

**DUBUQUE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF
May 11, 2020**

Commissioner Breitfelder called the virtual meeting of the Dubuque Human Rights Commission to order at 4:33 p.m. on Monday, May 11, 2020.

Roll Call:

Present: Anthony Allen Miquel Jackson
 Adrienne Breitfelder Jason Keeler
 Michael Durnin Kathy McCarthy
 Mallory Gardiner Gerald Hammel
 Ashley Regan

Absent

Staff: Kelly Larson Carol Spinoso
 Collins Eboh

Oath of Office

Commissioner Breitfelder administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Regan.

Approval of April 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion by McCarthy second by Hammel to approve the meeting minutes of the April 13, 2020 goal setting session. All in favor.

Reports

Caseload Report

The April 2020 Caseload Report was received and filed.

Chairperson's Report

Director's Report

A written quarterly report will be provided next month.

Old Business

New Business

COVID-19 Update

Kelly stated that work continues with the Housing & Community Development Director, Neighborhood Development Director, the United Way and the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque on assessing community needs related to food access, and rental assistance . The moratorium on evictions continues.

Working with the City of Dubuque Health Services, Dubuque county Health Department and the Iowa Department of Public Health, held a targeted testing program where approximately 330 individuals identified as at-risk of exposure through contact tracing were tested, along with approximately 1,100 staff from long-term care facilities. Grant funds have been distributed to area nonprofits working with the vulnerable populations. They published a Request for Proposal soliciting bids from qualified organizations to provide staffing for the City's COVID-19 isolation shelter.

Respond to Letter from Representative Isenhart

Representative Isenhart attended the virtual meeting to request that the Human Rights Commission send a letter to the Iowa Department of Human Rights and Office for Asian/Pacific Islander Affairs and the Governor, urging the state to provide health care coverage for COFA migrants currently living in Iowa, until federal legislation is passed restoring Medicaid coverage to this population.

Also present was Art Roche, a community member who is actively involved in leading the Dubuque Pacific islander Health Project Advisory Committee. Art provided background on the health conditions facing our local population, their legal status, and the efforts that have been underway to address the gaps in their healthcare coverage.

Assistant City Attorney Teri Goodman provided information related to the City Council's support of state and federal action to address this gap as part of its legislative priorities and indicated that the Mayor approved a letter to legislators requesting advocacy and support to include a provision for access to healthcare coverage for Marshallese and other Pacific Islanders in the CARES Act.

Collins Eboh is working with the ACLU and the League of Iowa Executive Committee to draft a letter to the Governor about the concerns of increased bias incidents and discrimination against Asians and Pacific Islanders in Iowa. They are asking leadership to issue a statement declaring that the racial discrimination is unacceptable. Collins will share the letter with Commissioners. The League will vote on whether to forward that letter on to the Governor and the IDPH.

Discussion ensued regarding forwarding to the City council the Commission's support for State and Federal solutions to provide health care coverage for community members from the Marshall Islands, as well as other community members covered by the COFA.

McCarthy moved to send a statement to the City Council expressing their support for a letter from the Mayor to the Governor encouraging actions to grant healthcare coverage to the COFA population through the COVID-19 health fund. Durnin seconded. Roll call:

Allen	Yes	Jackson	Yes
Breitfelder	Yes	Keeler	Yes
Durnin	Yes	McCarthy	Yes
Gardiner	Yes	Hammel	Yes

Motion carried.

Durnin moved to send a similar statement to the Council requesting a support letter to federal representatives regards promoting Medicaid coverage for the Marshallese and Pacific Islander groups in support of their health care needs, asking staff to draft that letter. Kathy seconded.

Allen	Yes	Jackson	Yes
Breitfelder	Yes	Keeler	Abstain
Durnin	Yes	McCarthy	Yes
Gardiner	Yes	Hammel	Yes

Motion Carries.

Durnin moved to write a statement in support of the Mayors documents using a combination of information drawn from Art Roche and Representative Isenhart. Keeler Seconded.

Allen	Yes	Keller	Yes
Breitfelder	Yes	McCarthy	Yes
Durnin	Yes	Hammel	yes
Gardiner	Yes		

Motion carried.

Standing Items: Goals

Objective 1: Race in the Heartland Conference – Jackson, Breitfelder, Allen

Jackson provided information as to the status of the conference planning. He has not received an update from Josh at Resources Unite on the state of the funds from last year’s conference. As it relates to this year’s conference, he is not sure the conference will happen in person because 1) he is not sure he will be comfortable around a bunch of people even by October and; and 2) asking people for funding now will not be as fruitful as funds are going to be needed for COVID relief.

He will look at having a mini conference online with a couple of sessions (will have to discuss that with the group though). Any funds we currently have dedicated will be protected into the account for a conference at a later date.

Objective 2: Education – Durnin, Breitfelder, Gardiner

The group has not met, but due to the uncertainty of things right now, they may need to reevaluate some of the timeline dates listed. They need to be observant of all student populations with the effect of this pandemic. What is being experienced now could be traumatic to students and those needs should be addressed upon returning to school.

Objective 3: Housing – McCarthy, Keeler, Allen

A small group met to work on the language of a draft. The draft will be forwarded to Kelly for review. This is be further discussed at the June meeting.

Objective 4: Employment – Breitfelder, Hammel

No update.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Hammel motioned and Commissioner Durnin seconded to adjourn. All in favor. The meeting ended at 5:52 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, June 8, 2020.

Minutes approved as submitted: _____

Minutes approved as corrected: _____