

**DUBUQUE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES OF  
May 14, 2018**

Commissioner Allen called the meeting of the Dubuque Human Rights Commission to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, May 14, 2018, at the City Hall Annex, 1300 Main Street, Conference Room II, Dubuque, Iowa.

**Roll Call:**

Present:	Anthony Allen, Chair	Ashley Melchert
	Adrienne Breitfelder	Jay Schiesl, Vice Chair
	Indigo Channing	Nicole Borovic
	Jerry Hammel	Kate Parks
	Miquel Jackson	

Absent:

Staff:	Kelly Larson	Carol Spinoso
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**Oath of Office**

The Chair administered the oath of office to Commissioner Melchert.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Motion by Schiesl, seconded by Borovic to approve the meeting minutes of April 9, 2018. All in favor. Commissioners Parks and Jackson abstained.

**Reports**

**Caseload Report**

The April 2018 caseload report was received and filed.

**Chairperson Report**

Commissioner Allen reported that he attended the Policy Link Equity Summit in Chicago in April as part of a delegation sponsored by the Dubuque Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque and expressed that the sessions/speakers were excellent.

The Juneteenth celebration is scheduled for June 16<sup>th</sup> at Comiskey Park from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. He invited commissioners to assist with staffing the Human Rights Commission table.

**Director Report:**

To be submitted quarterly (next due July)

Commissioner Allen reordered the agenda to allow guests to participate in the discussion related to a recent bias incident.

**Discuss Action Regarding Bias Incident**

Kelly stated that staff learned of a bias incident that occurred last week at a local apartment building, where Executive Management is the property manager. Kelly stated that a flyer was posted in areas of the building and on social media. She stated that Executive Management has responded stating it was a completely fabricated posting. They don't believe it was posted on specific doors of tenants, and the management company has some ideas as to who may have posted the flyer. The police are currently investigating this incident to determine whether there would be any potential criminal charges. Depending on that investigation, there is also a potential for a fair housing charge.

Katrina Farren-Eller, Inclusive Dubuque Coordinator, and John Stewart, a member of the ID Network Impact Council, were present to offer support from the Inclusive Dubuque Network. Katrina is willing to invite representatives from the Housing Sector to meet with the Commission.

It was decided to hold a special meeting on Monday, May 21, 2018 to: 1) review a draft response to the incident, which will be prepared in advance by Commissioners Parks, Schiesl, and Allen; 2) host a conversation about collaborative efforts to prevent future incidents. Inclusive Dubuque neighborhood groups (which includes representatives from NAACP Friends of Fair Housing and the Dubuque Area Landlord Association), Housing, and the Dubuque Renter’s Union will be invited to attend; and 3) receive any investigative updates that are available from the Police.

**Old Business:**

No old business

**New Business:**

**I Read Program Presentation – Hempstead Student**

The student was not in attendance.

**Complete Worksheets for City Council Goal Setting**

An electronic copy of the worksheet will be sent to commissioners to complete prior to the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Discuss Replacing Commissioner Melchert Due to Absences**

Commissioner Melchert was not present for this discussion. Kate moved to table this item until the June meeting. Commissioner Channing seconded. The Chair felt strongly about sending Commissioner Melchert a letter advising that she is in violation of the attendance policy and informing her that she would be required to attend all scheduled Commission meetings. The motion and second were rescinded. Commissioner Channing move to request the Chair send a letter to Commissioner Melchert to inform her that she will need to be present at all remaining 2018 Commission meetings, and if noncompliance, a letter will be sent to the City Council requesting removal due to violation of the attendance policy. Commissioner Hammel seconded. Roll call:

Allen	Yes	Hammel	Yes
Breitfelder	Yes	Jackson	Yes
Borovic	Yes	Parks	Yes
Channing	Yes	Schiesl	Yes

Motion carries.

**Review Studies: GDDC Community Perception/ISU Central Avenue Corridor/ University of Iowa Portrait of Poverty**

Commissioner Parks moved to table until the June meeting. Commissioner Breitfelder seconded. Commissioner Parks will prepare summaries for each of the studies for the June meeting. Commissioner Allen suggested using those summaries to identify possible goals for the next year. All in favor of tabling.

**Standing Items: Goals**

**Goal #1:** Establish sustainable and consistent equity in the DCSD to live up to the mission and vision statement of the District.

**Approve Goal #1 Subcommittee Presentation**

Commissioner Schiesl stated that he and RRS met to discuss and further summarize the presentation. They also met with Kelly to discuss the presentation and recommendations. It was suggested that the Commission decide as to what recommended actions they would ask the City Council to take into consideration. Kelly suggested the report be modified to reflect that the recommendation to fill the vacant positions in the Human Rights Department have been approved. The piece related to the poverty study could be addressed in the city council goal setting worksheets they will be completing at the June meeting.

Commissioner Schiesl stated that the School District has also taken some action. They have formed a committee to look into equity and diversity issues within the school district. Stan conveyed that he felt confident that one of the recommendations from that committee would be to hire of a full-time equity coordinator for the school district. He indicated that they have been told that he and RRS would be invited to the next committee meeting, but to date, that has not happened.

Commissioner Schiesl reported that they discussed ways to approach the city. Poverty reduction is crucial to housing and education, so it was suggested that they support the ongoing efforts to disperse Housing Choice Vouchers to reduce the concentration of low income in the downtown schools. That would involve both the City and the School District. The NAACP is planning to move forward in approaching the DCSD, and they talked about whether the Commission would want to offer their support of the NAACP's recommendations. Commissioner Allen felt collaboration between the NAACP and Human Rights was valuable.

The Chair felt strongly that Human Rights Subcommittee members be involved in the school district committee meetings. It was suggested that the commission draft a letter to Stan Rheingans requesting that a representative from the DHRC and NAACP be included on the Equity Committee. Commissioner Schiesl moved that the Human Rights Commission draft a letter to the School District requesting that a member of the Human Rights Commission be invited to be a part of their committee dealing with equity. Commissioner Parks second. All in favor. There was also discussion about possible involvement with the recruitment and hiring of the equity coordinator.

**Goal #2:** Collaborate with the Housing Commission and other partners in the City to make certain we accomplish the following for the benefit of the community.

Commissioners Channing and Parks have been communicating to arrange a meeting to work on the newsletter. They should be prepared to present something at next month's meeting.

**Goal #3:** Collaborate in the elimination of barriers in employment to reduce the poverty rate in Dubuque.

**Upcoming Events:**

Commissioner Channing announced that she is working on the Proclamation for June's Pride Month. The picnic will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at Flora Park from 11:30 to 5:00, and all ages are invited.

**Adjournment:**

Commissioner Jackson motioned to adjourn, and Commissioner Channing seconded. All in favor. The meeting ended at 6:30 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, June 11, 2018.

Minutes approved as submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes approved as corrected: \_\_\_\_\_