



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes

Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

5:15 PM

Eagle Room

This meeting is also being held virtually. E-mail kuhlmanl@cityoflacrosse.org if you have trouble logging in.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89582231794?pwd=ZGRiL2tZNTZGS0ZGOUZ2bW5Pak10dz09>

One tap mobile: +13126266799,,89582231794#,,,,*907234# US (Chicago)

Call to Order

Littlejohn called the meeting to order at 5:21 pm.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Tracy Littlejohn, Julia McDermid, A Xiong, Chelsey Myhre-Foster, Mac Kiel, Tashyra Bernard, Kristen Lettner

Excused: 1 - Kristen Ringgenberg

Approval of Minutes

Bernard motioned to approve the Minutes, McDermid seconded. The motion carried by a voice vote.

Agenda Items:

- 1 [22-1118](#) Discrimination Complaint - Kou Andy Vang v. Lee Bishop and Bob Daugherty - Determination whether the complaint alleges sufficient facts that if true, relief could be granted and therefore whether complaint is actionable.

Attachments: [HRC Complaint - Kou Andy Vang Redacted.pdf](#)

[Lee Bishop Statement](#)

[Robert Daugherty Statement](#)

After the case was dismissed, the commission discussed improvements to the form to direct people to the right agency for their issues, like a flow chart. McDermid suggested an interactive form that used conditional formatting, where the last question informs the next question. Myhre-Foster suggested that the full form be visible regardless of responses. Littlejohn also suggested putting together an orientation packet of resolutions and ordinances for commissioners.

Littlejohn dismissed the case due to lack of jurisdiction.

- 2 [22-1168](#) September Updates from Racial Equity Team, REACH, and Homelessness Coordinator

Attachments: [Racial Equity and Diversity Survey Draft](#)

Koterwski shared a Racial Equity Team update - postcards to promote the survey would be too costly and they are looking for an alternative medium. Bernard suggested partnering with organizations that are doing outreach to promote the survey, like HopeRestores. Littlejohn suggested adding an insert in the water bill. The RET is also working with translators at the Hmong Cultural Center.

Sampson e-mailed an update: "The 'Friday Group' has continued to work on winter planning for this year. Some of the progress includes creating a process that allows individuals experiencing homelessness to participate in our meetings and share their solutions and the service agencies creating a team that has met with most people to identify other places they can go this winter. We are continuing to finalize plans for overflow shelter."

LaPointe was not in attendance to share about REACH.

- 3 [22-0343](#) Strategic Planning

Attachments: [20220913 Vision Mission Core Values Draft.pdf](#)

Staff provided overview of process so far. Littlejohn suggested looking at Human Rights ordinance to make sure the mission, vision, and values align with the code; she also suggested looking at the 2017-18 strategic plan. Some core values may be more appropriate as actions.

- 4 [22-1024](#) Discussion on housing as a human right.

Attachments: [The Right to Adequate Housing - Training Module](#)
[What Does the 'Human Right to Adequate Housing' Mean?](#)
[Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration](#)
[Toronto Housing Charter – Opportunity for All](#)
[City of Madison - Housing as a Human Right Resolution Draft](#)

Littlejohn said the mayor is working on a resolution with Sandy Brekke; she will draft a letter to mayor and Common Council in support. Staff researched what policies can be enacted in emergency declarations; McDermid suggested getting more information from Brekke on authority, such as zoning allowances at churches and reallocating funds. McDermid suggested making sure information about declaration is very clear; Littlejohn said the HRC's role could be in public education on the policy, including a press release. McDermid noted a large number of small-time landlords in La Crosse and they are like not up on fair housing laws. Bernard recommended sharing concrete examples, like in cases of eviction. Lettner suggested sending any ideas for actionable items to be incorporated in letter to staff. McDermid recommends including eviction counseling similar to foreclosure counseling. Littlejohn reminded about staying with State laws. McDermid brought up rent abatement process in Dane County and could be done in La Crosse; the State allows it, so the City just needs enabling legislation. McDermid suggested also giving more direction to Housing Authority for

improvement.

5 [22-0062](#) Discussion on Civil Rights Dept.

Attachments: [Madison Civil Rights Dept Interview Notes](#)

Littlejohn suggested looking at what existing actions, policies, and programs could go under it, such as the Racial Equity Team and Human Rights Commission. There has been an increase in fair housing complaints and housing issues. Commissioners have a limited capacity. What would staff tasks and responsibilities look like? McDermid suggested getting HRC on GARE list serve. Ask if RET has discussed this as a possibility or is interested in collaborating.

Adjournment

Littlejohn adjourned the meeting at 6:38 pm.

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

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