



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Approved EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

Thursday, July 11, 2013

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL-120 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

This meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm., Brian Benford presiding.

Staff: Eric Kestin, Lucia Nuñez, Kate McCarthy

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bolles mentioned that his name is written as present on the minutes, but he was not yet a member of the Commission so his name should be removed from the Call to Order.

A motion was made by Fetty, seconded by McDowell, to Approve the May 9, 2013 Minutes with one correction to remove Bolles from the Roll Call. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

<http://madison.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Peters addressed the Commission regarding item No. 2, stating how he became a homeless advocate. He is working to obtain land to create tiny houses that one person could occupy. Mr. Peters discusses how he made a homeless bill of rights, the importance of solving the problem in Madison.

Mr. Kuharski addressed the Commission regarding item No. 2, emphasizing the importance of a homeless bill of rights, and the repeal of bad laws currently in place in the Madison General Ordinance.

A motion was made by Fetty seconded by Rudd. to allow Mr. Kuharski two additional minutes to present. The motion passed by voice vote/other. Mr. Kuharski mentions the need to search the Ordinance for more bad laws, and to start taking care of all citizens.

Mr. Barbett addressed the Commission regarding item No. 2, mentioning the number of homeless individuals who have passed away due to circumstances that could have been avoided had they had shelter. He will be taking a video of the number of people sleeping on or around the Capitol Square on any given night to present to the Public/Commission. He thanks the Commission for listening.

Ms. Pastor addressed the Commission regarding item No. 2, stating that rights are no longer naturally endowed to all citizens. Ms. Pastor mentions how important it is for a homeless bill of rights. She gives examples of where the homeless sleep throughout the City, and ends by thanking the Commission.

Benford asked a question of anyone who spoke during public comment, if a bill of rights would help. All are in agreement that having a homeless bill or rights would be helpful, as currently there are no equal rights available to the homeless.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Move item #2, Homelessness Protection, to be discussed prior to item #1, Unemployment Protection.

A motion was made by Rudd, seconded by Walsh, to move item #2 prior to item #1. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

2. Homelessness Protection

Nunez mentioned that in 2011, there was approval of housing as a human right, but is not in conjunction with the Rhode Island Bill of Rights. Fetty proposed that with some edits and additions to the Rhode Island Bill of Rights, the Commission may have a new bill of rights to adopt in the near future. Rudd questions whether the adoption of a new bill would be something the Commission did, or if it would be something the Commission suggested to the City to adopt. Nunez clarified that since the bill would incorporate many other agencies, the bill would need to be passed along to other Commissions and the Common Council. It is confirmed that the Bill of Rights can be put on the agenda for August, so the Commission has time to draft their own bill, ask questions, etc.

Item #1 was tabled for another few minutes, so copies of the documents could be made.

3. Hip Hop Subcommittee

Nunez stated that the Madison Arts Committee has created the Hip Hop Subcommittee to look at areas similar to the Diversity in Entertainment and inquired as to the interest of the Commissioners in being in the Hip Hop Subcommittee. It is confirmed by Rudd that she would like to be a representative in that subcommittee.

4. Diversity in Entertainment

This subcommittee was discussed in conjunction with item #3.

5. Commission Retreat

Benford inquired as to the availability of Commissioners for a retreat to discuss the relevance of the Commission, and how to better serve the community. Many of the Commissioners agreed that this was something they would be interested in doing. Benford suggests the addition of the Commission Retreat to the October agenda.

A motion was made by Walsh, seconded by Weier, that a retreat should be attached to one of the meetings in the near future. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

1. Unemployment Protection

Kestin went over the document drafted by the City Attorney in regards to adding unemployment status as a protected class. Alder Weier moved to go ahead with the presentation of the ordinance as drafted by the City Attorney.

A motion was made by Weier, seconded by Walsh, to Discuss and Finalize. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

REPORTS

6. Director's Report

Nunez stated that DCR is about to begin doing the budget for 2014. Rules were given to keep the same budget, as well as a supplemental budget of a three percent cut. She reported on the James Wright Award recipient, as well as the interviews taking place for the Investigator and Administrative Clerk positions. Nunez also mentions that the Department is close to the number of cases needed for the EEOC contract.

7. President's Report

Benford reported on attendance, and the hope to address the importance of quorum at the Commission Retreat. Benford also mentioned a conference call he had regarding the issue of a homeless bill of rights, and the gratitude he has for the steps that have been taken toward addressing the issue within the City.

8. Committee Reports

The EOC Employment Subcommittee is on summer break, and will not be meeting again until September.

9. Common Council Report

Alder Weier stated that the Council essentially had to approve a split in the parcel of land by Holy Redeemer Catholic Church so student housing could be built where the old school was, and where most of the parish meetings, particularly for Hispanic events, had taken place. Alder Weier added that the Council expressed their issues with how the issue was handled.

10. Appeals Committee Report

Kestin informed the Commission that there are three cases up for appeal, two smaller cases and one larger case. Two separate meetings will take place for the cases up for appeal.

FUTURE TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rudd mentioned the date of when Alder Strosser is presenting the Southside Master Plan. Fetty introduced the new social justice scholarship for minority students at East High School, with a fundraiser taking place on October 5th.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Fetty, seconded by Benford, to Adjourn. The motion passed by voice vote/other.