

MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
April 26, 2018

Call to Order – This regular meeting of the Ames Human Relations Commission was called to order by Commissioner Joel Hochstein at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room 235 of City Hall. Commissioners Wayne Clinton, Anneke Mundel, Liming Pals, and Heidi Thompson were present. Staff member Brian Phillips was also present.

Welcome to New Commissioners and Introductions – The Commissioners introduced themselves and spoke about their experiences.

Public Forum – There was no one present for public forum.

Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 22, 2018 – It was moved by Anneke, seconded by Heidi to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2018 meeting with corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

Selection of Commission Chair – Anneke nominated Joel to be chair. Seconded by Heidi. Wayne moved unanimous consent to approve Joel as the Commission Chair.

Report of Complaints or Inquiries from the Public – Brian reported no communication had been received from the public.

Program of Quarterly Educational Seminars/Public Service Announcements – Anneke noted that the Commission had been discussing a series of seminars, first relating to employment, then fair housing, and public accommodation in the summer. Anneke explained that she had worked with the City's Cable Television Coordinator to run public service announcements during Fair Housing Month. She noted that it would be possible to create customized PSAs for different topics through the year, featuring Commission members.

Joel asked about a schedule. Anneke said it sounded like filming all at once would be ideal, then broadcasting them throughout the year. She asked whether there was interest in this idea. Wayne stated he saw value in that. Liming noted that she has communicated with people who have been discriminated against. Liming stated she is available regularly. Anneke will consult with Derek and report back at the May meeting.

Heidi noted that in June the Commission will start on the public accommodation topic. She said another community had used a "secret-shopper" to test businesses regarding whether their services were accessible to individuals with disabilities. Joel summarized that this item should be on the agenda for May.

Preparation for May 8 Joint Meeting with City Council – Joel noted that the Annual report was provided to Commission members. It includes a summary of activities as well as a strategic plan for the Commission's next two years. It will be presented on May 8. Wayne noted he would

need to call in to the meeting, as he is out of the area. Joel noted there was also a memo asking for further dialogue with the Council regarding the Commission's purpose. What could or should the Commission be doing? What does the community need? The memo includes questions to get a better understanding of how the Council would like to proceed.

Wayne noted that this is a great opportunity to look at community outreach and engagement and partner with various like-minded entities to make Ames open and welcoming to everyone. That means showing up at some of their meetings and reporting back here.

Municipal Equality Index Scorecard – There were no updates. Joel provided an overview of the MEI and what it is. Joel has touched base with Sgt. Crippen in the Police Department to see how the liaison position could be best utilized.

Partnership with Inclusive Ames – Representatives of Inclusive Ames were in attendance to discuss their partnership with the Commission. The Human Relations Commission was invited to participate in three events that are being held. The November event is produced by Iowa DHS, and the AHRC is being specifically asked to co-sponsor it. This event relates to race, equity, and child welfare. The Commission is invited to sponsor the September and October events, but without Commission sponsorship of the November event, it would not occur, at least not at that time.

The Commission was asked whether these events were viewed by the Commission as encroaching on its role. Wayne asked whether the November event was limiting to the child welfare system. Anneke and Heidi indicated these efforts were welcome.

Inclusive Ames would like to be able to say that the Commission is a sponsor. There is no cost involved. Promoting the event would be helpful as well, such as advertising it on the City's website. Some Commissioners expressed interest in attending a session prior to it taking place here. It will be hosted in September in Davenport. Additionally, Inclusive Ames was asked to gather more information regarding how this program was evaluated for effectiveness and provide it to the Commissioners.

The Commission was asked whether it had interest in sponsoring the September or October programs. Heidi stated she did not see as much of a connection between the Commission and the Mindful Inquiry Program (October). The Commission discussed the Cross-Cultural Communication program (September). Heidi moved that the Commission should sponsor the September and October programs. Wayne seconded. Heidi also noted that the Commission should have representatives in attendance to listen to the comments and discussion from attendees. Liming offered to attend the first program. Motion carried unanimously.

It was noted that a flyer would be produced, and that Joel would be in charge of approving the look of the flyer on behalf of the Commission.

Symposium Development with Chamber and ISU – Joel provided background information

regarding this topic. A date is still in the process of being finalized. It will likely be a half-day event (morning) during the week. There is planning taking place regarding the keynote speaker and session topics. Joel was excited about the opportunity to discuss the concepts of equity and inclusion in the business community. He proposed the Commission could use funds to sponsor the event. Brian offered that it would be good early in the next fiscal year to review the Commission's available funds and typical annual expenditures to plan its spending. Wayne asked that this discussion be on the June agenda to discuss prospective FY 2018/19 expenses.

Commissioner Comments – Heidi asked about putting Carrie Moser's picture (recipient of the Home for Everyone Award) on the website. Joel will work with Brian to put it on the website and prepare something to put out to the media.

Next Meeting: May 24, 2018

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.