

**MARION CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**June 4, 2014, 6:30pm**

Marion City Hall  
1225 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Marion, IA 52302

**Commissioners Present:** Mr. Dave Baumler  
Ms. Deborah Brydon  
Mr. Joseph Ellis  
Ms. Janet Evans  
Ms. Queen Githaiga  
Ms. Elizabeth Hilkerbaumer  
Mr. Kent Jackson  
Mr. Steve Moshier, Chair  
Mr. Bret Nilles  
Ms. Janet Powell  
Mr. Joe Stutler, Vice Chair

**Staff Present:** Mr. John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas, Executive Director,  
Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission  
Ms. Virginia Sipes, Investigator,  
Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission

**I. Call to Order**

Noting there was a quorum, Commissioner Moshier, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

**II. Roll Call/Introductions**

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

**III. Public Response**

There was no public response.

**IV. Approval of Minutes from May Meeting**

The Commission met for the first time on May 6, 2014. Minutes from the May meeting were not available. Commissioner Nilles offered to consult with the City of Marion to find out what arrangements can be made for minutes to be taken by City staff on a routine basis as well as for alternate City staff members when needed.

**V. Report from Chair**

Commissioner Moshier, Chair, and Commissioner Stutler, Vice Chair, discussed the possibility of meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC) bimonthly. The Chair and Vice Chair plan to explore options for relating with the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commissioners.

**VI. Committee Reports**

*Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee met with Mr. Chaisson-Cárdenas, Executive Director, CRCRC, on May 20, 2014 to discuss several items and the need to take action on getting an official Executive

Director for the Marion Civil Rights Commission. Commissioner Joe Stutler, Vice Chair, made the motion to nominate John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas as Interim Executive Director for the Marion Civil Rights Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Joseph Ellis. After discussion regarding how passage of the motion would formalize the relationship between the City of Marion, the Marion Civil Rights Commission and the CRCRC Staff, the motion was adopted by a unanimous vote.

Discussion followed as to how the CRCRC and the Marion Civil Rights Commission could work together in a variety of ways. Included in the discussion was potential participation in CRCRC upcoming events.

## VII. **Interim Executive Director's Update**

Mr. Chaisson-Cárdenas, Interim Executive Director, noted that the Marion Civil Rights Commission has no mission or vision statement. However, the Commission does have a Declaration of Purpose, Chapter 31, Marion, Iowa Code of Ordinances, Section 31.01. The Interim Executive Director asked the Marion Civil Rights Commissioners to consider whether the Commission wants to develop a Mission and Vision that reflects the Commission's Declaration of Purpose. In addition, the Commission was encouraged to begin to think about strategic planning for the budget for fiscal year 2016.

The Interim Executive Director asked the Commissioners how they would like to participate in the following CRCRC events\*:

- **Asian Festival (Saturday June 7, 2014).** The CRCRC is sponsoring the first Cedar Rapids Asian Festival. Commissioner Ellis stated that he plans to attend.
- **Festival Latino de Cedar Rapids (Sunday July 13, 2014).** The CRCRC is sponsoring the third annual 'Festival Latino de Cedar Rapids' which will be held at Greene Square Park, in downtown Cedar Rapids. Commissioner Evans expressed interest in serving as a committee member.
- **A Face for Fairness: Fair Housing for All -- Video and Poster Contest (Summer/Fall 2014).** WE CREATE HERE (<http://www.wecreatehere.net/tag/cedar-rapids/>) and the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission are partnering to launch a Video and Poster contest in order to gather community perspectives on the impact of Fair Housing on community pride, the economy and the wellbeing of people in the Cedar Rapids/Marion area. Commissioner Brydon expressed interest in serving as a committee member.
- **Community Discussion on Race and Culture in Cedar Rapids (July 2014).** In late July the Civil Rights Commission will be partnering with other local groups to sponsor a conversation based on the findings of the State of Equity in Cedar Rapids Report ([www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights](http://www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights)). The CRCRC will use "Roll of the Dice", (<http://www.rollofadice.org/>), a nationally recognized interactive training "game" designed to strengthen community leaders' and professionals' ability to understand and work with the causes and effects of racial and economic disproportionality. Commissioner Ellis expressed an interest in bringing the training to Marion. The Interim Executive Director can provide a proposal to the Marion Civil Rights Commission at their request.

