

**DUBUQUE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF
September 14, 2020**

Commissioner Allen called the virtual meeting of the Dubuque Human Rights Commission to order at 4:32 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 2020.

Roll Call:

Present:	Anthony Allen Adrienne Breitfelder Michael Durnin Mallory Gardiner	Jerry Hammel Miquel Jackson Jason Keeler Kathy McCarthy
Absent	Ashley Regan	
Staff:	Kelly Larson	Carol Spinoso

Approval of August 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Hammel second by McCarthy to approve the meeting minutes of August 10, 2020 as submitted. All in favor.

Reports

Caseload Report

The August 2020 Caseload Report was received and filed.

Chairperson's Report

Commissioner Allen reported that he was part of the Nathaniel Morgan Tribute Committee that organized a memorial on September 6, 2020 at Washington Park. The group will be working to help facilitate a name change from Jackson Park to the Montgomery Morgan Park. Additionally, the renaming of the Dubuque Regional Airport to the Captain Robert Martin Terminal is going as planned. They are now fund raising for signage.

The Race Conference Planning Committee is working with a group of teachers at the Alternative Learning Center to discussing their involvement and to determine details of a program. Commissioners were encouraged to attend the October 8 and 9th Race In the Heartland event.

Director's Report

Kelly and Teri Goodman have been meeting with everyone who presented at the City Council Black Lives Matter work session. The specific reason for these meetings is to get input and recommendations on state and federal legislative priorities for the Council to consider. They are looking at how those recommendations can fit into departmental equity plans.

Old Business

Discuss additional goals related to recent community momentum on diversity and inclusion initiatives

Commissioner Breitfelder reviewed the City Council goals and priorities and highlighted multiple items that she felt focused on aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion. She suggested that the commission adopt as a goal to commit to following up with the City Council about these specific items to understand where they see these goal going and make sure, as a commission, to provide valuable input. She asked for suggestions for approaches for this as they move forward.

Jackson commented that the NAACP had presented a list of eleven recommendations to the City Council at the BLM work session, and in moving forward he will focus on bringing those recommendations back to the Council urging dialogue. As far as the commission, he suggested reviewing the NAACP recommendations and discuss whether any priorities could be incorporated into their goals.

Breitfelder suggested that commissioners review the NAACP recommendations prior to the October meeting so they can discuss which priorities they agree on adopting, along with the possibility of partnering with the NAACP.

Discuss details from Linn County's COVID-19 virtual town hall meeting and possibility of hosting a session in Dubuque

Breitfelder met with Ed Raber to inform him that the commission approved continuing discussions about a possible virtual town hall. They felt it is challenging at this time and discussed which type of session would be valuable. Ed had reached out to Jen Manders at the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque to have a conversation as to whether the Foundation would be interested in a virtual COVID-19 town hall meeting. She felt it wasn't a good opportunity or topic at this time. Ed was anticipating additional information that could spark ideas for another virtual option and that he would share those ideas when received. She has not heard back from him.

Key City Pride's Keychella Event

Breitfelder asked for feedback from those who had attended the event on September 5th. The press being present was good. Earlier in the day the crowd was small, growing in the afternoon, and they felt there was a good cross section of people who had attended. It was recommended they get a banner so they are more easily identified.

New Business

Report on COVID-19

Kelly provided COVID statistics in her Director's Report. Cases are continuing to climb. The fourteen-day positivity rate is about 11%. 49% are in the 18 to 40-year-old age range. The statewide positivity rate is 69% white, 18% unknown, 14% Hispanic, 6% black, 3% Asian, and 1% Native American. The statewide death rate is 80% white, 2% Asian, 6% Hispanic, and 4% Black. The DCSD now has a COVID-19 dashboard on their website. Currently there is 1 student at Roosevelt, 1 staff at Washington Middle School, and 1 staff at the Forum who have tested positive.

The \$1.3 million has been collected, with \$950,000 being granted out. \$2,500 to the Boy Scouts for Scouting for Food as the Dubuque Food Pantry relies heavily on that project. \$3,500 to Holy Family Schools, \$65,000 to Catholic Charities to hire a case manager and to have a general assistance fund. \$60,000 to Hills & Dales for protective equipment, \$12,000 to Almost Home, \$25,000 to support the Hillcrest residential students, and \$6,000 to Two-By-Two Character Development.

The city had projected a \$116 million budget deficit, but after receiving projected numbers from the state, the shortfall now is between \$4 and 5 million.

There are 900 families who are late on paying their city utility bills. Staff is working to connect those individuals to the Housing Department for assistance through CDBG grant funds. The state also has an Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Program, with Operation New View handling the application process, and Housing Department staff assisting people with completing those application forms.

Dream Center Staff

Kelly extended an invitation to Robert Kimble and Raquel from the Dream Center to attend today's meeting following a reported bias incident. The Mayor had read a statement at last Monday's Council meeting in response to the incident, and the police are investigating a possible harassment charge.

As a commission they can reach out to other organizations to let them know we are here for support. It was suggested that they create a standard email template that they could send to various organizations to get that word out. Breifelder and Allen will draft that email for review at the October meeting.

Standing Items: Goals

Objective 1: Race in the Heartland Conference – Jackson, Breifelder, Allen

Allen, Breifelder, and Gardiner met to discuss the commission's public forums portion of the Conference. They are planning two student forums which will focus on criminal justice and education, and two adult forums with one topic focusing on Housing. Breifelder, as part of the Race and the Heartland Planning Committee, created and sent out a press release to media sources.

Objective 2: Education – Durnin, Breifelder, Gardiner

Commissioner Breifelder met with Cynthia Wehrenberg, Youth Impact Coordinator for the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, to discuss her work with the Trauma Informed Alliance, a local group devoted to increase awareness of how traumatic experiences impact a child's academic performance. She stated that the Alliance collected data related to trauma within the Dubuque community. Cynthia indicated that she will be facilitating a session with the Alliance in September to specifically discuss action steps to move forward with this data. Cynthia will share those recommendations once they are formed.

Gardiner will again reach out to Marlynn Larron, a DCSD teacher who is involved with the Marshallese community and the Islander Club at Senior, to invite her to next month's meeting so she can share any concerns or questions that she may have.

Objective 3: Housing – McCarthy, Keeler, Allen

Commissioner Keeler inquired if Kelly had received any feedback from the City Council regarding the commission's recommendation on establishing a quarterly review process for examining eviction data. Kelly stated she did not receive any feedback. She stated that she counted the commission's two recommendations as part of the Black Lives Matter recommendations overall. They will also be listed in the document she is preparing with community recommendations for prioritizing different racial equity areas. The eviction piece is also in the Analysis of Impediments and is going to go in both as a recommendation from the commission and the consultant.

Objective 4: Employment – Breifelder, Hammel, Regan

Breifelder and Hammel have been looking into employment issues specific to the Marshallese population which led them to do research on various Pacific Islander and Marshallese commissions, organizations, and non-profits throughout the country. Of interest was a publication from the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs. As part of their strategic plan, they have a set of priorities related to employment. She will be meeting with the executive director to gather information about their strategic plan and will provide an update at the October meeting.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Hammel motioned and Commissioner Durnin seconded to adjourn. All in favor. The meeting ended at 5:53 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, October 12, 2020.

Minutes approved as submitted: _____