

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES

April 18, 2019 4:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers

PRESENT: COMMISSION CHAIR Derrick Thaxton
VICE CHAIR Nikki Garry
COMMISSIONERS Marty Watkins, Francie Johnson, Joyce Keller,
Richard Zaker, Byron Hansbro, and Ken White

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER Mary Jo Comerford

ALSO, PRESENT: ACTING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Penny Rogers
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY Sherry Beasley

I. Call to Order

Chair Thaxton called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Eight out of Nine Commissioners were present at the time of roll call. Chair Thaxton declared a quorum does exist to conduct and approve business.

II. Concerns, Comments or Questions from the Audience

There was none.

Chair Thaxton acknowledged the new Commissioner, Ken White and asked him to introduce himself.

Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers stated she will contact Fred Spannaus, Human Rights Investigator to set up orientation for Commissioner White and other Commissioners who have not had orientation or would like a refresher.

III. Approval of the March 21, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve the minutes with the necessary corrections, seconded by Commissioner Watkins. Upon roll call, the minutes were approved.

IV. Monthly Activity Report & Update/Summary of Cases

Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers presented the monthly status report of cases for Human Rights Investigators, Fred Spannaus (Exhibit A) and Jan Runion (Exhibit B).

V. Unfinished Business

A. Approval of Presentation on Protecting Houses of Worship

Chair Thaxton stated in the last meeting he met Kenith Bergeron from the U.S. Department of Justice regarding protecting houses of worship. He would like the Commission to hold a seminar in Decatur. Discussion followed. Chair Thaxton stated that would meet with Commissioner Zaker to discuss the particulars and follow up with Mr. Bergeron. A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve the presentation, seconded by Commissioner Keller. Upon roll call, the motioned carried.

B. MLK Celebration 2020

1. MLK Steering Committee Nominations and Election

Chair Thaxton asked for nominations for the MLK Steering Committee. Commissioner Garry nominated Commissioner Hansbro. Commissioner Keller stated she wanted to stay on the committee. Commissioner Johnson stated she wanted to stay on the committee as the alternate. Chair Thaxton asked for a motion to accept the following for the MLK Steering Committee: Commissioner Hansbro, Commissioner Keller, and Commissioner Johnson as the alternate. It was moved by Commissioner Garry and seconded by Commissioner Watkins. Upon roll call, the motion carried.

2. Discussion on MLK Theme

At the last meeting, Chair Thaxton asked the Commissioners to bring suggestions for a theme and suggestions for a speaker for the Banquet and the Freedom March program. Commissioner Garry stated she would like us to stay with a 2020 theme since we will be in the year 2020. Some suggestions were: Having 20/20 Vision for Social Justice, 20/20 Vision for Racial Equality, 20/20 Vision for All, or 20/20 Vision... How do you See It Through Your Eyes? All suggestions should be sent to Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers and she will bring the suggestions to the May meeting.

3. Discussion on MLK Banquet Speaker

Chair Thaxton asked for suggestions for a speaker for the MLK Banquet. A couple of names were suggested: host of the The Daily Show, Trevor Noah and Chicago Mayer-elect Lori Lightfoot. Commissioner Watkins suggested we have a singer who performs a concert at the Banquet, instead of having a speaker. Commissioner Watkins also stated he has a friend who will send a list of potential speakers, and he will bring this list to the next meeting.

4. Discussion on Freedom March Speaker

Chair Thaxton asked for suggestions for a speaker for the Freedom March program. Commissioner Watkins stated he has spoken to GT Church's Pastor Matt Samuels' secretary who asked for more information about the event. Other names that were suggested were as follows: Macon County Sheriff Tony Brown, Good Samaritan Inn Executive Director Stacey Brohard, and Boys and Girls Club Executive Director Bruce Jeffery.

New Business

A. Approval of Contributing to the 26th Annual Juneteenth Celebration

Chair Thaxton stated the African-American Cultural & Genealogical Society of IL, Inc (AACGS) (Exhibit C), has asked the Commission to contribute to the 26th Annual Juneteenth Celebration by placing an ad in their booklet. Last year the Commission placed a half-page ad for \$75 and Commissioner Keller bought a ticket to give to a student. Discussion followed. A motion was made by Commissioner Keller to place a full page color ad for \$110 and buy a ticket for a student which is \$25 (total \$135), seconded by Commissioner Zaker. Upon roll call, Chair Thaxton and Commissioner Watkins abstained due to being members of AACGS. The motion carried.

VI. Other Business

Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers stated Fred Spannaus will attend June's meeting to present information regarding implicit bias.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Hansbro made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Garry.

Upon roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.