



CITY HALL • 100 STATE STREET • BELOIT, WI 53511

**MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA**  
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

**Wednesday, January 18, 2011 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 September 21, 2011 Meeting
3. Introduction and Welcome of Newly Appointed EOHR Commission Commissioner Alexis Siatos
4. Public Participation
5. Review and Discussion of the City of Beloit Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing
6. Discussion of Proposed Changes to the EOHR Meeting Schedule
7. Review and Discussion of Fair Housing Month Activities
8. Upcoming Events
9. Adjournment

Notice Mailed: January 13, 2012

Approved: Teri Downing  
EOHR Staff Liaison

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**Please Call 364-6650 before 3:00 p.m. on Monday, January 16, 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, September 21, 2011 at 5:30 PM**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 5:34 PM by Staff Representative Teri Downing.  
Present: Commissioners Matthew Finnegan, Mark Spreitzer, Carolyn Lawrence, Ricardo Valdez, and Staff Representative Teri Downing. Planning Division Intern, Michael Lofton. Commissioner Marylyn Ohaegbulem arrived at 5:50 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes of the September 21, 2011 Meeting

Commissioner Valdez moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held on September 21, 2011. Commissioner Finnegan seconded. The motion carried.

3. Nomination and Election of Officers:

Staff notified the Commission that the former Chairperson, Kathryn Ingram and Gretchen Roy

a. Nomination and Election of Chairperson: Staff called for nominations for Chairperson. Carolyn Lawrence nominated Matt Finnegan. Joe Hansen seconded and the motion carried.

b. Nomination and Election of Vice-Chairperson: Chairperson, Matt Finnegan called for nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Ricardo Valdez nominated Carolyn Lawrence as Vice-Chairperson. Matt Finnegan seconded and the motion carried.

4. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

5. Review of Preliminary Data Sets and Interpretations for the City of Beloit Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing with Comments and Suggestions from Community Leaders

Commissioner Finnegan noted that no Community Leaders were present.

Ms. Downing explained that the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) is required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) for all Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement. The City is required to update their AI every 3 to 5 years to document their fair housing planning. This document must include an analysis to identify impediments to fair housing choice, actions taken to overcome the effects of any

impediments, and records reflecting the analysis and actions in this regard. The City completed its last AI in 2004.

Information was provided to Commissioners regarding the current demographics, economic profile, and housing profile of the City of Beloit. She explained that this is the starting point to analyzing possible discriminatory trends in our community. Once trends are identified, the City can analyze its policies and fair housing enforcement procedures to identify whether they foster these trends. She asked the EOHRC to provide input and direction for further research if needed. Ms. Downing also noted that community leaders were invited to this meeting to provide input and direction as well. She introduced Michael Lofton and explained that he is available for questions, as he did most of the data research. Staff also explained that the Commission has discretion on how to proceed with gaining input from the community and may want to hold a workshop.

Commissioner Mark Spreitzer asked which Community Leaders were invited. Staff said the following people were invited due to their involvement in the community and work with minorities and protected classes: The Alliance group which is an LGBT student organization from the Beloit College, Latino Service Providers Coalition, Marc Perry from Community Action, Rene Bue who actively involved with the Latino Community, Director of the Beloit Housing Authority Cathy Pollard, the local chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI), ... Ms. Downing also explained

Commissioner Lawrence suggested that in addition to inviting the community leaders, ask for an RSVP in order to gauge their commitment level and attendance. Discussion then occurred regarding how to reach community leaders, suggestions on who to contact, and the possibility of holding an EOHRC Workshop.

Chairperson Finnegan asked the Commissioners if anything in the data jumped out while reviewing it. Commissioner Lawrence said that there has been systematic discrimination in Beloit from many years ago and there needs to be a community discussion on this issue. She also mentioned that poverty seems to play a large role in discrimination, especially in housing patterns. Commissioner Finnegan agreed.

