



WEST DES MOINES HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 31, 2019

Commissioners Present: Sanjita Pradhan, Dr. Rich Salas, Bernell Edwards, Lonnelle Dafney, Heather Schott, Mindy Begenat, Mark Hillenbrand

Commissioners Absent with notice:

Staff Representative: Laura Reveles

Council Liaison: Councilwoman Renee Hardman- absent with notice.

Guests: Tom Hadden, Jane Pauba-Dodge, Stephen Blobaum, Alex Carl

1. Call to order: Meeting called to order at 4:33 p.m.

2. Roll call

3. Approval of August 2018 Minutes

Commissioner Dr. Rich Salas motioned to approve, Commissioner Heather Schott seconded, minutes approved

4. Introductions of members

- Members of the commission each introduced themselves with a bit of background on why they are on the commission.

5. Opportunity for public to address the Commission

- Alex Carl, Assistant Planner, introduced himself and invited the commission to the Diversity and Inclusion Focus Group that the Comprehensive Plan team is hosting.
- Stephen Blowbaum, West Des Moines resident

6. HR MEI Report- Jane Pauba-Dodge

- HR director Jane Pauba-Dodge presented the City's Municipal Equality Index score from the Human Rights Campaign. The commission asked questions and gave suggestions on the different sections of the scorecard. The City's score improved from a 79 in 2017, to a 93 out of a 100 for 2018. Human Rights Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan thanked Jane for the presentation and stated that these are starting points for real change in the community and these things take time and the commission is excited to start this journey with the City.

7. Staff report

- Staff liaison for the Commission Laura Reveles covered the following topics:
 - Phone Line: 2 messages – one in regards to harassment at apartment complex (called back, no response) and discrimination case against WDM schools (Chair Sanjita Pradhan contacted individual).
 - Budget: handed out current fiscal year budget
 - Iowa League of Human Rights Agencies meeting:

The agencies discussed the legislature being in session and some bills that are currently being discussed. Two local events were brought up; the DSM Civil and Human Rights Symposium, March 20th, and Iowa Civil Rights Commission Conference April 5th. Laura is now the on the Executive Committee for the League as well.

<https://icrc.iowa.gov/news/6th-iowa-civil-rights-symposium-and-3rd-build-it-right-iowa-conference>

- Comp Plan Diversity & Inclusion Focus Group: Handout with contact information if any commissioners would like to participate. It's the day before the next Human Rights meeting. Please notify Laura as well if you sign up to be a part of the focus group.
- LOSST FAQ: There will be a Local Option Sales Tax for Polk County residents of West Des Moines on March 5th, 2019. A Frequently Asked Questions page was handed out that can help inform yourself and others of this very important vote for the community.
- DSM Civil and Human Rights Symposium: the City will once again sponsor staff who choose to attend the Symposium
- Update on Diversity Audit: In our last quorum meeting, HR discussed the D&I audit being performed by Claudia Schabel- as an update the strategy recommendation should be given to the City in this next month for steps to move forward.
- Citizen Academies: We have some citizen academies at the City and they are all recruiting now for their sessions.
- Discussion took place on setting up a SharePoint site to disseminate documents.

8. Chair report: Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan

- Made the commission aware that she has been in contact with City staff to help move initiatives forward for the commission.

9. Report from Commissioners on recent activities–

10. Old business

- Charter
 - New Commissioners would like some more time to review, understand and process the information. Will discuss further in upcoming strategy sessions.

11. New business

- Sponsorship of Des Moines Civil & Human Rights Symposium
 - The Commission will donate \$500 to the Symposium
 - Commissioner Lonnette Dafney motioned to approve, Commissioner Dr. Rich Salas seconded, motion passed.
- Strategy Sessions
 - The Commission will host some strategy sessions to be facilitated by Teva from Group Creative Services. These sessions will be on the same nights as the regularly scheduled commission meeting.
 - Commissioner Dr. Rich Salas motioned to approve, Commissioner Heather Schott seconded, motion passed.
- GARE Membership
 - Commission supports the City joining GARE and will have access to all its resources
 - Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan requested that city leaders be included in the strategy sessions in order to hear the commission's conversations.

12. Next meeting date February 28, 2019, 4:30 – 6:00pm

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 6:12pm.

Commissioner Mindy Begenat moved to adjourn, Commissioner Mark Hillenbrand seconded

Minutes by: Laura Reveles

DRAFT