

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2025

DATE: Tuesday, April 8, 2025

TIME: 4:30 PM

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm.

Commissioners Present: Jake Kurczek, Matthew Zanger, Michaela Freiburger, Dave Heiar, Rick Baumhover, DeLano Cain Watson, Traci Phillipson

Commissioners Absent: Luselena Bravo, Nikki Nutter

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

New commissioner Traci Phillipson was sworn in. Returning commissioner Rick Baumhover was also sworn in.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected from the February 11, 2025 meeting by Freiburger, seconded by Baumhover. All in favor.

Public Input

No members of the public were in attendance.

Reports

Caseload Report

- Complaints filed – number of complaints that were signed during the month
 - March amount: 0
- Active investigations – investigations that are currently active but in various stages (active, administrative review, initiated, on hold, etc.)
 - March amount: 15
- Incidents in mediation – complaints currently in mediation
 - March amount: 0
- Incidents in full hearing – complaints in full hearing process
 - March amount: 0
- Inquiries – calls/inquiries that don't result in an official complaint being filed (including outreach events)
 - March amount: 11
- Complaints closed during the month – signed complaints that were closed during the month (doesn't include inquiries or complaints that were never filed)

- March amount: 0
- Total inquiries and complaints FY25 – signed complaints filed in FY25
 - March amount: 149

Example of EHR complaint received in March 2025:

No complaints were filed in March.

Director's Report

Aitken-Shadle reported that the department had recently attended an outreach event at Clarke University where Aitken-Shadle also presented on a panel about immigration. She is currently watching the state legislative bills, one of which would lower the commissioner's term from three years to two years. The City has different teams internally to track the bills. Community Impact, the Multicultural Family Center, and the Office of Shared Prosperity may also be affected by the bills.

Aitken-Shadle asked Chairperson Kurczek to send a letter in the mail to Bravo to respond promptly on her interest in joining the commission. If she doesn't want to join the commission then she will be invited out of the commission due to lack of attendance and lack of response to emails and phone calls.

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Kurczek reported that he is tracking the legislative bills.

Old Business:

Freiburger reached out to Maitha Joilet about facilitating for the event who agreed to participate. The theme will center around belonging and racial incidents in the community. It will include 10-15 Marshallese individuals. The intention will be to collect stories from the individuals and share them with City Council and state legislators. There was discussion about having only one commissioner attend the event. Aitken-Shadle felt that all commissioners should attend, at least briefly, to introduce themselves and put a face to the commission.

Heiar to reach out to Alex Baum to make sure the group of Marshallese for the event are coming from different groups within the community. Freiburger will train the facilitator in understanding what information the commission is looking for.

Baumhover provided an update on the DCPRC. Everything is currently on hold with this group as they wait to see what the state legislature will pass and what the language on the bills will look like. Currently the Civil Service Commission has three members and if the DCPRC is required to disband (per one of the bills) then the commission would increase to five or six members. If the bill regarding the DCPRC doesn't pass then they will draft a new memorandum of understanding.

The DCPRC requested training from Police Chief Jeremy Jensen and Kelly Larson. Aitken-Shadle to look into doing the training. It may need to be postponed until the state legislature decides on which bills to pass.

New Business:

Antonio Mouzon and LaMetra Murdock from the Office of Community Impact and the Multicultural Family Center, and Anderson Sainci from the Office of Shared Prosperity were not able to attend. The commission will wait until after the bills are passed (or not) to invite them to the commission as the bills may affect their positions as well. There are several bills at the state and federal level that affect the Equity & Human Rights (EHR) Department and the EHR Commission.

Reflections and Updates

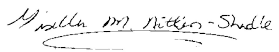
Kurczek has been working on filling in the partnership spreadsheet and understanding who else in the City has similar missions to partner and collaborate with. Kurczek to also reinstate state legislators to the meeting after the current session is over in May.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Heiar, seconded by Baumhover. All in favor. The meeting ended at 5:52 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 4:30 p.m., at the Multicultural Family Center.

Minutes approved as submitted: _____

Minutes approved as corrected:  _____