Commissioner Joe Hansen asked if the unemployment levels near the Merrill Neighborhood, Tract 18, included the College area and college students. It was clarified that this did not include the College. Staff clarified that the data was derived from Unemployment Compensation.

Council Representative, Commissioner Spreitzer, asked whether this information will go before City Council and staff explained that the Council Representative would determine whether it should be presented to City Council.

Commissioner Finnegan asked for clarity on the Section 8 Voucher concentration information. He said that Voucher holders were concentrated in minority and low-income areas because the highest amount Section 8 will pay is still lower than market rent in Beloit. Commissioner Hansen agreed and specifically pointed out that 2-bedroom vouchers are especially low. Staff explained that they will explore whether more research can be done in this area.

Commissioner Spreitzer pointed out that most of the statistics presented here regarding unemployment, low-income, voucher holders, minorities, and high rental concentrations tend to fall in the same few census tracts.

Commissioner Finnegan discussed the difference between Horizon Management and Beloit Housing Authority payment standards, pointing out that Horizon Management vouchers are higher. He explained that he believes that this is due to the difference in administrative costs. He also explained that it is difficult for landlords to maintain a property to the City's Property Maintenance Code and Section 8's Housing Quality Standards, when the market in rental housing is so low. He asked whether it is possible to provide a map that pinpoints specifically where the vouchers are in the City, instead of percentage of vouchers per census tract. He explained that if voucher holders are concentrated in one or two areas of the City, then that would create an impediment to fair housing choice among its recipients.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding how the Section 8 program works and whether the program has been spread too thin in an attempt to help as many people as possible. The discussion focused on the point that giving someone a small amount of help does not ensure success, but perpetuates a problem. That emphasis should be on helping a family with resources until they are successful, so they don't continue to need the system and are less likely to return to the system.

Commissioner Valdez inquired whether there is data regarding the percentage of felons re-entering society. He explained that these individuals are re-entering with their families and are having difficulty finding housing. He also pointed out that HUD issued a memo clarifying that Section 8 program can allow felons onto the program. Commissioner Ohaegbulem noted that Beloit Section 8 programs tend not to allow felons onto the program due to rules regarding criminal backgrounds. Staff explained that HUD allows Public Housing Authorities and administrators of vouchers to create more restrictive rules for admission, and that requirements differ among agencies. Commissioners Hansen and Finnegan noted that landlords also have to balance the public nuisance law with accepting tenants with criminal histories, especially if they are drug related.

Commissioner Spreitzer asked if there could be more precise data regarding distribution of rental amounts throughout the City as well as distribution of unit sizes throughout the City, in order to demonstrate whether there is actually an issue with voucher holders being limited in where they can obtain housing.

Commissioner Valdez asked if there is any data that shows the average amount of income lost due to the economic downturn. Commissioner Spreitzer commented that nationally, unemployment and loss of income hit hardest among African Americans and Latinos, so it is reasonable to assume that these trends would be present in our community, which would compound affordability and ability to obtain housing. Commissioner Finnegan explained that there is also a lack of financial literacy in Beloit. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the different ways that families are dealing with the economic downturn and loss of income. The large amount of rentals and the high vacancy rate within the City.

The Commission directed staff to schedule an October Workshop on the data for the AI and invite the community leaders discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

6. Upcoming Events

There were none discussed.

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Valdez moved for adjournment and Commissioner Ohaegbulem seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM by Chairperson Finnegan.

Teri Downing  
Grants Administrator



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## **Report to the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission**

**Agenda Item:** 5

**Topic:** Review and Discussion of City of Beloit Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

**Action:** Discussion Only

### **Staff Report:**

The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) is being completed by the City of Beloit to fulfill the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) requirement that all Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement grantees undertake fair housing planning. The City is required to update their AI every 3 to 5 years. The City completed its last AI in 2004.

As you are aware, the EOHRC reviewed data during a regularly scheduled meeting and held two Workshops with community leaders to review additional research, provide direction to staff, and identify indicators of impediments to fair housing.

