



CITY HALL • 100 STATE STREET • BELOIT, WI 53511

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Wednesday, August 15, 2012 at 5:30 PM
The Forum, First Floor
Beloit City Hall, 100 State Street

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes of the June 20, 2012 Meeting
3. Nomination and Election of Officers
 - a. Nomination and Election of Chairperson
 - b. Nomination and Election of Vice-Chairperson
4. Public Participation
5. Review of Draft of 2013 Strategy to Address Impediments to Fair Housing
6. Discussion of Development of EOHRC Bylaws
7. Upcoming Events
8. Adjournment

Notice Mailed: August 10, 2012

Approved: Teri Downing
Director of Community and Housing Services

Please Call 364-6650 before 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2012
if you are unable to attend.

* Please note that, upon reasonable notice, at least 24 hours in advance, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information to request this service, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 364-6680, 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511



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**MINUTES
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

Wednesday, June 17, 2012 at 5:30 PM

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by Chair Matt Finnegan.

Present: Commissioners Matthew Finnegan, Joseph Hansen, Marilyn Slonicker, Councilor Charles Kincaid and Staff Representative Teri Downing. Commissioner Alexis Siatos arrived at 5:48 PM. Excused: Commissioner Lawrence.

2. Approval of Minutes of the January 18, 2012 Meeting

Commissioner Slonicker moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 18, 2012 and Commissioner Valdez seconded. The motion carried.

3. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

4. Discussion of Fair Housing Goals

a. Duties and Activities of the EOHRG other than Fair Housing and Enforcement

Staff explained that the EOHRG has within its duties and powers, the discretion to undertake a variety of activities that facilitate fair housing in Beloit. The Chair requested discussion that identifies activities the EOHRG could be doing during periods of little or no enforcement or consultation activity.

Councilor Kincaid asked staff if there are specific areas that additional help could be used. Staff indicated that outreach and education is an area that could have more activity and summarized past outreach and education activities, such as seminars, and the mock hearing.

Commissioner Valdez proposed reaching out to Community leaders and organizations to let them know the EOHRG and Fair Housing Ordinance exists. He said that educating them regarding fair housing would allow them to pass the information to clients and general public who may be experiencing fair housing issues. Commissioner Hansen pointed out that we do not have anyone from the lending community on the Commission.

Councilor Kincaid pointed out that the ordinance lists a broad range of duties that the EOHRC could perform in the form of education and recommendation.

Commissioner Finnegan suggested outreach to the Latino community because some residents have limited English proficiency (LEP) so have a higher risk of being taken advantage of in real estate transactions. Commissioner Slonicker shared an experience of poor housing conditions in an apartment complex that due to LEP, the residents were not aware of their housing rights were and were unaware of how to report poor conditions. Commissioner Finnegan suggested having an EOHRC Commissioner attend a Latino Service Providers Coalition meeting and/or a Stateline Literacy Council meeting to get an idea of specific issues residents with LEP may be facing so we can assist appropriately. There was further discussion about land contracts and how people may be taken advantage of because they are not fluent in English.

b. Create Strategy to Address Impediments for the Year

Staff suggested that the Commission develop a strategy each year to address impediments identified the City's most recent Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing.

Commissioner Valdez said that it is clear from the discussion before that the Commission feels more outreach is necessary to community organizations that have direct resident contact. He suggested the EOHRC develop marketing and educational materials that can be distributed to the agencies. Staff explained that the EOHRC has materials currently, and offered to send the materials to the Commissioners so they can review them.

Commissioner Hansen said with respect to Recommendation #7 he has received direct feedback from potential tenants on the low payment standards for two bedroom units in the Section 8 Program. He said that the tenants are being driven to substandard housing because they cannot qualify otherwise. Councilor Kincaid asked what is driving the low payment standards. Staff explained that the payment standards calculations are driven by federal rules. Commissioner Finnegan said that it is an impediment in many other communities and that maybe there should to be a strategy to work with other Cities to approach HUD as a group for a solution. A discussion followed about Beloit's need for more Section 8 Vouchers and the different types of specialty vouchers that HUD offers on a competitive basis.

Commissioner Finnegan suggested the Commissioners email other suggestions to staff if they think of any.

5. Discussion of whether to apply for 2013 CDBG Funding

Staff explained that the Commission funds fair housing enforcement and outreach activities with CDBG funding and has usually applied for this funding every other year. Staff recommended applying for funding annually in order to keep the Community Development Authority members and Council familiar with the EOHRC and its important activities. Staff requested input regarding whether to apply for \$15,000 or \$25,000 in the case the Commission would like to hire in 2013.

Commissioner Slonicker said that she believes the Commission should apply for the funding and if a consultant is hired that it be a local agency so they are familiar with the residents' needs. Commissioner Valdez suggested hiring an intern to assist with the education, community outreach, and possible development of materials that were discussed. Commissioner Finnegan agreed with the idea of hiring an intern.

6. Upcoming Events

Staff explained that last year the Commission decided to have the Fair Housing Investigator come to one meeting each year to give an update on Fair Housing complaints and asked if the Commission would like him to come to the next meeting. The Commission decided to have the Investigator come to the next meeting.

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Slonicker moved for adjournment and Commissioner Valdez seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 PM by Chairperson Finnegan.

Teri Downing
Director of Community and Housing Services



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Report to the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission

Agenda Item: 3a and 3b

Topic: Nomination and Election of Officers

Action: Elect Chair and Vice Chair

Staff Report:

The Commission must nominate a new Chair and Vice-Chair annually. Attached are the procedures for electing the Chair and the Vice-Chair.

