

**MINUTES  
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES  
AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION  
Wednesday, March 18, 2009**

The meeting of the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission (EOHRC) was held on March 18, 2009 in the City Manager's Conference Room and called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Acting Chair Katherine Kemnitz.

1. Roll Call:  
Present: Commissioners Katherine Kemnitz, Marian Griffin, Lynda Owens, Carolyn Lawrence, Alex Brower, and Teri Downing, Staff Representative. Absent: Commissioner Martin Densch.
2. Approval of the Minutes from March 18, 2009:  
Commissioner Lawrence moved for approval of minutes of the regular meeting held on March 18, 2009 with the following revision: Study Circles started as a result of the Campaign to Promote Racial Justice. Kenny Ware and Mike Hughes held a Town Hall meeting at Beloit College and as a result got people to sign up for Study Circles. They did not start in lieu of a paid consultant for diversity training. Commissioner Griffin seconded the motion. Motion carried.
3. Public Participation:  
No one from the public spoke during public participation.
4. Nomination and election of Officers:
  - a. Nomination of Chairperson: Commissioner Lawrence nominated Alex Brower as Chairperson. Commissioner Griffin seconded. Motion carried.
  - b. Nomination of Vice Chair: Commissioner Kemnitz nominated Carolyn Lawrence as Vice Chair. Commissioner Griffin seconded. Motion carried.
5. Review and Consideration of Extension of the Markley Investigation, Inc. Contract for Fair Housing Investigations:  
Commissioner Kemnitz commented that the contract is essentially no good the way it is written. Commissioner Kemnitz then expressed that she was uncomfortable extending the contract beyond one month for this reason. The Commission discussed ways to expedite the review of Markley's contract by the City Attorney. The Commission instructed Teri Downing to discuss options with Julie Christensen and take whatever action Ms. Christensen suggests in getting the City Attorney to understand the urgency of this matter. If he does not respond, Commissioners discussed contacting Larry Arft.

Commissioner Brower moved to extend the Markley Investigation, Inc. contract for one month; until the next regularly scheduled meeting on April 18, 2009. Commissioner Griffin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. Update on Study Circles Workshops and Review Funding Options for Study Circles:  
Commissioner Griffin informed that she, along with Commissioner Kemnitz, Commissioner Lawrence, and Emma Harrell attended the Workshops. Commissioner Griffin passed around a brochure about Study Circles for the Commissioners to review. She also explained that Commissioner Kemnitz had brought information from the National League of Cities to the workshops.

Commissioner Kemnitz explained that Beloit is already in the National League of Cities. She passed out a sample Resolution for the Partnership for Working toward Inclusive Communities as well as a sample press release. She explained that the Resolution would go to City Council. She asked that the members review and make changes to them for the next meeting.

Commissioner Kemnitz shared that in one of the books she had ordered there was an article about what former Beloit City Manager, Dan Kelly, committed the City to do when Beloit became a member of the National League of Cities. Out of those activities grew the Campaign to Promote Racial Justice. Commissioner Kemnitz thought that EOHRC could build on that again.

Commissioner Lawrence suggested that perhaps the Commission could work on Fair Housing more, since that is what the City wants the EOHRC to work on. Commissioner Griffin explained that they were not limited to Fair Housing activities; the Commission used to be limited because the funding was designated for that purpose.

Commissioner Griffin explained that because of a recent discussion by the Commission about changing the name of Study Circles to something else, she changed the name from "Study Circles" to "Honest Dialogue on Race Relations" on the new brochure. She asked the Commissioners to suggest changes. There was further discussion and disagreement about whether or not to use the word discrimination in the new brochure for Study Circles. Commissioner Kemnitz moved to accept the title Honest Dialogue on Race Relations on the brochure. Commissioner Griffin seconded. Chair Brower requested a vote count: Commissioner Kemnitz, aye; Commissioner Griffin aye; Commissioner Owens, nay; Commissioner Lawrence, aye; Commissioner Brower, aye.

Commissioner Lawrence mentioned that she had spoken with Tara Tinder, Director of the Stateline Community Foundation, and that a grant from that agency could be an option for Study Circles funding.

Teri Downing explained that Tara Tinder said the Commission would have to be very specific in their request, and that the Commission should review the grant guidelines and application on the Foundation's website. Discretionary grant funds of \$100 to \$1000 are available.

The Commission directed Teri Downing to find out if the Commission could apply directly for the funding or if the City of Beloit would need to apply. Teri explained that City Council would need to approve the proposal before applying for the funding. They also directed her to take the budget from the CDBG request of \$3700 and decrease it proportionately to equal \$1000, and then use the same project wording as was used to apply for CDBG funding. There was a motion by Commissioner Lawrence to prepare the grant proposal as discussed in order for it to go before City Council in April. Commissioner Kemnitz seconded. Motion carried.

a. Review and Consideration of a Letter Requesting Reallocation of CDBG funds for Study Circles: A motion was made by Commissioner Kemnitz to approve the letter and seconded by Commissioner Griffin.

7. Review and Consideration of the Fair Housing Proclamation:

Commissioner Griffin moved to discuss the Fair Housing Proclamation. Commissioner Kemnitz seconded. Discussion by Commissioner Owens suggested that we start earlier each year to do something in the community for Fair Housing Month. Motion made by Commissioner Griffin to approve the Fair Housing Proclamation. Commissioner Kemnitz seconded. Motion carried.

8. Commissioner Announcements/Next Meeting Agenda Items:

Teri Downing passed out the Fair Housing Conference brochure and enrollment form. She instructed Commissioners to have their enrollment forms back to her by April 15<sup>th</sup> if they would like to go.

Chairman Brower reminded the Commissioners that the Resolution for the Partnership for Working toward Inclusive Communities would be on the next agenda for review and consideration, as well as the Stateline Community Grant proposal.

There was discussion by the members of possibly having the new brochures printed professionally.

Commissioner Kemnitz asked about advertising the open EOHRC positions. Commissioner Lawrence mentioned that she saw it on the cable channel and Commissioner Owens said that it was in the paper as well. Teri Downing explained that Larry Arft decided there would be no extra advertising than what the City already does for open committee positions.

Commissioner Lawrence announced that she attended a community meeting regarding the State of Wisconsin budget and would like everyone to send a

postcard to their congressman. She also announced that Merrill Community Center and OIC are having fundraisers, and would like the Commissioners to make a donation.

9. Adjournment:

Commissioner Kemnitz moved for adjournment, and Commissioner Griffin seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02PM by Chair Alex Brower.

Teri Downing  
Special Programs Administrator