

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 2, 2016, 6:30 pm**

Marion City Hall
1225 6th Avenue
Marion, IA 52302

Commissioners Present: Ms. Danielle Brazant
Mr. Joseph Ellis
Ms. Kim Gordon
Mr. Kent Jackson
Mr. Steve Moshier, Chair
Mr. Bret Nilles
Mr. Joe Stutler, Vice Chair
Ms. Angelica Vannatta

Commissioners Absent: Mr. Dave Baumler
Ms. Renae Forsyth-Christy
Ms. Queen Githaiga

Staff/Other Present: Ms. Amanda Kaufman, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Marion
Mr. Devin Kelly, City Attorney, City of Marion
Mr. Robin Tucker, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison
Ms. LaSheila Yates, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission

I. **Call to Order**
Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Moshier, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

II. **Roll Call/Introductions**
Commissioners, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

III. **Public Response**
Bob Mitchell, Landlords of Linn County discussed the issue of lawful source of income. He feels all sources of income are not equal and would like to see “lawful source of income” removed from Chapter 31 of the City of Marion’s Code of Ordinances. Commissioner Gordon stated that she has not found anything to support such statements. Devin Kelly, City Attorney, stated that this is purely a policy decision. Executive Director Yates clarified that only one city has adopted lawful source of income in the past year. Commissioner Stutler inquired whether the Landlords of Linn County have received legal review for this issue.

Commissioner Brazant left the meeting at 6:56pm and returned at 6:57pm.

- IV. **Guest Speaker – Sara Buck, Housing Programs Manager, City of Cedar Rapids**
Ms. Buck provided a presentation to the Commission regarding the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. A copy of the presentation materials were included with the agenda packet. 1,076 tenants are currently participating in the program with an additional 875 families on the waiting list. 11% of program participants (120 families) are in Marion. The primary barriers for program participants include credit checks, payment standards, rental history, and background checks. Ms. Yates stated that no official complaints regarding lawful source of income have been filed in Marion. Ms. Buck stated that education is key; consistent business practices are important for landlords to have in place.
- V. **Approval of Minutes from February Regular Meeting**
Commissioner Stutler, Vice Chair, moved to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Vannatta seconded the motion, and with no additional discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- VI. **Approval of Minutes from February Special Meeting**
Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Gordon seconded the motion and, with no additional discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- VII. **Report from Chair**
Commissioner Moshier, Chair, presented this report. He stated that the regular meeting in April will include a train-the-trainer from Executive Director Yates, which will take approximately 90 minutes. The meeting will also include Jay Johnson as a guest speaker. Commissioners should be prepared for a longer meeting. He also shared that the Commission will receive an updated version of the 28E agreement between the City of Marion and City of Cedar Rapids at an upcoming meeting.
- VIII. **Committee Reports**
Executive Committee
Commissioner Stutler, Vice Chair, presented this report. The agenda was drafted and the 28E agreement process was discussed during the executive committee meeting.
- Marion Liaison Report*
Commissioner Niles presented this report. During the last Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission meeting, the Commission decided to re-size their commission from 9 members to 7. Janet Abejo has been promoted to senior investigator with the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission.
- Cedar Rapids Liaison Report*
Mr. Robin Tucker, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Liaison, did not attend the most recent Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission meeting, so he had nothing to report. He did state that his term will be becoming vacant later this year.
- Guest Speakers*
Commissioner Ellis presented this report. He stated that he does not have a speaker planned past the April meeting at this time, to allow for other items or last-minute speakers to come up. Commissioner Moshier expressed his satisfaction for the guest speaker program.

Community Outreach

Commissioner Stutler, Vice Chair, presented this report. Next month the commissioners will receive train-the-trainer training from Executive Director Yates. After that training has been received, the commissioners will be well-equipped to go out into the community and do outreach activities. He urged commissioners to begin thinking about places where community outreach could be beneficial. Commissioner Vannatta asked if a working group would be formed to address community outreach. Commissioner Moshier stated that he would like that to happen after the initial structure has been solidified.

IX. Director's Report

Executive Director Yates presented this report. 5 cases have been closed between January 2015 and 2016; 3 cases have been filed. One case went to special meeting and the commission accepted the ALJ ruling. Mr. Devin Kelly inquired about next steps and Ms. Yates will follow up with him on that. Once this case is closed, there will be no open cases remaining for Marion. She stated that a second 3-hour mediation training is being scheduled with Eastern Iowa Mediation Services; once a date has been solidified, commissioners will be notified. An EEOC training will be held in May. Fair lending training will take place on April 8th.

X. Old Business

StarPower Simulation Report

Commissioner Vannatta presented this report. She thanked all commissioners who attended and assisted with the event. She passed out the results from the evaluation survey that went out to non-commissioner participants. For the first run-through of the game, she felt the smaller group size was successful. As outreach opportunities are identified in the future, it may be a beneficial thing to go to their groups to facilitate instead of hosting.

XI. New Business

Code of Ethics for Commissioners

Amanda Kaufman distributed the Marion code of ethics and signature sheets. Commissioners are asked to turn them in by the last week of April.

Upcoming Community Involvement Opportunities

No events to report.

XII. Good of the Order

No additional comments.

XIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Jackson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Brazant, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm.

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

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Kaufman, City of Marion