City of Aurora
Human Relations Commission

January 10, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Present
Susan Sosa Bachmeier, Bertha Baillie, Vincent Gaddis, Sheila Gray, Ryan Maley, Mae Smith (Chairperson), Kristen Ziman (ex-officio)

Absent
Zachary Draves, Michelle Evans, Robert Lundquist, Tony Martinez, William Small

Call to Order and Roll Call
Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM.
Ryan Maley took roll call and Chairperson Smith noted that a quorum was present. Alex Voigt from the City of Aurora was also present.

Minutes Approval
Ms. Gray moved the minutes from the December 13, 2018 meeting be approved with typographic corrections from Mr. Small. Ms. Baillie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Smith noted that she did not speak at the December Kwanzaa event as discussed at the December meeting. She said the event agenda changed. She did attend and observed that the event was quite well attended and had grown from previous years. Mr Small and Mr. Maley also attended.

Complaint 18-HRC 003
Chairperson Smith led a discussion of complaint 18-HRC 003. Respondent sent additional information dated January 3, 2019 in response to the Commission’s questions about processes in place to make reasonable accommodations. Commissioners discussed the response and generally felt that it did not directly address the concerns. However, Commissioners felt that the satisfactory answers were not likely to come from the respondent’s attorney. Ms. Voigt stated that no specific loss came to the complainant. Commissioners reached consensus to close the complaint.

Mr. Maley made a motion that (1) the complaint be closed, (2) the respondent be sent correspondence including a statement about Commission taking further action should similar
event happen in the future, and (3) respondent January 3 letter be sent to complainant. Ms. Gray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Complainant 18-HRC 004
Ms. Voigt reported that the disposition letter for complaint HRC-16 004 was returned via mail. No email address for the complainant is available and multiple attempts were made to contact the complainant. This is information for Commissioners, so they are aware of what happened after the case was closed. No further action is being taken at this time.

Committee Reports:

Community Outreach (Maley and Small)
No report.

Event Participation (Gray and Baille)
Ms. Baillie discussed distributing Commission brochures at upcoming League of Women Voters events on March 13, 15, and 18. She also reports that she believes Aurora will have its own League chapter soon.

She stated that she was unable to the Conversations on Race event in Downers Grove as discussed at previous meetings.

Ms. Voigt reports that the City of Aurora will be hosting a mandatory meeting on Tuesday Jan 29 for City Boards and Commissions. The meeting will cover a few topics and may be the start of training and other support for Boards. At least one member of each board must attend. She will forward the invitation to all Commissioners.

Marketing (Evans and Ziman)
No report.

Training and Community Education (Sosa-Bachmeier, Smith, Lundquist)
Chairperson Smith stated that The Long Shadow discussion group is scheduled to meet January 23 but she in unable to attend. All expenses for previous meetings have been submitted.

Ms. Sosa Bachmeier discussed the naturalization clinic to be held at Sacred Heart on Feb 23 from 9:00am to 12:00pm. She asked Ms. Baillie to attend and speak about the Commission. Chairperson Smith may also attend.
Indigenous People’s Day
Mr. Draves was not present. He previously supplied the text of the proposed resolution to Commissioners.

Chairperson Smith reports that four states and more than 50 cities have adopted similar resolutions. She reported that most controversy about the topic relates to feelings about Columbus Day among Italian-Americans.

Commissioners discussed the resolution. Commissioners noted that the resolution calls for Indigenous Day activities to replace any Columbus Day activities. Mr. Gaddis discussed the history of Columbus Day and referred Commissioners to Silencing the Past by Trouillot for more information. Ms. Voigt noted that the City does not observe Columbus Day as a holiday and still conducts business.

After discussion, Ms. Baillie moved that the Commission support the resolution and communicate its position to the Mayor and City Council. Mr. Gaddis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Aurora Police Data 2016 – 2018 and Training
Chief Ziman distributed information about Aurora Police Department (APD) traffic stops from January to June 2018.

Every officer reviews the traffic stops they made individually with APD lieutenants. No individual officer was identified as having a statistical difference in their stops. Stop statistics are also sent to the State of Illinois which performs statistical analysis to identify disparities based on race. If a disparity is found, the State takes action. Chief Ziman reported that APD has never been subject to such an action.

Chief Ziman reported that a primary goal of APD is reduction of violent crime. Officers and patrols are placed in geographic areas of high crime. No targeting of areas is done based on race.

Chief Ziman stated that annual report on crime statistics, excessive force etc. is being prepared and will be available perhaps as soon as six weeks from now. This will be shared with the Commission.

Commissioners discussed various including the how vehicle consent searches are made, officer diversity training (implicit bias and cultural training was done in 2018), and civil rights training (officers are trained on protester rights, immigrant rights and other relevant topics).

Chairperson Smith asked about previous data supplied to the Commission. Chief Ziman was not clear about the exact data needed. After discussion, it was decided to further define the needed data after the meeting.
Other Business
Ms. Voigt reported that the giveaways discussed at last month’s meetings have been paid for, but not ordered pending some decisions about branding related to all City boards and commissions.

Ms. Voigt reported that she has put out a call for members of all City Boards and Commissions. She has at least one candidate for the Human Relations Commission. Commissioner Martinez and Commissioner Sosa-Bachmeier terms expired August 2018. Mr. Martinez will not be reappointed. Ms. Sosa-Bachmeier will be reappointed by the Mayor

Next Meeting
Chairperson Smith reminded commissioners that there will be no February meeting. The Commission will meet again on March 14, 2019.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan Maley