

MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
January 25, 2018

Call to Order – This regular meeting of the Ames Human Relations Commission was called to order by Chair John Klaus at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room 235 of City Hall. Commissioners Heidi Thompson, Joel Hochstein, and Anneke Mundel were present. Staff member Tasheik Kerr and Vanessa Baker Latimer were also present.

Public Forum – Barb Wheelock, Cheryl Binzen and Chris Mondak from Inclusive Ames were present. Cheryl informed the Commissioners that one of the subgroups of Inclusive Ames who meet to work on the achievement gap with schools is no longer under the umbrella of Inclusive Ames. The group is now working directly working with the School Board and the School District as the Ames Youth and School Action Team. Cheryl informed the Commissioners on the initiatives of the Safe Communities Team and on the vision and mission of Inclusive Ames. She also wanted to know if the Commission would be interested in working together on educational activities and on cosponsoring events. Joel responded that Inclusive Ames would need to put the events on the Commission’s agenda two months before the event.

Report of Complaints or Inquiries from the Public – There were no reports of complaints.

Review of Progress on Strategic Plan – Heidi noted that the Commission was to build the strategic plan into their agenda. The Commissioners discussed how to organize and compare the data of the AHRC and those of the IHRC.

Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 28, 2017 – Heidi noted that the first paragraph under the agenda item “Purpose of the Human Relations Commission” should be under the agenda item “Quarterly Educational Seminars and Proposed Rotations of Topics.” It was moved by Anneke, seconded by Heidi to approve the minutes of the December 28, 2017 meeting with the correction as noted.

Discussion of the Commission with Incoming Elected Officials – New Council members were not able to attend.

Fair Housing Month – Vanessa informed the Commissioners that she will be formulating a plan with various partners including the Commission for Fair Housing Month. She noted that some of the partners are thinking about having the poster art contest again featuring school-age children. She indicated that the Commissioners could help by advertising the contest and by serving as judges.

John inquired about the award for Home for Everyone. Anneke responded that they could put a call out for nominations. The application for the award would need to be modified. Vanessa added that the award could be part of the proclamation for Fair Housing Month during the first week of April. It was moved by Joel, seconded by Anneke to put the application for Home for Everyone Award on February’s agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Program of Quarterly Educational Seminars – Heidi shared that Anneke developed some questions in order to identify what challenges or discriminatory situations groups are facing and whom the Commission is trying to reach. Vanessa suggested some places the Commission could do their outreach. Heidi suggested that the questions be modified based on the audience.

Anneke shared that housing was the second most complaint received by the Iowa Civil Rights Commission. Heidi added that the Commission could work with Vanessa to do a public service

announcement around April regarding what discrimination looks like as it relates to housing. Vanessa suggested doing a segment on channel 12. John noted that the Commission need to find organizations that deal with the poor.

Joel asked Vanessa if she was aware of the Iowa City human relations code, which prohibits discrimination against individuals that are using subsidies. Vanessa responded that though she is aware of the ordinance, she would need to look at it in more detail.

It was moved by Anneke, seconded by John to have Heidi and Anneke develop a proposal for a housing educational activity for the next Commission meeting. Motion carried unanimously. It was moved by Joel, seconded by Heidi to coordinate with Vanessa on fair housing initiatives. Motion carried unanimously.

Annual Report Presentation – The Commissioners reviewed the draft annual report, made amendments and assigned tasks for each other to input data into the report. Heidi asked if the goal of the Commission was to get the report approve in February and to take to the Council in March. It was moved by Joel, seconded by Anneke to put the annual report presentation on February's agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

John left meeting at 6:41

Municipal Equality Index Scorecard – Joel announced he would try to obtain other cities' contractor non-discrimination ordinance language. If the Commission decided they needed it, it could go before Council for approval. Joel also added that at the direction of the Commission, he would work with city staff regarding youth bullying prevention policies for city services.

It was moved by Heidi, seconded by Anneke to keep the Municipal Equality Index Scorecard on the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Comments – Heidi suggested making an outline of the strategic plan to facilitate its integration into the agenda. Joel added that when the original agenda comes out, he could box off areas the strategic plan falls into and send to Stacy to make edits.

Joel mentioned that the Mayor called and asked him to attend the Chamber's sponsored diversity and inclusion workshop. It was moved by Joel, seconded by Anneke to provide the Commission with a report on the Chamber's workshop. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: February 22, 2018

The Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.