



# City of Madison

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

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Thursday, January 16, 2014

5:00 PM

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

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The Equal Opportunities Commission meeting was called to order at 5:03 P.M. with EOC Executive Committee member, Bill Fetty, presiding. The following attendance was noted:

Present: Bill Fetty, Moriah Grace, Narendra Sinha, Sean Saiz, David Bolles, Alder Anita Weier, Kathy Cramer and Charles McDowell

Excused: Hedi Rudd, John Quinlan and Shawn Peters

Absent: None

Staff: Lucia Nuñez, Eric Kestin, Charlyn Cruz-Nuñez and Alyssa Riphon

Presenters: Tara Wallace (Transitional Education Program), Jani Koester (Transitional Education Program) and Sue Wallinger (Community Development Block Grant Program)

Charles McDowell entered the meeting at 5:04 P.M.

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Cramer, seconded by Alder Weier, to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2013 meeting without correction. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

### 4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None

### DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

5. Discussion: Homelessness in Madison

Sue Wallinger served as the presenter for Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG). Ms. Wallinger talked about CDBG's role, HUD funding and the homeless research their program conducts. She passed a handout to Commissioners detailing the statistics her department has gathered in regard to people without homes in Madison. She explained how CDBG predicts the size of the homeless population will grow based on the statistics presented in the research.

Tara Wallace and Jani Koester presented the Transition Education Program (TEP) of the Madison Metropolitan School District. Ms. Wallace and Ms. Koester talked about the functions of their program, their role in assisting homeless children and families, TEP services, as well as TEP's statistics regarding homeless children. Ms. Wallace and Ms. Koester talked about the biggest challenges TEP faces in working with homeless children and families to help secure permanent housing. In the 2013-2014 school year, the program has identified 1,047 children as homeless, which includes sheltered and unsheltered homeless children. Ms. Wallace and Ms. Koester explained the number to be underidentified, as the process to become identified is entirely voluntary. The women explained how they predict the number will grow as the school year progresses.

After the presenters finished describing their programs, a discussion was held surrounding homelessness in Madison. The Commission and presenters discussed the possible reasons for the high population of people without homes in Madison. Ms. Wallinger explained how economics and physical health prove to be two main factors in homelessness.

The discussion then focused on the possible pros, cons and ramifications of adding a protected class for homeless to the Equal Opportunities Ordinance (MGO, Sec. 39.03). The presenters believed it would be most critical to add this protected class within the realm of housing. The programs see few people without homes transition to permanent housing independently, whereas the majority of homeless go through a program. This creates an estimated three-year track of homelessness for the majority. A protected class may help to support the person without the home facing discrimination throughout this process of securing permanent housing.

The Commissioners and presenters also talked about the possible obstacles in adding a protected class for the homeless population. These obstacles included requirements for housing history (such as distinctions between a housing history and shelter history), the inability to supersede state limitations on housing, and the possible stigmatization that could result from this addition.

6. Discussion: Department of Civil Rights, Disability Rights and Services Program

The presentation by Jason Glozier was referred to the next Equal Opportunities Commission meeting to take place on Thursday, February 13, 2014.

7. [32810](#) Equal Opportunities Commission Presidential Election
- In lieu of the President's resignation, Ms. Nuñez opened the floor for nominations for the Equal Opportunities Commission President. Commissioner Fetty and Commissioner Quinlan were nominated. The Equal Opportunities Commission conducted a secret ballot vote with no abstentions. The following votes were recorded:
- Commissioner Bill Fetty: 5  
Commissioner John Quinlan: 3
- Commissioner Fetty was then elected President by a 5 to 3 secret ballot vote.
8. [31858](#) EOC Employment Subcommittee Election
- President Fetty opened the floor for volunteers to act as a liaison between the Equal Opportunities Commission and the EOC Employment Subcommittee. Commissioner Sinha volunteered for this position. No other Commissioners volunteered.
- Commission Cramer moved to elect Commissioner Sinha to the EOC Employment Subcommittee by acclamation. Commissioner McDowell seconded the motion, which was passed by voice vote/other.
9. Discussion: "Letter to the Editor" about Homeless Discussions
- The EOC Executive Committee offered the Equal Opportunities Commission an explanation of this agenda item. It was agreed the EOC Executive Committee would draft the letter and present it to the Equal Opportunities Commission for approval before publication. The item was then referred to next EOC Executive Committee meeting to be held on Monday, February 3, 2014 and the next Equal Opportunities Commission meeting scheduled to be held on Thursday, February 13, 2014.
10. Discussion: "Justified anger: Rev Alex Gee says Madison is failing its African-American community," by Reverend Alex Gee
- Alder Weier distributed an article she wrote in response to the article referenced in this item (which was written independently; not on behalf of the Commission). The following is a link to the article:
- [http://host.madison.com/news/opinion/column/ald-anita-weier-ultra-liberal-madison-is-segregated-by-race/article\\_f6236d6e-297c-5060-8af0-0e02723aedb4.html#.UtgQiKIXBZg.email](http://host.madison.com/news/opinion/column/ald-anita-weier-ultra-liberal-madison-is-segregated-by-race/article_f6236d6e-297c-5060-8af0-0e02723aedb4.html#.UtgQiKIXBZg.email)
- The Commission discussed the article, as well as Alder Weier's response.

## REPORTS

11. Director's Report

**Ms. Nuñez reported to the Commission of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award winner selections have been completed and the award ceremony will be held at 6 P.M. on Monday, January 20, 2014 in the Overture Center.**

12. President's Report

**In lieu of President Fetty's recent election, this report was referred to the next Equal Opportunities Commission meeting scheduled to be held on Thursday, February 13, 2014.**

13. Committee Reports

**Commissioner Saiz provided the full Commission a report of the EOC Employment Subcommittee meeting held the previous Thursday, January 9, 2014. He and the Commission discussed improving procedure and communication between the Equal Opportunities Commission and the EOC Employment Subcommittee.**

14. Appeals Committee Report

**Commissioner Bolles, as Chair of the Appeals Committee, reported to the full Commission in regard to their previous meeting on December 6, 2013 in consideration of MEOD Case No. 20052134, Norris v. Cost Cutters of Madison.**

**Alder Weier moved to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2013 Appeals Committee meeting without correction. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bolles, and passed by voice vote/other.**

15. **FUTURE TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR**

**The Equal Opportunities Commission suggested presentations from the Parks Department and Meridian in future discussion surrounding homelessness in Madison.**

16. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**None**

17. **ADJOURNMENT**

**At 6:24 P.M., Commissioner Bolles moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Saiz, and passed by voice vote/other.**