

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 3, 2016, 6:30 pm**

Marion City Hall
1225 6th Avenue
Marion, IA 52302

Commissioners Present: Mr. Dave Baumler
Ms. Renae Forsyth-Christy
Ms. Kim Gordon
Mr. Steve Moshier, Chair
Mr. Bret Nilles
Mr. Joe Stutler, Vice Chair
Ms. Angelica Vannatta

Commissioners Absent: Ms. Danielle Brazant
Mr. Joseph Ellis
Mr. Kent Jackson
Ms. Queen Githaiga

Staff/Other Present: Mr. Chad Simmons, Diversity Focus
Ms. Brenda Markwardt, Diversity Focus
Mr. Robin Tucker, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison
Ms. LaSheila Yates, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission
Ms. Alicia Abernathy, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission

I. Call to Order

Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Moshier, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

II. Roll Call/Introductions

Commissioners, staff and guests introduced themselves.

III. Public Response.

Chad Simmons, Diversity Focus, stated Diversity Focus has been around since 2005 and does not work to replace Civil Rights agencies but works to support them. Mr. Simmons stated Diversity Focus is currently working on two new programs including Johnson & Linn County Boards & Commissions Leadership Institute and Iowa New Resident Recruitment & Retention Pilot INR³P. Mr. Simmons stated he is asking City governments to include support for Diversity Focus in their FY17 budgets. Mr. Simmons stated he spoke with the Marion City Manager and the Marion Mayor and plans to speak with Marion City Council in the near future.

IV. Approval of Minutes from January Meeting

Executive Director LaSheila Yates pointed out the date states 2015 rather than 2016. Noting the change, Commissioner Niles moved to approve the January minutes as amended. Commissioner Vannatta seconded the motion and, with no additional discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

V. **Report from Chair**

Commissioner Moshier, Chair, presented this report. Mr. Moshier stated the Commission needs to get out in the community more and therefore a request was made for the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission staff to share their training materials with Marion. A request was also made for Cedar Rapids staff to share the train-the-trainer materials. Mr. Moshier stated he would like the train-the-trainer trainings to take place during upcoming Commission meetings. Mr. Moshier stated if Commissioners help with the outreach it takes stress off the Cedar Rapids staff.

VI. **Committee Reports**

Executive Committee

Commissioner Stutler, Vice Chair, presented this report. Mr. Stutler noted that the committee met to plan the current agenda. Mr. Stutler also noted that representatives from both Marion and Cedar Rapids met to discuss the 28E Agreement. A follow up meeting is scheduled for February 10th.

Marion Liaison Report

Commissioner Niles deferred his report to Cedar Rapids Liaison Robin Tucker as he was not present at the previous meeting.

Cedar Rapids Liaison Report

Mr. Robin Tucker, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison, presented this report. Mr. Tucker noted that, if approved, the new 28E Agreement will be effective in FY17. Mr. Tucker stated staff worked to create a new case analysis template that they have been using since September and makes all case analysis uniform. Mr. Tucker stated the “Selma” movie night held on January 17th was successful despite the cold weather.

StarPower Simulation Report

Commissioner Angelica Vannatta presented this report. The event will be held on February 25th, at Lowe Park. Ms. Vannatta stated invitations for the event were sent out on January 19th and there is no head count at this point as Amanda Kaufman is out of the office. Ms. Vannatta stated volunteers are needed but she’ll get more into the details later in the agenda.

Guest Speakers

Commissioner Moshier noted there is no report as Commissioner Ellis is absent. Mr. Moshier stated he would like to have it where there is not a guest speaker every meeting. Mr. Moshier stated not having a speaker every meeting will allow for people to speak who request to address the Commission on short notice, such as the case at this meeting. Commissioner Vannatta requested time limits for the speakers be discussed.

Community Outreach

Commissioner Stutler noted this was previously discussed under the Chair Report. Commissioner Moshier stated he would like to have a schedule for train-the-trainer trainings somewhat organized by the March Commission meeting.

VII. **Director’s Report**

Ms. Yates presented this report. Ms. Yates stated for the January 2015 to January 2016 reporting period, four (4) cases were filed with the Marion Commission. Five (5) cases were closed during the same period and one (1) is in the public hearing phase. Ms. Yates stated the Administrative Law Judge’s decision for the public hearing case was received on February 1st. Ms. Yates stated in accordance to the code the Commission will need to meet in closed session within 30 days to review the decision. Ms. Yates stated she is working with City Attorney Devin Kelly to set up this

meeting as he will need to be present to provide a recommendation.

Ms. Yates stated the Iowa City Civil Rights Commission had the first reading to amend their ordinance to include Section 8 under Lawful Source of Income. Ms. Yates stated she was contacted by the Gazette to discuss the Cedar Rapids ordinance not including Lawful Source of Income. It was determined if any questions arise regarding Marion's ordinance they will be directed to Chairperson Moshier for comment.

VIII. **New Business**

StarPower Simulation

Commissioner Vannatta stated volunteers will be needed to help set up the space as there will be three (3) sections with tables and chairs. Volunteers are also needed to help check people in between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. The event will start at 6:00 p.m. with a welcome from Chairperson Moshier. The plan is to start the game at 6:30 p.m. to allow time to get everyone organized. Ms. Vannatta stated there will be two sessions and she and Commissioner Dave Baumler will switch between facilitator roles.

Commissioner Moshier asked if the Cedar Rapids Commissioners were invited and requested they be invited. Alicia Abernathy stated if Commissioner Vannatta would send her the invitation and registration details she'll share it with the Cedar Rapids Commissioners. Commissioners informed Ms. Vannatta of the times they can arrive at the event.

ICRC Training Opportunity

Commissioner Moshier stated correspondence was received from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission regarding an upcoming training. If Commissioners would like to attend mileage would be reimbursed but people are encouraged to carpool if possible.

Upcoming Community Involvement Opportunities

Ms. Yates noted the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission is hosting Mediation Training on February 9th if Commissioners would like to attend. Ms. Yates stated the registration deadline is February 5th at 5:00 p.m. and Alicia will share the press release with Commissioners.

IX. **Good of the Order**

Ms. Yates stated Cedar Rapids has invested money recently in materials that better assist with outreach efforts such as banners, table covers, t-shirts and promotional materials such as tote bags, pens and water bottles. Ms. Yates stated staff will share the costs and companies used with Marion if they would like to look into investing in something similar.

X. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Baumler motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Niles, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 6:30 pm at Marion City Hall, 1225 6th Avenue, Marion, Iowa.

Respectfully submitted by Alicia Abernathy, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission