

MINUTES

CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS (CCHR) BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING March 14, 2019

Attendance

Commissioners Present:

Mona Noriega, *Chair*
Joanna Borowiec
Ryan Dunigan
Naderh Elrabadi

Rochelle Grimbau
Emanuel Johnson, II
Stephanie Kanter
Ray Koenig, III

Leisa Mosley
Nabeela Rasheed
Mark Rodriguez
Michelle Shang

Staff Present:

Iris Archilla
Kenneth Gunn
Matthew Lango

Kristen Lee
JoAnn Newsome
Gloria Vu

Karen Wallace

Call to Order

Mona Noriega called the meeting to order at 3:29 p.m. and Gloria Vu recorded the minutes. A quorum of board of commissioners was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner, Mona Noriega presented to the board the minutes of the January 2019 board meeting for approval, whereupon motion was duly made by Leisa Mosley to adopt as written, seconded by Ray Koenig, III and unanimously adopted. The minutes were approved as presented.

Personnel Updates

Mona Noriega announced that Gloria Vu is the new Executive Administrative Assistant II to the Commissioner and Iris Archilla is the new Administrative Services Officer II. (Gloria took Iris's old position and Iris took Harriet's position.)

Kenneth Gunn introduced David Wells and Benjamin Likis from the Office of Budget and Management as well as Kristen Lee, one of the CCHR's investigators.

Reflections

Mayor Rahm Emanuel joined the board members for their last meeting until the new mayor is elected in April 2019. Mayor Rahm Emanuel thanked the board members for their time spent volunteering to help and better serve the people of Chicago on knowing and exercising their human rights. Throughout the meeting several board members also thanked the mayor and the Commission for giving them the opportunity to serve on the board, to be here during a time when several amendments to the ordinance were passed.

Mona also thanked every Board Member for their time and efforts to serving the people in the City of Chicago. Furthermore, Mona asked the board members a few reflection questions that may help the future administration.

- "What is it that the Commission can do better?"
- "What is it in your roles that you'd like to see different?"
- "What are some ideas that you envision that can better the Civil Rights challenges in the city?"
- "Is there a way that the Commission can be more effective?"

Joanna Borowiec proposed working with all of the communities across the Chicagoland area. Joanna wants the Board to express the value of community because there is still a division among communities.

Mark Rodriguez suggested getting an idea of the mayor's future plans for the city. He further suggested, the mayor, with the commissioner's help, should bring communities together to address community issues. Mark also wants to figure out a way to have a dialogue with potential candidates about their views and goals before they are elected into office.

Nabeela Rasheed recommended having sub-committees that focuses on outreach in communities. Sub-committees should be no more than 12 members. The sub-committees' responsibility would be to go to different areas and engage with community leaders on a quarterly basis. These committees would act and serve as a succession plan in each community.

Naderh Elrabadi stated while she is not a Muslim, she recommends that the city establish a better connection with the Muslim community. She explained that when she has found herself in situations where she was unable to provide information or direct assistance to Muslims facing hate crimes or discrimination, she referred them to the Council of Islamic Organization of the Greater Chicago (CIOGC). She also felt that she could have done better with the issues that the Arab community has faced recently. Nabeela Rasheed then recommended Naderh contact the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) to be better connected and to have support in the Muslim community.

Ryan Dunigan proposed a different direction from the Board. He would want the Board to act more as a prosecutor and to bring in affirmative litigation based on issues we see happening as a city. Mona mentioned Ryan's idea would have a governance component.

Mona asked if the suggestion of sub-committees could be more related to self-initiated complaints because the CCHR has been slowly selling the idea to the Law Department and decision makers about the CCHR carrying out self-initiated complaints. Some of the board members expressed concern that if the CCHR becomes involved with self-initiated complaints, it may be misinterpreted as representing the agenda of someone in a higher position.

Leisa Mosley feels that as a board member, there is something more that board members can do in their leadership roles for the City of Chicago. Leisa suggested that the board needs more of a strategic plan. Board members can have a greater voice with structure when it is beneficial with the larger goals of the city. Mona agrees that there could have been a larger deliverance if the vision was more clearly articulated from the beginning.

Stephanie Kanter stated that board members have responsibilities and roles in the community. Board members need to have a stronger communication with other departments to better integrate messages.

Mona agreed with the board members' ideas and asked them, "What are some ways we could bring specific roles of the Commission to achieve that larger vision?" Mark Rodriguez proposed that we can pro-actively address and support the sub-committees and communities.

Joanna Borowiec wants to achieve community bonding. She feels that there should be a want and a need for outreach in communities. She wants communities to bond to show the people that we all have a common ground. We can excel if communities work together. The question is how do we establish this commonality with different communities? How do we talk among other communities about different issues that we are all facing? How do we bridge the gap? How can we be more supportive with one another?

Next Meeting

April 11, 2019, at 3:30 p.m., CCHR Boardroom

There being no further business to come before the board, a motion to adjourn was duly made by Emanuel Johnson II, seconded by Ray Koenig, III and unanimously adopted at 4:33 p.m.