 budget for the Equity and Human Rights department. Next stage is for approval and recommendations from Mike Van Milligan followed by presentations to the city council in the spring.

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Kurczek has emailed other civil rights agencies across the state with questions about their operating standards and commissioner responsibilities. He received responses from Ames, Iowa City, and Cedar Rapids.

Old Business:

Heiar reported on the ordinance update. They have asked for Crenna Brumwell to simplify the purpose section. He also asked to change the quorum requirement to be a majority of commissioners that are currently in the commission rather than having a quorum of at least five commissioners. Brumwell responded that because the other commissions had this language that she would prefer to keep it that way. Heiar asked to put on the agenda for next month to review and approve recommended changes and to then send to City Council.

Kurczek reported that he sent a letter to Aitken-Shadle to request the removal of Enoch Sanchez from the commission due to non-attendance. Aitken-Shadle forwarded the email to the City Clerk who added it to the council agenda on October 7. Formal council approval will be October 21.

Heiar reported on the planning of a future event. Heiar had reached out to Greater Dubuque Development and the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. The latter replied that the business community isn't interested in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) training and education because they feel it doesn't work. Instead, they want tools and to learn how to use them and implement them at work. Kurczek reported that the survey he sent to commissioners showed that the responses indicated education, awareness, and collaboration should be the commissions goals.

New Business:

Jannette requested that commissioners attend at least two outreach events a year. Heiar to look into creating a set of policies for the commission. Also requested that we evaluate which events the department and/or commission should be attending.

Jannette reported on two upcoming outreach events: Caregiver Wellness Day at Shalome, and a neighborhood event to be planned by the Community Impact department.

Reflections and Updates

Sampson-Brown reported that the next commission meeting will be her last. She will be resigning from the commission at that time.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Zanger, seconded by Baumhover. All in favor. The meeting ended at 5:55 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, at 4:30 p.m., at the Multicultural Family Center.

Minutes approved as submitted: *M. Miller, M. Miller, Shadie*

Minutes approved as corrected: _____