



TERRY BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
BETH TOWNSEND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Minutes of the November 8, 2012 Meeting of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission

- I. Roll Call:** Chapman, Spicer, Morain, Lipski, Williams, Conley
Staff: Townsend
Public: None
- II. Introduction of Newest Commissioner – Tom Conley.** Commissioner Conley introduced himself and indicated he is the owner of the Conley Group; is an officer in the Navy Reserve where he conducted investigations; is married and lives in the Des Moines area.
- III. Minutes from August 2, 2012 meeting:** distributed for review and unanimously approved. **Minutes from April 12, 2012 meeting:** distributed for review. Commissioner Spicer asked the minutes be amended to include reference to her assignment to establish contacts and network with individuals from Burlington and Council Bluffs for future town hall meetings, which she did. With amendment, minutes unanimously approved.
- IV. Discussions of future Town Hall meetings:**

Commissioner Chapman discussed difficulties related to scheduling locations and the change in schedule to originally scheduled meetings due to scheduling conflicts. All commissioners agreed that the meetings needed to be rescheduled to help raise awareness around the State about the ICRC and to hear input from constituents. Commissioner Chapman asked for input from other commissioners. Commissioner Morain expressed support for going forward with the meetings but also determining a specific agenda for each meeting. Commissioner Chapman addressed the original intent was in response to the NAACP's request that the ICRC meet with the community. Discussed the questions to be asked/answered as part of the conversation starter including the following questions from the 2012 State Fair Questionnaires as well as bullying, safe schools issues as well as the definition of probable cause. Will distributed updated brochures as well as a hand out of FAQ. Discussed getting input from investigators regarding current issues.

Commissioner Conley raised the prospect of utilizing the ICN teleconference resources to hold town hall meetings. Commissioner Spicer indicated that the request was for in person meetings in Council Bluffs and Burlington. Discussion occurred surrounding broadcasting those town hall meetings via ICN.

The issue of the ICRC providing in person fair housing training was discussed. Director Townsend advised that Burlington had contacted HUD, Region VII, for guidance. Region VII supported ICRC's previous offer of providing the training via ICN. The ICRC is awaiting further contact from Burlington regarding setting up the training.

Commissioners targeted the beginning of April 2013 to schedule town hall meetings with an eye towards looking for dates in March that would work and did not conflict with local spring breaks.

Commissioner Spicer requested that her previous discussions regarding the use of criminal records being used in credit or employment be tabled pending the holding of town hall meetings.

- V. Legislative Priorities** – Commissioner Morain requested discussion of ICRC legislative priorities. Commissioners were previously provided a history of the ICRC legislative priorities and statements of support. Discussion regarding the role of the ICRC re: advocacy vs law enforcement agency; should the ICRC be proactive in areas not currently protected by the ICRA including pending legislation related to predatory lending, DREAM Act, voter identification laws, and voter rights for felons. Commissioner Spicer recommended issuing position statements on all areas of civil rights related issues. Commissioner Morain asked whether there were any issues that any commissioners wanted to raise for discussion. Discussed how to handle situation where Commission takes a position that is contrary to the administrations and the role of the Director. Discussed permitting the Director to recuse herself in those cases and relying on individual Commissioners to advocate for the position. Director Townsend raised concerns about how advocating for a particular issue would affect the neutrality of the ICRC, or the appearance that the ICRC is a neutral fact finding law enforcement agency. Further discussion about how to resolve these situations and setting priorities for the Commission.
- IV. Executive Director Report** – Discussed the next hearing which will include hearing a Notice of Appeal filed by the ICRC relating to an ALJ decision issued in Latham/ICRC v. ABCM, et al. Discussed testimony before the Governor related to future ICRC budget and the effect sequestration may have on the availability of federal funds for the ICRC. Reported on the results of recent Kaizan event that addressed the processing of complaints from the time they arrive at the agency until they were moved to screening shelf. Have reduced the processing time from 8-10 days to 24-48 hours. Discussed state fair; provided a handout related to the productivity of the ICRC and discussed the non-disclosure agreement related to the assignment of different AG to the ICRC.
- V. Commissioner Reports**
Spicer – Attached
Lipski – No report.
Chapman – Was contacted by a complainant who expressed dissatisfaction with the way the complaint was processed. Commissioner Chapman followed up with ICRC staff who reviewed the file and recording of the interview conducted between Complainant and investigator and determined the complaint was handled appropriately. Referred to Ombudsman’s Office. Attended the Friends of ICRC 17th Annual Awards luncheon.
Morain – distributed series of articles that were written for his local paper by school superintendent (attached).
Williams – No report
Conley – Reporting process was explained to Commissioner Conley. Commissioner Conley expressed appreciation for the assistance he had received from ICRC staff and expressed his pleasure in joining the Commission.
- VI. Next meeting – Set for January 24, 2013 at 1:00 pm.**
- VII. Adjournment**