



CITY HALL • 100 STATE STREET • BELOIT, WI 53511

MEETING MINUTES
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION
Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 5:45 PM
The Forum, First Floor
Beloit City Hall, 100 State Street

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 5:50pm by Teri Downing. Jennifer Perreault moved to elect Steve Howland as chair pro tempore. The motion was seconded by John Emery. The motion was approved unanimously, voice vote. Commissioners Richard, Perreault, Howland, Mohorko, and Emery were present. Commissioners Weaver, Hansen, and Councilor Dunkin were absent.

2. Introduction of New EOC Members

There are three new EOC members. Rose Richard, John Emery, and John Mohorko have joined the Commission.

3. Approval of Minutes of the August 17, 2016 Meeting

Commissioner Perreault moved to approve the minutes from the August 17, 2016 meeting. Commissioner Mohorko seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously, voice vote.

4. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

5. Nomination and election of Chairperson

Commissioner Howland summarized the mission and duties of the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Commissioners had a small discussion on the possibility of expanding the spectrum of topics the EOC addresses to include discrimination against any and all different groups.

Commissioner Emery also suggested that the City of Beloit website be developed further in regards to the Equal Opportunities Commission documents available.

Commissioner Mohorko raised the concern of advertising, stating that other routes of communication would be possible. Commissioner Richard also suggested utilizing social media to reach a different population that may not be reached otherwise. Ms. Downing alerted the Commission that further steps would need to be taken before a social media site was created.

Commissioner Perreault nominated Commissioner Howland as Chairperson.

Commissioner Emery seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote. The Vice-chairperson is still Joe Hansen.

6. Discussion of Fair Housing Month - April

- a) Review and Approval of Fair Housing Month Proclamation
 - a. Commissioner Perreault moved to have the Fair Housing Month Proclamation brought to City Council. Commissioner Mohorko seconded the motion. Commissioner Emery inquired if there was an event or activity that may be more impactful than simply acknowledging that April is Fair Housing Month. Commissioner Howland requested Ms. Downing to explain her position with the City of Beloit and what insights she may have on topics relevant to the Equal Opportunities Commission. Ms. Downing explained what has occurred in the past in regards to the Fair Housing month proclamation as well as past events the EOC has completed. The motion was approved, voice vote.
- b) Discussion of Possible Fair Housing Activities to Raise Awareness
 - a. Ms. Downing suggested welcoming Beloit's citizens to address the commission and sharing with the EOC examples of discrimination they have faced.
 - b. Commissioner Emery asked Ms. Downing if she knew of any specific issues dealing with Fair Housing that the Commission could possibly address. Ms. Downing explained the issues relating to "Red Lining." Per Ms. Downing, investors as far away as California are purchasing properties in Beloit and then abandoning those properties once the foreclosure process has begun. The banks foreclosing on the properties then take possession of the properties on the outskirts of the City, but neglect those closer to urban areas.
 - c. Commissioner Howland requested Ms. Downing collect information regarding trends in Beloit. Specifically, he mentioned the percentage of vacant properties in Beloit; rental properties vs. owner occupied, and requested more data on "Red Lining."
 - d. Commissioner Richard inquired if there is still a lawsuit being brought against the City of Beloit regarding the Rental Registration Certificates and Inspections. Ms. Downing confirmed that there is still a lawsuit.
 - e. Commissioner Howland stated that he will be sending an email to the EOC members to set up a meeting in March to further discuss how the Commission will be moving forward. Commissioner Richard requested that the meeting be set for the first week in March.

7. Commissioner Comments and Upcoming Events

The Commission discussed the possibility of holding meetings or workshops in different community locations in place of City Hall.

Commissioner Perreault inquired if action still needed to be taken on the "Impediments of Fair Housing." Ms. Downing provided background on the initiative and stated that she would have further information for the Commission in March or April.

Commissioner Howland inquired into what needed to be done to have the documents relating to the Equal Opportunities Commission placed on the City website. Ms.



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Downing explained that a new software program will be put into place in the next two weeks to create a standard for placing documents online.

Commissioner Howland also requested that the Strategy to Address Fair Housing Impediments be added to the next agenda.

8. Next Meeting Date: April 19, 2017

Commissioner Howland will be arranging a special meeting in the first week of March.

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Mohorko moved to adjourn. Commissioner Richard seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ashley Rosenbaum