

MEETING MINUTES
BELOIT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

Wednesday, August 15, 2018 at 5:30 PM
The Forum, First Floor
Beloit City Hall, 100 State Street

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson Howland called the meeting to order at 5:41pm. Commissioners Howland, Miller, and Councilor Blakeley were present. Yolanda Saffold was welcomed as a new commissioner. Commissioner Mohorko and Gross were not present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the June 20, 2018 Meeting

Commissioner Miller moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Saffold seconded the motion. Councilor Blakeley pointed out that in Item #12 the time was not listed. It will be updated to reflect 6:55pm as the adjournment time. The motion to approve the minutes as corrected was approved, voice vote.

3. Public Participation

Kurt Reynolds, 612 Milwaukee Road, Beloit, WI, addressed the Commission. Mr. Reynolds requested that the minutes from the Equal Opportunities Commission be posted on the City of Beloit website for public review. He also stated that he is a member of the Appointment Review Committee and that there will be an additional member appointed to the EOC in the near future. Mr. Reynolds also offered an open invitation to any citizens or commissioners to attend the Appointment Review Committee meeting (2nd Monday of every month, City Managers conference room, 4th floor at 4:30pm).

Ms. Downing stated that a staff member will upload past documents to the website within the next week or two.

4. Nomination and Election of Officers

a) Nomination and Election of Chairperson

Commissioner Miller nominated Commissioner Howland as Chairperson. Councilor Blakeley seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote. Commissioner Howland abstained from the vote.

b) Nomination and Election of Vice-Chairperson

Commissioner Blakely nominated Commissioner Gross as Vice-Chairperson. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

5. Review of Recent Outreach Activities and Consideration of Future Activities, including EOC Workshops

Commissioner Miller mentioned that “Rock the Pride” is occurring on August 25, 2018. She also questioned whether or not the City of Beloit could officially recognize June as National Pride Month and plan some programming around the fact.

Councilor Blakeley stated that she believes it might be more prudent to wait to bring it to the City Council closer to June so that it coincides with National Pride Month.

Mrs. Downing will put a notice in the paper that there may be a quorum of EOC members at the event.

Commissioner Howland stated that he will put an item on the agenda for October regarding useful recognition of holidays and include recommendations to the City Council of holidays to recognize (including but not limited to Indigenous People Day, Kwanza, Pride Month, Juneteenth Day). Councilor Blakeley also suggested that it would be a good time to review the charter of the EOC and what protected classes the EOC would be protecting.

Commissioner Saffold inquired as to why Domestic Violence victims were not covered as a protected class by the EOC. Commissioner Howland explained that the City and the EOC felt there would be too many legal ramifications to include DV victims to the list of protected classes. Commissioner Howland also explained that it was understood that the State of Wisconsin considers victims of Domestic Violence a protected class. Ms. Downing stated that this topic has been brought forward in the past and encouraged Commissioner Saffold to pursue the issue. She also stated that Commissioner Saffold explained there are many issues in the City of Beloit faced by victims of domestic violence regarding housing. Commissioner Miller requested that further research be completed to ensure that all protected classes are included by the EOC. Commissioner Howland asked Commissioner Saffold to put together research regarding victims of DV to bring forward to the City Council.

6. Review of New EOC Subcommittees and Consideration of Creating a Subcommittee to Create Self-evaluations for Businesses to Assess their Inclusiveness to diversity in the Community

Commissioner Miller explained the idea behind creating self-evaluations for Businesses to Assess Inclusiveness. Commissioner Howland asked for further information on the process of creating the self-evaluations. Commissioner Miller volunteered to reach out to agencies in the City of Beloit that have previously expressed interest. Commissioner Miller moved to approve the motion to create a subcommittee to create Self-Evaluations for Businesses to assess their Inclusiveness to Diversity in the Community. Councilor Blakeley seconded the motion.

Commissioner Saffold asked who would actually be completing the evaluations. Commissioner Miller explained there would need to be evidence to back up the scoring. Ms. Downing questioned if businesses would be under any obligation to reveal the results to the public. Commissioner Miller said that the goal is not to be punitive, but rather encourage diversity and inclusiveness in the community.

Commissioner Howland asked if the EOC would have resources and/or follow-through available to any participants who wished to improve their diversity and inclusiveness. Commissioner Miller inquired if there were any written documentation that would be available to provide to interested parties. She also questioned how to properly alert the public of the Subcommittee. Councilor Blakeley voiced her concern that a creation of a subcommittee would actually bog down the process and questioned if it was possible for the Commission to perform the work without the subcommittee. Commissioner Miller said she thought maybe the subcommittee would actually create the process for the EOC to move forward. The motion to consider the creation of the subcommittee was passed, voice vote.

7. Update on Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Process

Mrs. Downing explained why the analysis is required as well as what the analysis is. She also explained the analysis was delayed due to changes at the federal level. One of the changes is that regional analyses will be done instead of every specific entity that has received funds. Mrs. Downing explained the process behind completing the analysis including a Request for Proposal and a response was received from an agency in Milwaukee. Commissioner Howland asked how long the analysis would take. Mrs. Downing stated that April 2019 would be the deadline as the documentation is due to HUD at that point in time. Commissioner Howland also inquired if there was any action the EOC could take. Mrs. Downing explained that work is mostly what the consultant is hired to do.

8. Commissioner Comments and Upcoming Events

Rock the Pride, Telfer Park on August 25, 2018 from 10am to 10pm.

Commissioner Miller questioned how information could be collected for the Race to Equity in regards to the creation of a subcommittee vs having the entire EOC assist. Commissioner Saffold stated that she believed the EOC should actively support the Race to Equity project and explained her stance.

Commissioner Miller asked how further outreach to the Latino Community could be done. She suggested that the EOC invite a community stakeholder to the next EOC meeting as well as host workshops to talk to any community stakeholders about actions that could be taken.

Commissioner Miller questioned if it would be possible to have a legal fund for citizens who need legal aid but cannot afford them. Mrs. Downing explained that the City cannot offer funds directly to for profit entities but that there are CDBG funds available



CITY HALL • 100 STATE STREET • BELOIT, WI 53511

for non-profit agencies. She explained Tré Legal and the work they have done thus far.

9. Next Regular Meeting Date: October 17, 2018

Chair Howland announced the date of the next regular meeting of the EOC.

10. Adjournment

Councilor Blakeley moved to adjourn. Commissioner Saffold seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ashley Rosenbaum.