



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes

Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

5:15 PM

5th Floor Conference Room

Special Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Shaundel Spivey at 5:16 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 5 - Ashley Lacenski, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten, Rose Reinert

Excused: 2 - Vacant 1, Vacant 2

Others present: Council Member Marcou, Deborah Kelly, Patricia Thomas, Sarah Fortune, Erica Borde, Jason Gilman.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Van Roosenbeek, seconded by Digby-Britten, to approve the October 18, 2017 meeting minutes. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.

Agenda Items:

1. [17-1318](#) Complaint filed by Genean Thomas vs. City of La Crosse Housing Authority -Review of response received by the City of La Crosse Human Rights Commission from Hale Skemp Hanson Skemp & Sleik Attorneys & Counselors at Law, representing the Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse, dated October 18, 2017.

(Note: The Board may convene in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats. sec. 19.85(1) (a) regarding deliberating a case which is the subject of a quasi-judicial body. Following any closed session, the Board may reconvene in open session.)

Attachments: [Request received 9-28-17 from Housing Authority attorney](#)
[Letter from Genean Thomas 11/7/17](#)

A motion was made by Digby-Britten, seconded by Van Roosenbeek, to convene in CLOSED SESSION. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.

A motion was made by Reinert, seconded by Lacenski, to reconvene in OPEN

SESSION. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.

A motion was made by Van Roosenbeek, seconded by Reinert, that probable cause was found in the complaint filed by Genean Thomas vs. City of La Crosse Housing Authority. The motion carried 5-0 by roll call vote.

A motion was made by Van Roosenbeek, seconded by Reinert, to direct staff to find an independent fact finder and that the data requested on September 28, 2017 be part of the data collection. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.

2. [17-1537](#) Complaint filed by Patricia Thomas vs. City of La Crosse Housing Authority
 - Receipt by Commission and notice to respondent
 - Consideration of preliminary investigation
 - Determination as to whether there is probable cause for hearing
 - Scheduling of proceedings

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A motion was made by Lacenski, seconded by Digby-Britten, that probable cause was determined in the complaint filed by Patricia Thomas vs. City of La Crosse Housing Authority. The motion carried 5-0 by roll call vote.

The Human Rights Commission will send a letter to the Housing Authority giving 30 days to respond.
3. [17-1004](#) Update on letter to school district following complaint filed by Elizabeth Digby-Britten
 - A motion was made by Digby-Britten, seconded by Reinert, to refer this item to the next meeting. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.**
4. [17-1164](#) Announcements/Community Events
 - Arts and Social Justice Listening Session, December 6*
 - Digby-Britten noted a flyer is going out on this event*
5. [17-1111](#) HRC Member Vacancy
 - Spivey noted there are three vacancies, one council member and two citizens. Council Member Marcou will be appointed tomorrow. Reinert asked for an update from the Mayor on pending applications.*
 - A motion was made by Reinert, seconded by Van Roosenbeek, to request an update from the Mayor on the timeline to fill the HRC vacancies. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.**
 - A motion was made by Reinert, seconded by Van Roosenbeek, to request the Mayor and Attorney attend the next meeting to discuss the nature of the pending ordinance. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.**
6. [17-1317](#) Public Forum
 - A motion was made by Van Roosenbeek, seconded by Lacenski, to open the public forum.**

Council Member Marcou inquired about process.

Patricia Thomas inquired about an application to be on one of the boards. Spivey noted a general application, but also noted she was referred to the Mayor's office. Staff will contact Heidi Stein for a status report.

Someone asked for more detail on the listening session. Digby-Britten and Reinert clarified it is a joint listening session with the Arts Board on 'when art becomes offensive'.

It was requested to have the application available at the next meeting for new members.

Van Roosenbeek inquired about the independent fact finder process and who would make the recommendation. Spivey noted there are three in La Crosse. Digby-Britten recommended outside La Crosse perhaps an ACLU recommendation. Reinert and Lacenski noted options.

A motion was made by Digby-Britten, seconded by Reinert, to close the public forum.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next meeting is November 15, 2017 at 5:15 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Van Roosenbeek, seconded by Digby-Britten, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0 by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.