



WEST DES MOINES HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 9, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Commissioners Present: Heather Schott, Mindy Begenat, Lonnette Dafney, Sanjita Pradhan, Dr. Rich Salas, Milton Cole

Commissioners Absent with notice:

Staff Representative: Laura Reveles

Council Liaison: Councilwoman Renee Hardman

Guests:

1. **Call to order:** Meeting called to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. **Roll call**

- Commissioners gave updates on how they are doing this this time

3. **Approval of February 2020 Minutes**

- Commissioner Lonnie Dafney motioned to approve, Commissioner Milton Cole seconded, minutes approved

4. **Opportunity for public to address the Commission**

- No public joined the meeting

5. **Staff report**

Staff liaison for the Commission Laura Reveles covered the following topics:

- Phone Line: No messages. If there is a message it will send Laura an email, so calls are not missed
- Budget handout
- City Buildings are closed to the public, but operations continue. Many staff are working from home
- Valley Junction Foundation- Originally there was going to be an item on the agenda regarding helping support the Cinco de Mayo Festival. Funding for the event that typically comes from a corporate grant has stopped and the foundation needs assistance. With the early portion of their event schedule being cancelled or at best postponed, they will experience a pretty severe decrease in revenue coming in from things like Farmers Market vendor fees, beer sales at Music in the Junction, sponsorships, etc. In some cases, Farmers Market and Music in the Junction helped to subsidize other less profitable events. Without a portion of that revenue, it becomes even more critical to cover as much of the cost of Cinco de Mayo with outside sources. With the change in Wells Fargo's sponsorship program, their \$5,000 sponsorship went away, thus the request for assistance from the Human Rights Commission has been requested. Please keep them in mind and the commission can discuss as an agenda item in a future meeting.
 - Tom Hadden spoke to the need to support this event
 - Councilwoman Renee Hardman agreed to support, and this event helps promote diversity

- Commissioner Dr. Salas supports financially supporting as well as getting out in the community and being more visible
- Tom Hadden will get back to the commission to see if we split the donation between the City and Human Rights Commission
- **Action item: All Commissioners to review the sponsorship document, provide as much feedback over email and come prepared for discussion/approval in the next meeting.**
 - **Action item: Chair Pradhan will look at remaining budget for this fiscal, maybe pledge money towards this now. She sees this as a partnership and co brand as an event we host. Commission can look at this and think it over**
 - Commissioner Milton Cole likes the idea of people coming from all other cities to WDM for this event and supports the idea.
 - Commissioner Lonnie Dafney is supportive of the event and agrees with revisiting and solidifying the commission's process and guidelines for sponsorship

6. Report from Commissioners on recent activities

- Commissioner Dr. Salas discussed the issue with undocumented residents who have lost jobs and are in need and brought up the option of resources and how best to get them in the hands of people who need them. Discussion took place on resources and how best to work with Human Services or post on website
- Council Liaison Renee Hardman congratulated Commissioner Lonnie Dafney on her new position as Diversity and Inclusion Director with EMC Insurance Companies. She also asked the Commission if they should endorse a message in support of the 2020 Census
 - Thanked Commissioner Heather Schott for serving on a panel for National Women's Day and participated in discussions for women and equity.
 - Council approved \$7,500 to do a bigger MLK Event
 - Commissioner Dr. Salas proposed, with further discussion, that the Commission match that amount for the event.
 - Commissioner Milton Cole, having been in the presence of Martin Luther King, truly supports this event and suggested working with the schools, City, HRC and community to bring this event forward
 - Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan stated the next step will be to come together as a events committee with financials and ideas and present it to the Commission

7. Old business

- Strategic Plan one-page handout approval
 - Will circulate in an email and approve at next meeting
 - Commissioner Heather Schott makes a motion to approve and post on site and Commissioner Lonnie Dafney seconded, motioned approved.
- Strategic Plan leadership roles
 - Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan proposed that people tag team, and each take a piece of the strategic plan main items and form a subgroup on that topic.

Action item: Each commissioner to email Laura and Sanjita their preference on what goal(s) they want to take leadership on.

- Commissioner Heather Schott stated the first concern is subgroups taking topics offline and working or doing things on behalf of the Commission without our knowledge
 - Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan stated that each subgroup will have to bring budget and decisions to the Commission for approval.
- Vice Chair Election
 - Discussion took place on adding the Vice Chair position to the ordinance document along with term and role expectations.
 - Commissioner Heather Schott nominated Commissioner Mindy Begenat, Commissioner Milton Cole motioned to approve, Commissioner Dr. Salas seconded.
- Chair Election
 - Commissioner Milton Cole motioned for Sanjita Pradhan to continue as Chair, Commissioner Mindy Begenat seconded.
- Councilwoman Renee Hardman requested if there are any referrals for the open position on the Commission to let her know.

8. New business

- One Economy Report
 - Commission Chair Sanjita Pradhan recommended a virtual tour of Undesign the Redline exhibit followed by discussion for city staff in the future. Commission can help coordinate and facilitate the discussion.

9. Next meeting date: May 14, 2020.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 6:09pm.

Commissioner Milton Cole moved to adjourn; Commissioner Heather Schott seconded

Minutes by: Laura Reveles