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**CITY OF KALAMAZOO**  
**Civil Rights Board**  
**Wednesday, October 6, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. • via Zoom**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jacob Beech, Jessica Glynn, Marissa Harrington

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Janneen Brown (Unexcused)

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:** Clyde Robinson (City Attorney); Marcia Jones (Asst. City Attorney) & Tinessa Patterson (DEI Coordinator)

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The Civil Rights Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Harrington.

**Opening Remarks:** Attorney Robinson advised the board that they did not have a quorum and cannot take action during this meeting and introduced Marcia Jones and let the board know that she will be taking over his role as the attorney for this board starting in November.

**Agenda:** Jacob Beach to adopt meeting agenda; supported by Jessica Glynn. Motion approved by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

**Minutes:** Jessica Glynn motioned to approve minutes from October 6, 2021; supported by Jacob Beach. Motion approved by unanimous vote. Minutes adopted.

**Public Announcements and Communications:** None

**New Business – Public Comment:** None  
**Board / Staff Comments:** None

Vacant Board Positions –

- There are currently several open vacancies on the board needing to be filled. Director Beach lifted that it is important that the board open the public application process up again to fill the board. Director Glynn has started making sure that the open positions have been posted to various bodies (TRHT, etc.). She voiced the need current link for applicants to apply online.
- Vice Chair Harrington voiced her opinion to review applications in October and go straight into interviews in December due to timing. Attorney Robinson stated that other boards will usually appoint a subcommittee to interview candidates and make a recommendation to the full board. This allows them to work outside of OMA (candidates wouldn't need to be interviewed publicly) and moves the process along quicker.
- Attorney Robinson clarified that a full board includes the Commissioner appointee and the City staff person as well. He expressed that he does need feel all four board members should be a part of the interview process as they still make up most of the board. He recommends two or three, at the most, form the nominating committee.
  - Tinessa Patterson brought forward that a nominating committee was voted on at the October meeting with Director Glynn and Director Brown being nominated to this committee.
- Director Beach asked to know what the scoring/evaluation tool would be for the interview process. Tinessa Patterson confirmed that the information that was used in the original interview process when the board was first selected will be made available to the nominating committee by Director Bonner once she returns from her conference and be made available to the board.
- Attorney Robinson spoke to the fact that there is a requirement in the ordinance for the board to reflect specific requirements (city resident, ability to reflect diversity of community and demonstrating some experience in civil rights regarding public accommodation, disability, housing, etc. He also wanted to bring to the board's attention that they need to

look at the individual who's position you are filling to look at where they were at regarding their term as the initial appointments were supposed to staggered.

- Tinessa Patterson stated that the DEI office has the board term information that can be forwarded to the nominating committee.
- Attorney Robinson clarified once nominations are presented to the City Commission, they could include current board members who have expiring one-year terms nominated for a three-year term. Current board members could continue in their positions beyond their terms pending reappointment.
- Director Glynn stated that she will speak with Director Bonner upon her return about interviewing candidates on a rolling basis so that we can get vacant seats filled and move business forward. She asked that the scoring rubric be made public for transparency purposes.
- Vice Chair Harrington requested that brief bios of interviewees be shared with the board. Attorney Robinson clarified that the nominating committee can send this information via email but cautioned the board not to communicate with committee members on this information as it is in violation of the OMA.

Board Chair Discussion – Vice Chair Harrington has taken over duties of the Chair at this time as there isn't a Chair currently. She suggested continuing this way and hold off appointments of a new Chairperson until new directors are selected. Director Glynn and Director Beach agreed.

Educational Committee Update – Director Beach discussed that the goal of the group is to have locations nailed down and fliers created by the end of next week that will be distributed. The goal is to host four information sessions before the end of the year targeting each of the core neighborhoods in Kalamazoo. More information to come.

90 Day Goal Discussion – Vice Chair Harrington stated that the prioritization of these goals was discussed in the last meeting. She suggested that getting more people on the board should be added to the board's 90-day goals as well.

Community Activities and Trainings Discussion – Director Beach confirmed that Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan has started hosting trainings for communities' members on local ordinances and these trainings are posted on their website. Civil Rights Boards trainings are going to focus on how to access the City's complaint process during a training no longer than one hour with the goal of accessibility and making sure everyone has access to this information.

Complaint Update –

- Attorney Robinson notified the board that the City received 21 complaints. Many can be handled by the MDCR and have been referred and others are within the City's jurisdiction. However, out of the 23 there appear to be 7 or 8 and due to short staffing in the CAO. City staff have met with Fair Housing Center (FHC) representatives and in complaints we may not be able to assist in, we can forward them to the FHC and they may be able to assist. These 8 complaints have been split amongst staff with a goal to complete investigations to report out to the board by next month.
- Director Glynn inquired on the Chair and Vice Chair being a part of the investigative process. Attorney Robinson stated that it is inappropriate for this body to be a part of the investigative process as they will be a part of the deliberation process. This could possibly be seen as being prejudice or bias being a part of both portions of the process. The way the ordinance is set up is that staff will do the leg work and keep the board informed. Director Beach recommended regrouping on this subject with Director Bonner to clarify where the Chair and Vice Chair will participate in this process in the beginning portion of the process. Vice Chair Harrington will be reaching out to Director Bonner regarding this recommendation.

**Citizen Comments:** None

**Miscellaneous Board Comments:**

- Director Beach reminded everyone that there is housing assistant that have been impacted by COVID. Visit [housingresources.org](http://housingresources.org) or give Housing Resources a call.
- Director Glynn spoke to the eviction to the homeless encampment and asked Attorney Robinson if those who had cars towed will be receiving charges for the time their vehicles are not picked up from McDonald's Towing and how they can pick up their property. Attorney Robinson did not know the answer to this inquiry. She requested that this answer be made available to the board as it concerns the civil rights of houseless people.

**Closing Comments:** Tinessa Patterson read words on Director Bonner's behalf thanking Vice Mayor Griffin for her time serving on the City Commission.

**Next Meeting:** November 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 7:51 p.m.

Tinessa Patterson, Recording Secretary  
Dorla Bonner, Staff Liaison  
Vice Mayor Patrese Griffin, City Commission Liaison  
Marissa Harrington, Vice Chair