

MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
January 3, 2017

The Human Relations Commission held a Meeting on January 3, 2017 in the Executive Conference Room at City Hall.

Chair Larry Apperson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL

The following members of the HRC were present: Larry Apperson (Chair), Joe Gastiger, Lisa King, Ellingsworth Webb.

The following City staff members were present: Management Analyst Lauren Stott and Management Intern Emily Tipps.

Notes were taken by Analyst Stott.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – ADDITIONS / DELETIONS

The meeting agenda was approved.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the December 6, 2016 meeting were approved.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public participation occurred.

E. OLD BUSINESS

a. Cultural Competency Training and FY17 Budget Update

Chair Apperson provided an update on the Cultural Competency training. The Commission discussed the approval for the Cultural Competency training as part of the FY17 budget process.

Chair Apperson indicated that his conversations with Mayor Rey and City Manager Gaura resulted in a portion of the requested budget to be approved for FY17, less

Commissioner Gastiger said he hopes an appropriate grouping of trainees is chosen for the initial training that is conducted during FY17.

The Commissioners discussed the value of providing training to groups of employees and whether a group of employees from different departments, rather than a single department, would be most effective.

Chair Apperson said he believes it might be best to start the training in Fall 2017 to afford for some continuity through 2018, pending approval of additional training dollars.

Chair Apperson said he has participated in past trainings through other organizations, and that in fact trainees do share their experiences with others.

Commissioner Webb asked how many staff members there are in City Hall and in the City total.

Analyst Stott said there are about 40 staff members in City Hall, and about 200 total City employees.

Commissioner King said one option would be to create a webinar or workshop that could be shared with other staff members, instead of requiring them to be in the training classroom with the teacher.

Management Intern Emily Tipps explained the various ways that the City has helped expose people to training information if they cannot be present.

Commissioner King said she would like to explore that option.

Commissioner Gastiger said he doesn't believe it would be an adequate substitute for the in-person training.

Commissioner Webb said he believes a critical look at the make-up of the initial training class is key to making sure the most influential people are being trained first.

Commissioner Maurice Bailey and Commissioner Norden Gilbert arrived at the meeting at approximately 6:55 p.m.

Chair Apperson provided a review of the conversation so far.

Commissioner Gastiger said he believes the most important part of the training is interactive, and he doesn't want that important part to be lost if there is an electronic/desktop component.

The Commissioners discussed various options for presentation, including in-person training from Dr. Cohen, desktop training communicated via video/recording, or training that is transferred from a group of initial trainees (likely managers) to others in the organization.

Commissioner King said she believes it would be better to “catch more fish” during the FY17 training. She also indicated that Dr. Cohen may have other ideas as well for presentation options.

Commissioner Webb said perhaps people who could benefit more, or who would share the information more freely, could be targeted for the initial training session.

Chair Apperson asked what the most appropriate next steps would be to communicate the intent of the HRC to the Human Resources Department.

Analyst Stott said a memo from the HRC would most effectively communicate the intentions to staff members who are not present.

1. Review of HRC Brochure Draft #2

Chair Apperson recommended that the City Hall address be moved down lower so users are not confused about the services available at City Hall.

Commissioner Gastiger asked for “De Kalb” to be included with no spaces.

Commissioner Webb asked for the HRC to be bolded, and for “DeKalb” to be removed when redundant.

Chair Apperson recommended including the City’s website homepage in the place where the City Hall address is included.

Commissioners made additional recommendations directly to Intern Tipps, who created the brochure. She indicated that she will make the requested changes and provide an updated draft via email to the Commissioners.

2. Sanctuary City Discussion

Commissioner Gastiger provided some reading materials to the HRC and talked about several example communities that have enacted sanctuary city resolutions.

Commissioner Gastiger said he has struggled to find the examples, but wanted to find them so the HRC could contemplate the specific language for recommendation in DeKalb.

Chair Apperson recommended contacting communities in Illinois to find accessible examples.

3. Ex-Offender Re-Entry Update

Commissioner Webb indicated that no update is available at this time.

4. Chapter 49 Updates

Analyst Stott provided an update from Attorney Frieders regarding Chapter 49 discrepancies and handed out ordinance changes from recent years.

Commissioner Gilbert indicated his concern that definitions are not included in the ordinance in a relevant way.

The Commissioners reviewed the materials.

Chair Apperson said he would like to review the handouts against the current ordinance, and any old copies of ordinances that he might have saved previously, and address the issue at an upcoming meeting.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Apperson announced that the next meeting would be held on February 7, 2017. He also indicated that a procedural justice item would likely be on the agenda, pending a conversation with Police Chief Gene Lowery.

Chair Apperson indicated that he would like to invite Chief Lowery to the next meeting.

Commissioner King asked how the recognition of former members and staff members be addressed.

Chair Apperson said he was directed to speak directly to former members or staff regarding the service recognition they would most appreciate.

The Commission discussed various ways that people who served could be appreciated. Chair Apperson said he would contemplate the options, perhaps discuss with staff and the Mayor, and bring updates to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.



LAUREN STOTT, Management Analyst

Minutes approved by the Human Relations Commission on February 7, 2017.