Staff Recommendation:

Nomination and election of a Chair and Vice Chair.

Attachments:

Election Instructions

Election Instructions

Election of Chairperson

Chair/Acting Chair: **“Nominations are now in order for the office of Chairperson.”**

Member: “I nominate Mr. or Ms. A.”

Chair/Acting Chair: **“Do we have a second to the nomination?”**

Member: “I second the nomination.”

Chair/Acting Chair: **“Are there any further nominations for Chairperson?” “If not, nominations are closed.”**

If more than one person is nominated, proceed to voting by ballot, voice vote, or roll call vote.

Chair: **“All those in favor of Commissioner _____ for Chairperson say aye ... Those opposed say nay.” The ayes have it and Commissioner _____ is elected Chairperson.**

Election of Vice-Chairperson

Newly Elected Chair: **“Nominations are now in order for the office of Vice-Chairperson.”**

Member: “I nominate Mr. or Ms. A.”

Newly Elected Chair: **“Do we have a second to the nomination?”**

Member: “I second the nomination.”

Newly Elected Chair: **“Are there any further nominations for Vice-Chairperson?” “If not, nominations are closed.”**

If more than one person is nominated, proceed to voting by ballot, voice vote, or roll call vote.

Newly Elected Chair: **“All those in favor of Commissioner _____ for Vice-Chairperson say aye ... Those opposed say nay.” The ayes have it and Commissioner _____ is elected Vice-Chairperson.**

Voting by Ballot

Election of Chairperson

Chair/Acting Chair: **“Please vote for your choice for Chairperson, and pass the ballots to Teri.”** Teri counts ballots and gives results to Chairperson. **“Mr. or Ms. A. has been elected Chairperson.”**

Election of Vice-Chairperson

Newly Elected Chair: **“Please vote for your choice for Vice-Chairperson, and pass the ballots to Teri.”** Teri counts ballots and gives results to Chairperson. **“Mr. or Ms. A. has been elected Vice-Chairperson.”**



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Report to the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission

Agenda Item: 5

Topic: Review of Draft of Strategy to Address Impediments to Fair Housing

Action: Review and Discussion Only

Staff Report:

The Commission may decided to develop a strategy each year to address impediments identified in the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. Attached you will find a draft of the Strategy based on the discussion from the last EOHRC meeting.

Please review the draft and provide input. The Commission does not have a mission statement, but may want to develop one for the strategy as well as for future use. The Commission should also decide whether to adopt the final strategy by resolution.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends developing a mission statement and adopting the strategy by resolution each year.

Attachments:

DRAFT - 2013 Annual Strategy to Address Impediments to Fair Housing

2013 Annual Strategy to Address Impediments to Fair Housing

Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission (EOHRC)

The Commission was created by the City of Beloit to improve the quality of life by the elimination of racism in the Beloit community. The purpose of the Commission is to take action, study, analyze and recommend solutions with respect to the major social economic and cultural problems that affect people residing or working within the City, including discrimination in housing.

Mission

(Mission, Vision and Values Statements -- These statements describe the strategic "philosophy" of the organization)

Strategy to Address Impediments

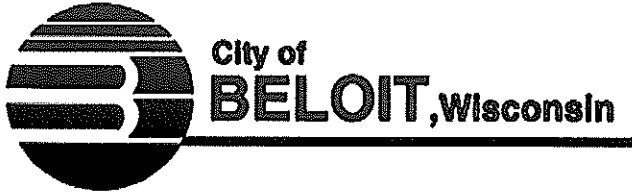
The Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission (EOHRC) assisted with the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, which identifies a number of Fair Housing concerns and impediments and outlines seven recommendations that may help address these impediments. The Commission develops a strategy each year to address impediments identified in the Analysis.

The Commission discussed that the first step to addressing impediments to fair housing is to bring awareness to fair housing issues and educate people about their fair housing rights and remedies under the law. Therefore, in 2013 the Commission will focus its efforts on outreach and education.

- The Commission will recruit an intern to reach out to agencies, create materials for education, and provide educational seminars based on the specific educational needs identified by the agency. This activity will support recommendations 2, 3, and 5.
- The Commission will reach out to social service agencies in the community in order to educate workers who have direct contact with residents who may be experiencing fair housing issues. And provide materials so agencies and residents have practical resources to reference when needed. This activity will support recommendations 2, 3, and 5.
- The Commission will reach out to agencies that assist persons with limited English proficiency in order to combat unfair practices in real estate transactions and rental conditions. This activity will support recommendations 2, 3, and 4.
- The Commission will reach out to other communities that have identified low payment standards as an impediment in order to develop possible strategies to address the issue. This activity will support recommendation 7.

- The Commission will actively recruit a member of the lending community to serve on the EOHRC. This activity will support recommendation #6.
- The Commission will develop EOHRC bylaws to codify procedural rules in the administration of the Fair Housing Code. This activity will support recommendation 1.

(RESOLUTION?)



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Report to the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission

Agenda Item: 6

Topic: Discuss the Development of EOHRC Bylaws

Action: Discussion Only

Staff Report:

The City's Fair Housing Code address requirements for enforcement of the the Code, such as investigations, hearings, and appeals. However, the Code lacks procedural detail on how to conduct such requirements.

Section 1.82(11) of the City's Municipal Code allows the EOHRC to adopt bylaws or amended rules of procedure. Bylaws would codify procedures for processing complaints, investigations, appeals, and conduct of hearings. This would allow for more consistent administration of the Fair Housing Code which is one of the impediments identified in the AI.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends developing bylaws for review

Attachments:

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March 27, 2009**

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