



ROCK ISLAND
HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

Mission: The mission of the Rock Island Human Rights Commission is to bring about greater public awareness of the ethnic and cultural diversity that exists within the community and to ensure that all humans are treated equally, regardless of race gender, religion, age, or disability.

10/15/2020 The Rock Island Human Rights Commission meets the third (3) Thursday of each month beginning a

<p>Location: Conference Room Martin Luther King Jr. Center 630 Martin Luther King Dr Rock Island, IL 61201</p>	<p>City Liaison: Jerry Jones Chairman: Quincy Davis Vice Chairman: Janet Lockhart-Johnson Secretary: Christiana Headley</p>
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I. I. As part of his Executive Order in Response to Covid-19, #2020-07, section 6, Governor Pritzker announced in part that “During the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, 5ILCS 120, requiring or relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body are suspended. Specifically, (1) the requirement in 5 ILCS 120/2.01 that ‘members of a public body must be physically present’ is suspended; and (2) the conditions in 5 ILCS 120/7 limiting when remote participation is permitted are suspended. Public bodies are encouraged to postpone consideration of public business where possible.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Vice Chairman, Janet Lockhart-Johnson. The following commission members were present virtually via Google Meetings (P):

P	Thurgood Brooks	P	Jerry Jones, City Liaison
P	Quincy Davis, Chairman	P	Jason Lopez
P	Gregg Hampton	P	Clayton Peterson
P	Christiana Headley	P	Tamara Felden
P	David Levin	P	Vincent Thomas
P	Janet Lockhart Johnson, Vice Chairman	P	Steven Andich
P	Margie Mejia-Carabello		

Also in attendance were Mayor Mike Thoms, City Manager Randall Tweet and City Attorney Dave Morrison.

III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Janet made a motion to approve previous (09/2020) meeting minutes. David Levin-2nd the motion. Consensus.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT-No public comment.

V. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

All membership positions have been filled. There are 12 members total, 11 voting members.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. 72-2020-RT- Report from Clayton Peterson. Gregg and Clayton met with Eric Sellers. Mr. Sellers confirmed the sequence of events as described by Ms. Teague. The exception to her recollection is the altercation started with the youth playing hoops at another neighbor's poured slab by their garage. The youth, amongst themselves, were using foul language and the "N" word with one another. According to Mr. Sellers it was all black youth. According to Ms. Teague there were African American, Hispanic and mixed race children. All children were in the age range of 9-12. Mr. Sellers stated that he approached the youth and asked them to calm their language. One youth responded, "F" you, you're not my dad." Mr. Sellers became agitated and he admits to saying some inappropriate things in a fit of rage. He does not recall making the statement that he would "drop them." Police have been involved in many of the confrontations. Mr. Sellers stated his first amendment rights and after the initial altercation he made an offensive poster and hung it in his driveway. Ms. Teague's 18 year old son took a photo and either he or Ms. Teague posted the photo on facebook with Mr. Teague's address. Following the post, a brick was thrown through Mr. Seller's front window at 2:00am. Another police report was filed. Mr. Hampton eloquently explained racism and racial threats. Mr. Sellers acknowledged that some inappropriate language may have occurred. Since the brick incident, he felt threatened and has moved to Bettendorf, Iowa. He has agreed that if both sides agree to write an apology, the matter will be closed.

Mr. Sellers contacted Clayton last night and wanted to know where the commission is with this complaint. Mr. Sellers hired a lawyer and may press charges for Ms. Teague posting on Facebook.

The commission decided the matter is essentially out of our hands seeing Mr. