

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

July 11, 2022

DATE: Monday, July 11, 2022

TIME: 4:30 PM

LOCATION: Ruby Sutton Building, 1157 Central Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001

Commissioner Durnin called the meeting of the Equity & Human Rights Commission to order at 4:34 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Carla Anderson, Janelle Branch, Yindra Dixon, Michael Durnin, Klanea Evans, Aaliya Herrion, Maitha Jolet, Jake Kurczek,

Commissioners Absent: Dereka Williams

Staff Present: Collins Eboh, Carol Spinoso, Shante Weston

Approval of May 9, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Motion by Anderson, second by Jolet to approve the meeting minutes of May 9, 2022 as submitted. All in favor.

Reports

Caseload Report

The May and June 2022 Caseload Reports were received and filed.

Chairperson's Report

Durnin welcomed the four new appointments to the commission.

Interim Director's Report

Collins thanked the new commissioners for their commitment to join the commission. Shante was invited back to answer any follow-up questions commissioners may have and to provide the complaint process information to newly appointed commissioners. Todd Schmidt and Addison from Iowa Legal Aid were invited to provide information about their initiative to conduct fair housing testing in Dubuque.

On July 6 and 7, Collins attended the 60th Anniversary Conference of the Davenport Civil Rights Commission. The conference highlighted the importance of civil rights agencies throughout the state and the importance in building strong and connected communities and featured two session tracts. The fair housing tract covered topics of criminal records screening, source of income discrimination, reasonable accommodation, fair housing legal updates, and the affordable housing crisis. The social justice tract offered information on trauma informed interviewing and the emotional harm of discrimination.

Old Business:

New Business:

Review Complaint Investigation Process

Shante Weston, Civil Rights Specialist, provided a presentation on the investigative process.

Legal Aid Presentation on Fair Housing Testing Grant

Todd Schmidt from Legal Aide, and fair housing project coordinator, Addison, were in attendance to provide information about a Fair Housing Initiatives Grant they received. The grant funds will be used to conduct two types of testing: 1) fair housing tests in individual complaints upon referrals from the Office of Equity & Human Rights or Housing and Community Development Department; and 2) proactive testing surveys of housing providers who advertise as not accepting housing choice vouchers to develop and understand data regarding whether refusal to accept is a pretext for discrimination under existing fair housing law. They are currently in the project planning stages and anticipate the tests beginning this fall. They will provide information as the project progresses.

Review 2022 Goals:

Durnin asked the new commissioners to review the current goals to determine which objectives they would be interested in being involved.

Adjournment:

Dixon motioned and Kurczek seconded to adjourn. All in favor. The meeting ended at 6:15 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, August 8, 2022.

Minutes approved as submitted: _____

Minutes approved as corrected: _____