



MINUTES
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 17, 2010

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioner Thomas moved to have Commissioner Marty Densch chair the meeting because both the Chair and Vice Chair were not present. Meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM by Commissioner Densch. Present: Commissioners Carolyn Lawrence, Thomas Ryan, Kathryn Ingram, Lynda Owens, Martin Densch and Staff Representative Teri Downing. Absent: Commissioner Alex Brower. Excused: Commissioner Emma Harrell

2. Approval of Minutes of the January 20, 2010 Meeting

Commissioner Lawrence moved for approval of minutes of the regular meeting held on January 20, 2010. Commissioner Ryan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes of the February 17, 2010 Meeting

Commissioner Lawrence moved for approval of minutes of the regular meeting held on February 17, 2010. Commissioner Ryan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Public Participation

Commissioner Densch opened the meeting to public participation but there were no members of the public present.

5. Review and Consideration of Revised Proposal for Fair Housing Education and Outreach from MSA Inc.

Commissioner Lawrence moved to consider the amended MSA proposal. Commissioner Ingram seconded. Discussion followed regarding how many live sessions to hold for citizens. Commissioner Lawrence questioned why there would be education for real estate professionals, rental professionals, and lending professionals. She said that the education should focus on educating renters and consumers about their rights under Fair Housing laws and that Fair Housing education for the professional community should be a part of their professional training at their expense and not the City's. Staff explained that the City would like to ensure awareness among these professionals in the event that they are not educating themselves in order to prevent intended or unintended discriminatory acts. Commissioner Lawrence stated that the professionals should know the laws in this day and age.

Commissioner Densch asked if under there are specific requirements of who needs to be educated about Fair Housing. Staff explained that there are no specific requirements, only that there must be Fair Housing education in the community. Staff explained that the City would like to not only educate the public about rights and remedies, but also focus on prevention in order to be most effective in its goal of decreasing discrimination in the community.

Commissioner Ryan pointed out that an advantage of providing education to the professional community is that they will not be able to come back later and claim that they were not aware of the rules or law. He also said that the cost is very minimal to ensure that education is available at no cost for professionals.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if the webinars will be available on the web for those interested in obtaining the information later. Staff informed the commission that this information will be available on the City's website.

Commissioner Lawrence moved to amend the proposal for consideration with the following changes: Four (4) live sessions in English only, two (2) live sessions in Spanish, two (2) webinars for landlords and real estate professionals, and two (2) webinars for lending professionals. Commissioner Ingram seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Ryan moved to adopt the proposal as amended. Commissioner Ingram seconded. Motion carried.

6. Update on Reallocated Funds for Fair Housing Activities

Teri Downing advised the commission that \$20,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds has been reallocated by the Community Development Board to the EOHR for Fair Housing activities for 2010. The amount was based on actual costs in 2009 and anticipated costs for 2010.

7. Approval of Fair Housing Resolution for Recognizing April as Fair Housing Month

Commissioner Ryan moved to approve the language of the Fair Housing Resolution. Commissioner Lawrence seconded. Motion carried.

8. Upcoming Events

Teri Downing announced that the Wisconsin Fair Housing Network (WFHN) is sponsoring a Fair Housing Awards program and asked if the EOHR would like to nominate an agency the instructions and nomination packet have been provided. Commissioner Lawrence listed many different agencies that could be considered for nomination.

Ms. Downing also informed the commission that there is a Fair Housing Poster contest and she has contacted Regina Dunkin at the Merrill Community Center as well as David Wilson at the Boys and Girls Club to see if they would be interested in participating in the contest.

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Ryan moved for adjournment and Commissioner Owens seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM by Chairman Pro Tem Marty Densch.

Teri Downing
Special Programs Administrator