



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

Thursday, October 11, 2012

5:00 PM

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

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Brian Benford, President.

Present: 9 -

Brian L. Solomon; Hedi L. Rudd; Brian Benford; John L. Quinlan;
Katherine Cramer Walsh; Shawn F. Peters; William (Bill) Fetty; Charles E.
McDowell and Narendra Sinha

Excused: 3 -

Sean A. Saiz; Brandon M. Johnson and Benjamin M. Nerad

Staff: Rachel Campbell, Marcus Miles, Lucía Nuñez

On a motion from Quinlan, seconded by Fetty, Public Comment was taken out of order at this time.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Member of the public Gene Devitt, resident and Chair of the Mansion Hill Historic District, spoke to the issue of accessible voting. He reported that due to redistricting his place of voting has been moved from Madison College to Gates of Heaven, a highly inaccessible venue for people with disabilities and the elderly. Devitt reported that he has tried to work with his Alder, the Mayor's Office, Jason Glozier of the DCR's Disabilities Rights and Services program, and the Attorney's Office, among others, and has not been pleased with their suggestions and feedback. He asked that the EOC endorse moving his voting location back to Madison College. Ald. Solomon volunteered to inquire further with the Clerk's Office about this issue.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion from Rudd, seconded by Peters, the August 9, 2012 minutes were approved without correction. Motion passed by voice vote/other.

4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Vice-Presidential Election

Benford reminded the Commission that the Executive Committee is still without a vice-president and entertained nominations from the floor. Quinlan nominated Rudd for the position, and Rudd accepted. There were no other nominations. The Commission unanimously elected Rudd to the vice-presidency by voice vote/other.

6. [27348](#)

Responding to the tragic events of Sunday, Aug. 5th, 2012 at Oak Creek's Sikh temple

Benford thanked Quinlan and staff for their work on these drafts and opened the floor to comment from the Commissioners. Walsh requested the deletion of "this week" from the letter to the media. There were no other comments. On a motion from Fetty, seconded by Walsh, the Commission accepted the drafts with the amended text for referral to the Common Council. Motion passed by voice vote/other. Ald. Solomon suggested that this may no longer be the appropriate time to send a letter to the media regarding the Oak Creek temple shooting, given the inherent topicality of news and the fact that the shooting happened over two months ago. Quinlan agreed, and suggested that the Commission reconsider sending the letter to the media at year-end or at the one-year anniversary of the shooting. The Commission agreed and Benford accepted the friendly amendment that the letter to the media, while accepted, be tabled at this time.

7. Diversity Picnic

Rudd began discussion by commenting that when she served as a Commissioner several years ago the Diversity Picnic and other public events seemed much more important and galvanizing to the Commission. In light of refocusing the Commission's energies, promoting enthusiasm and attendance within the Commission, and continuing to establish a strong presence within the community, she would like to see the picnic resurrected. Nuñez gave a brief history of the picnic for newer members, concluding that the vastly increased financial burden to the DCR budget of producing the picnic over recent years -- not to mention hidden costs such as months of planning, overtime, and shutting down the office for a day -- has necessitated that the picnic be cut from said budget in lieu of cutting essential office supplies or salaries. DCR did keep the Rev. Wright award, though this is now presented to the recipient at a Common Council meeting rather than the picnic.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions and discussed various suggestions for funding sources, organization and logistics, and staffing. Ald. Solomon offered to introduce a budget amendment next week to provide funds for a 2013 picnic, provided at least three or four Commissioners volunteer to take up

organizational responsibilities. Fetty, Peters, Quinlan, and Rudd volunteered. On a motion from Walsh, seconded by Rudd, the Commission accepted the volunteers and Ald. Solomon's offer to introduce a budget amendment of \$1,000 to \$2,000 to provide funds for the picnic. Staff agreed to work with the Department of Finance on a total cost estimate and feasibility.

REPORTS

8. [08357](#) DIVISION MANAGER'S REPORT--For information only. No action required.

The Equal Opportunities Division Manager will report on the following:

- a. Activities of the Division since the last meeting.
- b. Update on staff activities.
- c. Update on the EEOC Contract.

Miles reported that investigators are conducting a lot of outreach, particularly on social media and its relevance to employment practices and to renters and landlords on changes to MGO 39.03 in housing. Staff are also working with the YWCA on the upcoming Racial Justice Summit and on the NAACP freedom banquet. Miles also reported that Nuñez was recently recognized on Hispanic Heritage Day, that EOD's cases are on par with previous years, and that he met recently with the Madison Police Department for a security audit of the DCR offices.

9. [13093](#) DIRECTOR'S REPORT--For information only. No action required.

The DCR Director will report on the following:

- a. Activities and meetings since the last meeting.
- b. Update on agency activities.