- **LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY Fair Housing Summit (Thursday, September 4, 2014).** The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission, in partnership with PFLAG of Cedar Rapids and the Riverview Center, is sponsoring a free event for the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies. Commissioner Stutler expressed an interest in serving as a committee member.
- **Latino Professional Development Institute (October 3, 2014).** In partnership with the University of Iowa, the CRCRC will be sponsoring a professional development institute which is designed to enhance the skills of professionals working with Latino individuals, families and communities in Iowa. The institute will be part of the 16th Annual Strengthening and Valuing Latino/Communities in Iowa Conference. Commissioner Githaiga expressed interest in serving as a committee member.

#### VIII. **Old Business**

Mr. Chaisson-Cárdenas, Interim Executive Director, asked the Commissioners whether their training helped them understand their role. Commissioners offered highly favorable comments. In addition, Commissioner Ellis asked whether additional case-study based training could be offered. Also, the Chair asked whether there was a conflict of interest policy for the Commission. The Interim Executive Director stated that the best practice when there is a question regarding a potential conflict of interest is to have transparency.

#### IX. **New Business:**

##### *Rules of Practice*

The Rules of Practice need to be updated, in part, to reflect references to our ordinance (Chapter 31) where appropriate. A document with proposed changes will be distributed to Commissioners at the July meeting for discussion and vote at the August meeting.

##### *Standard Operating Procedures for Investigations*

The Interim Executive Director discussed the proposed Standard Operating Procedures with the Commissioners and requested that the Commissioners consider taking a vote on them at the July meeting. If commissioners have any feedback they wanted to share, they were invited to email Ms. Sipes.

##### *Liaison with Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission*

The Interim Executive Director extended the CRCRC's invitation for a Commissioner from the Marion Civil Rights Commission to serve on as a non-voting member of the CRCRC. Commissioners interested in serving as a liaison with the CRCRC may advise Commissioner Moshier, Chair.

##### *Committee Charters*

Commissioners reviewed the CRCRC's Committee Charters. The Interim Executive Director recommended that the Marion Civil Rights Commission create a subcommittee to create charters.

##### *Media Policy*

The Commissioners discussed the process for making official statements on behalf of the Commission. Commissioner Stutler, made a motion that it be in the Commission Chair's purview to select spokespersons when the Commission / a Commissioner receives a media request for an official commission statement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nilles. Discussion followed. Commissioner Ellis made a motion to amend the original motion to state that the Commission Chair will appoint an official spokesperson for media requests for official commission

statements. Commissioner Stutler accepted the amendment. The amendment was seconded by Commissioner Nilles. Discussion followed. The motion, as amended, passed unanimously. Commission Chair Moshier nominated John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas, Interim Executive Director for the Marion Civil Rights Commission, as the official spokesperson for any and all media requests and stated that if Mr. Chaisson-Cárdenas is not available to serve as spokesperson that the Interim Executive Director for the Marion Civil Rights Commission provide the Commission Chair with talking points for the media request.

**X. Adjournment**

Commissioner Stutler, Vice Chair, moved that the meeting adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brydon. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. Commission Chair Moshier adjourned the meeting at 7:48 pm.

The Marion Civil Rights Commission Meeting will be held on July 2, 2014 at 6:30pm at Marion City Hall, 1225 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Marion, IA 52302.

*Respectfully submitted by Virginia Sipes, Investigator, CRCRC.*

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Marion Civil Rights Commissioner / CRCRC Event Committee Volunteer Summary	CRCRC Events
Commissioner Evans	Festival Latino de Cedar Rapids (Sunday July 13, 2014)
Commissioner Brydon	A Face for Fairness: Fair Housing for All -- Video and Poster Contest (Summer/Fall 2014)
Commissioner Ellis	Community Discussion on Race and Culture in Cedar Rapids (July 2014)
Commissioner Stutler	LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY Fair Housing Summit (Thursday, September 4, 2014)
Commissioner Githaiga	Latino Professional Development Institute (October 3, 2014)