

Approved Minutes – Oct. 21, 2016 Meeting of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission

- I.** Roll Call: Jackson (Chair) (by phone), Lipski (by phone), Conley, Cunningham (by phone), Hosford (by phone) (pursuant to IAC – 161—1.1(3)(c)(2), see explanatory statements from Commissioners appearing by phone)
Staff: Director Johnson
AG: Fiala
Public/Press: None
- II.** Minutes from 9-23-15 presented. Motion by Cunningham, seconded by Conley to approve minutes from 9-23-15; motion approved.
- III.** Commissioners' Reports
- a. Commissioner Angela Jackson – Commissioner Jackson has been assisting the Commission and Don Grove in signing complaints and settlements and will defer to Director's report on settlements and training.
 - b. Commissioner Patricia Lipski – nothing to report.
 - c. Commissioner Lawrence Cunningham – Commissioner Cunningham reported that he attended the "Know your Civil Rights" presentation at Iowa State given by ICRC staff members Andy Duffelmeyer and Rob Poggenklass, and he wanted to commend the efforts. ICRC members did a good job fielding questions from attendees and this is a good perspective of what the ICRC is doing from an outreach perspective. There was a wide representation of the community and Commissioner Cunningham expressed his appreciation for staff efforts in outreach.
 - d. Commissioner Tom Conley – nothing to report.
 - e. Commissioner Mathew Hosford – nothing to report.
- IV.** Director's Report – Director Johnson reported that the ICRC has been asked to maintain status quo budget, but the carried-forward federal funds that have allowed the ICRC to operate on status quo for five years is projected to be eliminated within FY 2018. The result is that the ICRC may have difficulty meeting operating and salary expenses in FY 2018. The Director is working with the Department of Management on possible alternatives and hopes to report a viable solution at the next meeting. Decreased staff results in decreased production, resulting in decreased federal funding, creating a snowball effect. The Director will reach out to Commissioners if the stage is reached where more support is needed from Commissioners. Average number of complaints has decreased in the past three years, but not enough to lessen the adverse effect of a loss of staff positions. Commissioner Jackson inquired about the funds that had been reverted several years ago and whether there was a way to receive credit for this. The Director indicated she will continue to argue that this reversion, in addition to the great efforts to eliminate the huge backlog that existed prior to 2011 and the need for adequate funding to prevent building up another huge backlog, justify a modest increase this year. Commissioner Cunningham inquired about the 4-month backlog announced at the presentation at Iowa State. The Director clarified that staff members were referring to the 120-day statutory goal of the initial screening of a complaint and explained the different steps of non-housing screening, mediation and investigation.

The only thing cited in the completed FY 2015 audit was that there were a couple checks that were not deposited in a timely manner. The Director predicts this will be an issue again in the FY 2016 audit, but the Director has implemented procedures and modified staff assignments that she believes have eliminated this problem. The Director did remind Commissioners that their attendance is governed by the Iowa Code, and missing too many meetings might result in dismissal, as this was something that was cited in the FY 2014 audit. Commissioners are required by Iowa Code to attend a minimum number of scheduled meetings. Commissioner Cunningham requested a copy of the formal written audit, and the Director agreed to scan it and send it to the Commissioners.

Don Grove, who was scheduled to report on the ICRC's training efforts, was delayed at an out-of-town training. The Director reported that the Commission requires training as part of settlements where a probable cause finding has been made. The ICRC provides much of that training. This is part of the ICRC's preventative mission. The report will be added to the minutes.

The Director reminded Commissioners of its Symposium scheduled for October 28, 2016. Registrations as of the date of this meeting were already 16% higher than last year. The Director expects more registrations today, and a total of more than 200. Commissioner Lipski and Commissioner Jackson indicated they planned to attend. Commissioners were asked to pre-register if they wanted a lunch.

V. Next meeting will be on January 20, 2017 at the Grimes Building at 2:00 pm.

VI. At approximately 2:33 pm, it was moved by Commissioner Lipski, seconded by Commissioner Conley, to adjourn to closed session pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.5(1)(c) ("To discuss strategy with counsel in matters that are presently in litigation or where litigation is imminent where its disclosure would be likely to prejudice or disadvantage the position of the governmental body in that litigation.") A roll call vote was held and all members of the Commission present voted to go to closed session deliberations.

The Commission exited closed session at approximately 2:53 pm after motion by Commissioner Conley, seconded by Commissioner Lipski. Motion approved by roll call vote.

At approximately 2:53 pm, Commissioner Conley moved that the Commission adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Jackson, motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Signed,



Kristin H. Johnson
Executive Director

Commissioner Reports on Reason for Electronic Attendance:

-----Original Message-----

From: Cunningham, Lawrence [ICRC]
Sent: Friday, November 04, 2016 3:06 PM
To: Johnson, Kristin [ICRC]
Subject: RE: Remote Attendance at meetings

Hi Kristin -

When we scheduled the meeting date, I notified the group of my impending travel schedule. Therefore the reason that I called into the last Commission meeting was due to the fact I was traveling for business to Washington, D.C.

Hosford, Mathew [ICRC] <Mathew.Hosford@iowa.gov> Mon, Oct 31, 2016 at 10:21 AM

To: "Johnson, Kristin [ICRC]" <Kristin.Johnson2@iowa.gov>

Due to an employer meeting that could not get rescheduled. I would not have had time to travel and attend in person.

October 27, 2016

Kristen Johnson
Executive Director
Iowa Civil Rights Commission
Grimes State Office Bldg.
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Director Johnson,

Please be advised that due to an unavoidable project delay, I was unable to attend the meeting in person on Friday, October 21, 2016 at 2:00 pm. I made the decision to call in rather than cause a further delay in the meeting start time due to tardy arrival.

I am looking forward to attending our next meeting on January 20, 2017.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Angela M. Jackson

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