Attached you will find the DRAFT version of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, which is due to HUD's Fair Housing / Equal Opportunity Office by January 31, 2012.

There are highlighted portions in the Analysis because staff is waiting for additional information to complete these sections.

The City would like the EOHRC to review this DRAFT and provide comments.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

None

### **Attachments:**

None



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## **Report to the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission**

**Agenda Item:** 6

**Topic:** Discussion of Proposed Changes to EOHRC Meeting Schedule

**Action:** Discussion Only

### **Staff Report:**

By ordinance the EOHRC is scheduled to meet the third Thursday of each month. Due to the unique roles of the EOHRC, there are months with no action items so meetings are canceled. And oftentimes there are agendas with information only items, or one advisory item, or one enforcement item.

The Chairperson wants to explore whether the EOHRC should change its meeting schedule to either bi-monthly or quarterly, to create an easier schedule to keep track of, and so each meeting has a purpose. The EOHRC would always have the option to schedule special meetings if needed.

If the EOHRC decides a new schedule is appropriate, a recommendation to change the ordinance would go before City Council for a approval.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

None

### **Attachments:**

None



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## **Report to the Beloit Equal Opportunities and Human Relations Commission**

**Agenda Item:** 7

**Topic:** Review and Discussion of Fair Housing Month Activities

**Action:** Discussion Only

### **Staff Report:**

April is Fair Housing month and historically, the EOHRC has done something during April to bring attention to the issue of Fair Housing. Last year the EOHRC held a mock hearing and the Merrill Community Center children participated in a Fair Housing poster contest. Each year the City Council does a Fair Housing Proclamation at one of their April meetings.

The annual State Fair Housing Poster and Essay Contest information is attached. Please provide any ideas or suggestions you may have for Fair Housing Month this year.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

N/A

### **Attachments:**

2012 Fair Housing Poster and Essay Contest information



## 2012 FAIR HOUSING POSTER AND ESSAY CONTEST

The month of April is designated as Fair Housing Month, to commemorate Congress passing the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which includes the Fair Housing Act. To celebrate this significant movement in our history, the Wisconsin Fair Housing Network is once again sponsoring a Fair Housing Poster and Essay Contest. The purpose of the poster and/or essay is to demonstrate non-discriminatory housing for all people regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, disability or family status. The 2012 theme is:

### **"FAIR HOUSING: A CLEAR PATH FOR ALL"**

In past years, we have received requests for a structured lesson plan to teach the main concepts of Fair Housing. This contest is very open-ended and you may take a great deal of liberty when teaching about fair housing. But, to provide some guidance, we have put together some key points you may want to include when talking to your students about fair housing.

**What is Fair Housing?** The Fair Housing Act states it is illegal to discriminate in the sale or rental of housing, or make housing otherwise unavailable because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, marital status, disability, lawful source of income, or familial status. Although the law was passed over 40 years ago, discriminatory practices continue.

#### **What are some common examples of Fair Housing violations?**

- Minorities or families with children are told an apartment is already rented when, in fact, it is not.
- A woman trying to buy a home is held to a higher purchase standard than a man.
- A single woman with children is denied an apartment but a married couple with the same number of children is not.
- "Steering" – a realtor only shows apartments or houses in certain neighborhoods that are prominent in a specific race or national origin.
- Segregation by floor, building or development based on race, national origin, etc.
- Refusing to allow reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities (example – leasing a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartment to a wheelchair-bound tenant in a building without an elevator)

#### **Purpose of the contest:**

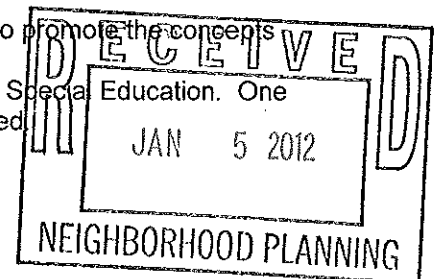
- To create awareness in school aged children of the importance of providing equal opportunities to people of all races, colors, genders, etc.
- To creatively express an understanding of today's fair housing challenges through designing a poster or writing their thoughts in an essay.
- To elicit students' thoughts and suggestions of ways to solve the problem of Fair Housing violations.

