
CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Civil Rights Board
Monday, January 20, 2022 – 6:45 p.m. • City Commission Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jacob Beach, Jessica Glynn, Marissa Harrington, Janneen Brown

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Clyde Robinson (City Attorney), Dorla Bonner (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director)

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

Opening Remarks: None

Agenda: Chair Harrington motioned to adopt meeting agenda; supported by Jacob Beech. Motion approved by 4 votes. Agenda adopted.

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

Public Announcements and Communications: Director Dorla welcomed members, staff, and public to January 20th Civil Rights Board Meeting, reminded those present that mask must be worn in City Hall and City Chamber regardless of vaccination status with the exception of those commenting in person. Director Dorla reminded board that the DEI Department is in the process of engagement for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment and the report has been disclosed and a February 24th virtual meeting will occur to discuss the assessment recommendation, emails will be sent out to board members to engage in the meeting.

- Jessica Glynn asked for update on complaints from Director Dorla. Director Dorla responded that City Attorney staff and City Auditor are preparing a report to showcase complaints reported with report being shared to the board by February or March.
 - Director Dorla let board members know that Michigan Department of Civil Rights Board is conducting training for landlords and asked board members to share the information with relevant stakeholders.

New Business – Public Comment: None

Board / Staff Comments: None

2022 Board Meeting Schedule – Chair Harrington discussed the importance of training and a period of acclimation for new board members as she reiterated the board’s goal of community engagement. Member Beach support Chair Harrington’s remarks regarding allow board members to familiarize themselves with the Board’s process and recommended a bimonthly meeting with a required meeting in February to approve new board meetings.

Member Glynn stated her reluctance in holding any board meetings with complaints without new board members involvement, suggested that special meetings take place when necessary. Director Dorla reiterated that board members have the right to hold special meetings regardless of schedule. Chair Harrington stated that previous meetings have been cancelled due to lack of business and thus supported bimonthly board meetings with special meetings occurring to meet business demands.

- Member Brown motioned to adopt a bimonthly meeting schedule starting in February, supported by member Beech. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Board Chair Discussion and Nomination – Chair Harrington began the discussion of a need for a permanent appointments of board Chair and Vice Chair for 2022.

Member Brown nominated Director Harrington for the Chair position and Director Beach for Vice Chair. Member Glynn brought up the concern of deciding a Chair and Vice Chair position without a full board presents and recommended the continuation of interim roles until a full board is present to vote. Member Brown believes that board Chair and Vice Chair should have more experience and that leadership can be revisited at a later with a fully board membership. Member Beach supported Member Brown's statement.

- Director Brown motions to nominate Director Harrington and Director Beach as Chair and Vice Chair respectively, supported by Director Glynn. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

New Nominations Committee Member Selection – Nominating Committee and Selection of Candidates.

Chair Harrington began discussion surrounding the previously established Nominating Committee and the selection of new board members. Chair Harrington reiterated that moving forward, nomination board shall be appointed by the Chair. Director Dorla stated that recommendations for board members must be done in a public meeting.

- Director Beach motioned for nominating committee to be appointed by Board Chair and publicly acknowledged, supported by Director Brown. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Director Beach volunteered to handle all matters of the nomination and interview process for potential board members with Director Brown assisting. Director Glynn suggested that all board members be apart of the interview process and have their schedules open, this suggestion was supported by Director Brown adding on that emergencies and life events can occur which will require board members to support one another. Director Beach recommends that he and Director Brown take the lead in the interview process and will reach out for support when needed.

- Director Beach and Director Brown will assess candidates and will set forth recommendations with terms for the Board to vote on which will then be brought to City Commission.

Citizen Comments: Richard S. – Reminded board about correcting the name of the board as they did not reflect the civil rights of all citizens and stated that the board is an anti-racism board. The board name is dishonest and misleading. Wondered if board members as well as new members will be required to attend ableism training. Had some complaints on format of meeting as they cannot read lips with board members wearing masks and public comments are off on YouTube.

Miscellaneous Board Comments:

Director Brown wondered if the board had agreed to change the board name. Chair Harrington responded that board had to transition due to lack of full membership, indicating the need to fill vacancies to continue such discussion and other businesses as well. Director Brown clarified that name change must be done and other items must be done with full board. Chair Harrington spoke on how community engagement in 2022 can help the community better understand the role and work of the Board.

Closing Comments: None

Next Meeting: February 2, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:47 p.m.

Lal Tuangi, Recording Secretary
Dorla Bonner, Staff Liaison
Marissa Harrington, Chair