

Minutes

AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Conference Room 235
City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue
Thursday, April 27, 2023

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. by Vice Chair Wayne Clinton. Commission Members Chunhui Chen and Marty Martinez, City of Ames Staff Liaison Deb Schildroth, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator Casandra Eames were also present.

Welcome New Commissioners and Introductions: Vice Chair Clinton welcomed the new commissioners and Commission Member Martinez introduced himself. Staff Liaison Schildroth explained that Commission Member DeWaard could not attend this meeting due to a prior commitment, but was excited to serve on the Commission.

Public Forum: Vice Chair Clinton opened the Public Forum. No one was present to speak, and Vice Chair Clinton closed the Public Forum.

Selection of Chair and Vice Chair: Moved by Chen, seconded by Martinez, to elect Wayne Clinton as Chair of the Ames Human Relations Commission. Roll Call Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Martinez, seconded by Clinton, to elect Chunhui Chen as Vice Chair of the Ames Human Relations Commission. Roll Call Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Moved by Martinez, seconded by Chen, to approve the minutes of the March 29, 2023, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Strategic Plan: Chair Clinton explained that the current draft reflected revisions from the past few months. He also noted that Coordinator Eames had emailed feedback to the Commissioners. Vice Chair Chen welcomed the feedback from Coordinator Eames, expressing that her perspective was integral for the Commission.

Staff Liaison Schildroth suggested a change to the wording of Strategic Goal A – Advocacy. The Commissioners amended the wording of the second sentence to: “The Commission will undertake activities to discover, conduct analysis on, and circumvent instances that may lead to prohibited discrimination so that the community can be educated and assisted in preventing it.”

Moved by Chen, seconded by Martinez, to approve the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Planning for the 2022 Annual Report to City Council: Staff Liaison Schildroth suggested changing the date for the joint meeting with the City Council. Since the Annual Report must be approved by the Commission prior to City Council review, the Commissioners decided to delay the joint meeting until June 13, with a plan to approve the report at the regular Commission meeting on May 25. Staff agreed to assist Chair Clinton in compiling the report.

Invitation to ICRC Executive Director Kristen Stiffler: Staff Liaison Schildroth explained that the City contracts with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) to investigate complaints of discrimination. The Commissioners previously expressed interest in reaching out to ICRC staff for a training on how complaints are processed. On April 24, Kristen Stiffler was appointed as the new Executive Director of the ICRC. Staff Liaison Schildroth recommended waiting a few months before reaching out with a training request due to the staff turnover.

2023 Ames AAPI Heritage Month Celebration: Vice Chair Chen announced that the second annual Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month Celebration would be held on May 6 in the Memorial Union at Iowa State University from 4:00 – 6:30 p.m. The family-friendly, community event was co-sponsored by the Commission and will feature a keynote speech, awards ceremony, ethnic artistic performance, and a fashion medley showcase. A reception will follow in Howe Hall with cuisine from local Asian restaurants.

Vice Chair Chen discussed the reimbursement process for the funding budgeted for this event by the Commission. He also suggested that Coordinator Eames could send a formal invitation to the event to the Mayor and City Council. Coordinator Eames agreed to send the invitation. Staff Liaison Schildroth inquired whether the Commission had interest in pursuing a proclamation recognizing AAPI Heritage Month at the City Council meeting on May 9.

Moved by Clinton, seconded by Chen, to request a proclamation recognizing AAPI Heritage Month. Motion carried unanimously.

Postings and Social Media Content: The Commissioners discussed promoting the AAPI Heritage Month Celebration through the City’s social media accounts.

Commissioner Announcements: Staff Liaison Schildroth invited everyone to attend the final Community Conversations on Mental Health. The conversation on May 2 would address “Navigating Mental Health/Substance Use Systems,” and the event on June 6 would feature Scott Raecker on the topic of “Civility in Conversations.” Both events will be at the Ames Public Library Auditorium from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 25, 2023

Adjournment: Chair Clinton adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.