What will the future of fair housing look like in your area? Let us know about the importance of fair and open housing where you live. Better yet, show your community how great the future will be with fair and open housing for everyone. Fair housing affects renters, landlords, buyers and sellers, lenders and insurers—it affects you.

A school, local unit of government, neighborhood organization or other community group may sponsor a Fair Housing Poster and/or Essay Contest at the local level. The sponsoring agency will then **submit the top winning entries** for each grade level to the state for the statewide competition. The date for submission of the posters and essays to the State is **April 16, 2012**. Additional submission information is contained on the enclosed sheets.

The Fair Housing Poster and Essay Contest is an important educational activity to promote the concepts of choice and equality in housing:

- The Poster Contest is open to Wisconsin residents in grades K-12, including Special Education. One poster representing the efforts of an entire group or class will also be accepted.
- The Essay Contest is open to children in grades 4-12.





## POSTER CONTEST SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### THEME

The sponsoring organization should provide information to participants about the meaning of fair housing. Participants should be made aware that the theme is designed to reflect equal opportunity in housing choice and that **the posters will be judged based on the theme**. The posters should convey imagery and/or wording reflecting the theme. The theme is:

***"FAIR HOUSING: A CLEAR PATH FOR ALL"***

### ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

The Poster Contest is open to Wisconsin residents in Grades K-12. Entries to the state contest will be grouped K-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12 for the State judging.

### POSTER SPECIFICATIONS

Although there are not any size requirements, the posters should not exceed a size that can be mailed without doing damage to the poster. Suggested materials include, but are not limited to, markers, colored pencils, crayons, paint, and construction paper. Contestants should not be discouraged from participation due to the unavailability of suggested materials.

### LABELING

Each entry to the State poster contest must include a **completed ENTRY LABEL**. The **ENTRY LABEL** is included with this mailing, and should be duplicated as necessary. It is important to include the entrant's name, home address, home telephone number, school, grade, and parent's/guardian's name and daytime telephone number on the **ENTRY LABEL** and attach it to the **back** of his/her poster. Please do not place labels on the front of the posters; contestants should be anonymous to the judges.

### AWARDS

Winners of the State Fair Housing Contest receive framed certificates and other awards at a special ceremony held at the State Capitol, usually the last Friday in June.

### LOCAL CONTESTS

Each sponsoring agency is encouraged to make award presentations (e.g., ribbons, gift certificates) following the local judging. Media attention to the Fair Housing Contest promotes the concept of Fair Housing throughout the community. Winning posters (**a maximum of 3 from each grade level**) may be sent to Madison to compete in the State Fair Housing Contest.

Each sponsoring agency should select a panel of judges for the local judging. Suggested backgrounds may be, but are not limited to, education, art, and/or fair housing.

### WINNING ENTRIES

Entries in the State Contest become the property of the Wisconsin Fair Housing Network. Return of the posters is **not** guaranteed. The posters may be included in displays or publications to promote fair housing throughout the year.

The winning entries from each grade level must be submitted by **April 16, 2012**, to:

Division of Housing  
Wisconsin Department of Administration  
Attention: Betty Kalscheur  
101 East Wilson Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor (53703)  
P.O. Box 7970  
Madison, WI 53707-7970

FAIR HOUSING POSTER / ESSAY CONTEST

ENTRY LABEL

ENTRANT: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHOOL/GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_  
DAYTIME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

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FAIR HOUSING POSTER / ESSAY CONTEST

ENTRY LABEL

ENTRANT: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHOOL/GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
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PARENT/GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_  
DAYTIME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

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FAIR HOUSING POSTER / ESSAY CONTEST

ENTRY LABEL

ENTRANT: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHOOL/GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
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PARENT/GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_  
DAYTIME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
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