



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final

Affirmative Action and Human Rights Commission

Thursday, January 12, 2023

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 207B

Call To Order

Also present: Damian Evans, Brendan Saunders

PRESENT: 4 - Don Nielsen, Roy Carter, Roy Carter and Carmen Lassiter Ayers

EXCUSED: 2 - Rashanda Cainion and Dasheika Kidd

Approval of Minutes for the November 10, 2022, Meeting

Motion was made by Farrar and seconded by Carter to approve the November 10, 2022, minutes.

[0045-23](#)

Subject: Hiring Reports November 2022 & December 2022

Motion was made by Lassiter Ayers and seconded by Nielsen to defer the Hiring Reports.

[0046-23](#)

Subject: Fair Housing Reports November 2022 & December 2022

Motion was made by Jarrett and seconded by Carter to receive and file the November and December 2022 Housing Reports.

0047- [0047-23](#)
23

Subject: AAHRC Member Questionnaire

Damian Evans requested that the Commission members complete the questionnaire and return it to him prior to the next meeting. Once they are all received he will compile the information and review it with the Commission.

Evans opened the discussion sharing the idea behind the survey and how it may contribute to provide a background for Commission members to understand the skills and education of the group as a collaborative. Evans, also shared it isn't mandatory to complete all questions, but an opportunity for Commission members to share who they are and the thoughts for the upcoming year. Jarrett asked if they should be returned to Evans today or at the next meeting. Lassiter-Ayers stated she liked the Questionnaire but would like additional time to complete it. Evans responded either way was fine or he could email it out and provide everyone with time to complete it when their schedule allows. Both Jarret and Lassiter-Ayers concurred with preferring an email and Nielsen added that would be a better approach for him. Evans agreed to email the questionnaire to the commission Friday, January 13, 2023. Saunders added that he and Evans had discussed this idea prior to the meeting and agreed it would be an opportunity to get the Commission members an opportunity to display their expertise

as well. Further, it would provide the opportunity for the Commission to recommend different entities to present, present themselves, and make suggestions of people and organizations to invite to the Commission to increase our understanding of several resources and advance our reach into the community. Therefore, there would be multiple opportunities to bolster what the Commission is doing from a development and outreach standpoint. The members of the Commission agreed and the questionnaire will be emailed on Friday, January 13, 2023.

Considered as Reported

[0048-23](#)

Subject: Schedule Discussion

Evans shared this was an opportunity to discuss the time and dates of meetings and what should be present on the agenda. This approach allows the Commission members to be aware of what is on the upcoming agenda and hopefully prevent last minute agenda development. After discussion, the consensus was to keep the meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 4:30 p.m. with an understanding that while a few members may be a little late due to work schedules, it is better to maintain the consistency.

Motion was made by Farrar and seconded by Carter to adopt the AAHRC meeting be held the 2nd Thursday of each month from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

[0049-23](#)

Subject: Identify Two Important Goals for Commission

Jarrett stated identifying goals is difficult for her because the parameters of the Commission don't seem clear like other committees. Carter and Lassiter-Ayers, as seasoned members, shared that often things are brought to the group and stalls at "investigation". Lassiter-Ayers shared that it had been a while since the commission had an initiative originate from the Commission. Saunders shared the Rents program had come through the Commission, but he understood her point. He had been working to arrange getting the Commission trained through the Milwaukee HUD group. That didn't occur due to HUD's need for more staff, but he would check back into it for the 2023 calendar year. There was some frustration shared by various Commission members as to the challenge of developing and completing initiatives with little understanding of the purpose of the Commission. Jarrett then inquired about purpose of the Commission and how to get it expressed clearly. Also, Jarrett stated she is interested in continuing the work Alder Rouse began before exiting the Common Council with the Racine Police Department about Body Cameras. Evans responded that there are ordinances that define the group, and he would share that when he sends the questionnaire. This will provide time for members to do some in-depth review and use the information to assist with goal development. Jarrett stated we have to "define what we are able to do" before establishing goals. The members of the Commission concurred that would be most important. Next steps should include getting some data as suggested by Peete. Lassiter-Ayers agreed to get the comprehensive data that the Racine/Kenosha community action organization uses to provide data and context of the local community, and Peete agreed to get any relevant data from the Johnson Foundation. Jarrett agreed to get information on the body cameras initiatives that the Racine Police Department had been exploring with Alder Rouse. Evans agreed to get the report from the Community Conversations that had been held mid-year 2022. Farrar agreed that all of the above mentioned steps were necessary due to the uncertainty surrounding the Commission's purpose.

The discussion continued with the sharing of ideas to elevate Diversity, Equity &

Inclusion throughout the community. One example suggested by Lassiter-Ayers was that the committee highlight some of the present day atrocities, such as "Equal Pay Days" (this identifies the number of days required for underrepresented groups to earn what their White male counterparts earn). After a little more discussion, the Commission agreed to review all the data and work to create a purpose will then allow them to create and accomplish goals.

A motion was made by Jarrett and seconded by Lassiter Ayers to defer the discussion.

[0050-23](#)

Subject: Equity Officer Report

Evans asked that Farrar share the City of Racine's recent accomplishment of scoring a 100 on the Municipality Equity Index (MEI) developed and implemented by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). Farrar shared the history of how the city became involved and became better over time, eventually reaching a score of 100. It is important to note that the city is one of only three cities in Wisconsin to achieve the score of 100; a couple businesses in Racine scored that high as well. An outcome of these efforts is that the Racine Police Department now has a process to identify hate crimes. Prior to this, there were only two documented hate crimes because of the difficulty in proving the crime. The city's ban on conversion therapy was also due to the efforts to improve the MEI score as well.

Evans shared that he would be presenting the overarching Equity Workforce Plan at the February Common Council meeting. The presentation will focus on the four goals identified and previously shared with the AAHRC: Recruitment and Retention, Orientation and On-boarding, Climate and Culture, and establishing a theoretical framework.

Also included in the report was discussion on the city's on-boarding and orientation, including the intentionality needed when on-boarding new employees who don't have any city government background. This would include providing specific meeting schedules, the process in which ordinances are developed and implemented, and identifying the political aspects of individual roles.

Throughout the Equity Officer's report, the commission discussed ideas of advancing city practices by utilizing funds to purchase technology to meet some of the city's needs, and training up employees to do additional tasks in effort to improve the city's capacity. The Commission and the Equity Officer concurred that while there are some challenges with the current resources, pivoting some may produce preferred outcomes.

A motion was made by Nielsen and seconded by Farrar to receive and file the Equity Officer Report.

Next Meeting Date February 9, 2023

Adjournment