



MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING **APPROVED**

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, January 14, 2025
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Urbana City Council Chambers
Urbana City Building
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, Illinois 61801

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ann Panthen, Chair; Shalini Smith, Vice Chair; Peter Resnick;
Jerry Frye

COMMISSIONER ON PHONE: Vahagn Chiflikyan

COMMISSIONER ABSENT: Charles Davidson

ALSO PRESENT: Carla Boyd, Human Rights and Equity Officer;
Tom Unzicker, Human Rights Specialist

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Ann Panthen called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. The Recording Secretary took the roll. A quorum was present.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Panthen asked for any additions to the agenda. There were none.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 17, 2024

Ms. Panthen called for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Peter Resnick so moved. Jerry Frye seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote.

D. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Commission Name Change

The City Council approved the change of this commission at their meeting last night, January 13, 2025. The Human Relations Commission name now officially has changed to the Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Resnick and Carla Boyd had attended a meeting of the council last month to formally present the request that received approval at the October 2021 meeting of this commission. Ms. Panthen thanked them for their efforts to see the name change move through the council.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Receipt of automatic two-year EEO Certifications

Shalini Smith announced that two companies qualified for automatic two-year EEO Certification this month with 14 or fewer employees:

- McKenzie Wagner Inc
- Mid-State Fire Repair LLC

2. Consideration of EEO Workforce Statistics

Ms. Panthen requested a motion to approve applications this month. Ms. Smith moved to approve certification of the applicants as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| • Tom Davis Electric, Inc. | 1 year |
| • A&R Mechanical Contractors, Inc. | 2 years |
| • A&R Mechanical Services, Inc | 2 years |
| • Daniel L. Ribbe Trucking, Inc. | 2 years |

Mr. Resnick seconded the motion.

During discussion, Mr. Resnick stated the two A&R units had made progress. He will continue to work with Ms. Boyd on a strategy to encourage unions working with companies that certify with the City of Urbana. All four of the companies requesting certification this month utilize union labor.

Following discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

3. Automatic EEO Certification Process – Discussion

Ms. Boyd requested the commissioners consider changing the automatic certification cut-off from “Under 15” to “20 and Below”.

Various applicants with 15 employees and slightly above have gone through the process since the commission adopted a change allowing automatic certification to those employers with 14 and under employees. Daniel L Ribbe with 16 employees at this meeting was one example.

Ms. Boyd stated that these employers are facing challenges, which are like those with under 15 employees. These include hiring infrequently and having a slower turnover rate while making efforts to diversify.

Ms. Panthen clarified that a vote on any proposed changes would need to occur at a future meeting.

Mr. Resnick suggested possibly placing applicants above the current threshold, and up to the new cut-off, in a separate category for review. Then commissioners could vocalize concerns or ask for additional information if they wished to scrutinize an automatic two-year recommendation.

Mr. Resnick also suggested considering a process that would simply make all [“20 and Under”] automatically approved. Ms. Smith stated her view that perhaps non-union companies should face more scrutiny because they have greater leeway in their staff hiring processes.

As discussion concluded, Ms. Panthen reiterated that the item would receive formal consideration as part of the next meeting agenda.

G. OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Boyd shared her monthly report. Highlights included:

- Status of complaints and referrals made
- Met with the Executive Director of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes, along with members of the Equity and Engagement Department of the City of Champaign to discuss assisting in a "Hate-Violence" prevention program.
- That commission seeks community members from government, education, healthcare, and community organizations to interview for a study
- Adding "Moments in Human Rights History" to her monthly report
- January 14, 1963: George Wallace sworn in as Governor of Alabama. Video: "Segregation now; segregation tomorrow; segregation forever."
- January 14, 1979: U.S. President Jimmy Carter endorsed a bill to make Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a federal holiday

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. This Commission has three openings.
2. Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

I. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Ms. Panthen adjourned the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Unzicker
Recording Secretary