Nuñez reported that the Mayor has issued both his capital and operating budgets and the DCR did relatively well -- in fact the Mayor resurrected funding for the Aaspire interns, which were going to have to be cut. Regarding voting accessibility issues with Gates of Heaven, Disability Rights and Services Program Coordinator Glozier has been working extensively with Mr. Devitt, Ald. Maniaci, the Clerk's Office, Parks, and many others on these issues. It may be too late to change the voting location for the upcoming November elections but temporary accommodations may ease accessibility in the interim.

10. [15179](#) PRESIDENT'S REPORT--For information only. No action required.

The EOC President will summarize meetings attended and other related activities on behalf of the Commission since the last Commission meeting. For information only. Any item raised for future discussion will be posted on the next agenda.

Benford reported that he is planning on speaking with past EOC presidents and other previous members on the subject of best practices for encouraging quorum and participation.

11. [08358](#) COMMITTEE REPORTS--For information only. No action required.

Reports summarizing discussions at meetings held since the last meeting. For information only. Any item raised for discussion appears under Unfinished Business or will be posted as "Introduction of Future Items From the Floor" on the next agenda.

- a. EOC Executive Committee
- b. EOC Employment Committee

a. Quinlan noted that the Commission has already discussed the bulk of the issues the Executive Committee was concerned about at their previous meeting, notably quorum issues, the Diversity Picnic, and promoting enthusiasm within and for the Commission.

b. Rudd was not able to attend. Miles was in attendance at the Employment Committee meeting however and reported that Melissa Gombar presented to the Committee on social media in employment practices.

12. [13853](#) APPEALS COMMITTEE REPORT

For information only. No action required.

Walsh reported that on July 26, 2012, the Appeals Committee affirmed the Hearing Examiner's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order in MEOD case no. 20071119, Midstokke v. Southridge Village Apts.

13. [26541](#) Diversity in Entertainment Venues

Reports summarizing discussions at meetings held since the last meeting. For information only. Any item raised for discussion appears under Unfinished Business or will be posted as "Introduction of Future Items From the Floor" on the next agenda.

Rudd reported that the Committee was unable to schedule a third meeting but wished to do so at this time, perhaps for November. It no longer appears that a public meeting can be organized by the end of October as the Committee originally planned, and given upcoming budget meetings, the November election, and holiday season and inclement weather, the Committee will now look into alternate steps.

14. [12507](#) COMMON COUNCIL UPDATE--For information only. No action required.

Ald. Brian Solomon will provide an update on Common Council actions since the last Commission meeting.

Ald. Solomon reported that the Mayor named Jim O'Keefe as the new Director of Community Development today and reviewed for the Commission the role of CDBG in the City. Ald. Solomon also reported that homelessness seems to be an increasingly pervasive issue within the Council and the city at large, and asked the Commission to consider what aspects of homelessness fall under EOC auspices and examining these issues. Finally, Ald. Solomon reported that

the upcoming budget includes a bus fare increase and the addition of a job development specialist in Economic Development.

15. [27880](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners may report on current activities of interest to the body. Items the Commission wishes to discuss or take action on may be placed under Introduction of Future Items from the Floor and referred to the next meeting.

Benford introduced the item as proposed by the Executive Committee and opened the floor. Walsh announced that symposiums on diversity are occurring Fridays at the UW Union South; she also announced that the YWCA Racial Justice Summit is taking place over October 15 and 16. Rudd announced that the South Madison Promise Zone will present the results of its community survey at Lincoln Elementary on October 24, and will invite residents to participate in developing a community action plan based on those results. Ald. Solomon announced that free concerts by saxophonist Tia Fuller will be presented at the Union South tomorrow, October 12, at 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. Quinlan announced that he has begun a radio show on WORT focusing quite a bit on diversity issues, and reminded Commissioners that the Wisconsin Book Festival will be held November 7 - 11. Miles announced that a mayoral walk-along will be conducted this weekend with Alcohol Policy Coordinator Mark Woulf and area tavern owners along State Street into the UW campus.

16. [15741](#)

INTRODUCTION OF FUTURE ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Walsh requested that City Clerk Maribeth Witzel-Behl and Glozier be invited to the December EOC meeting to speak to the issue of voter accessibility. Walsh also suggested that former Commission President Coco Bustamante be recognized for her service at the November meeting, and that an item devoted to discussion of issues pertaining to the unemployed in Madison and equal rights to employment be added to that agenda as well. Quinlan requested that an item devoted to discussion of homelessness in Madison and equal rights to housing and public accommodations also be added to the November agenda. The Commissioners agreed to accept these amendments.

17. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from Fetty, seconded by Rudd, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.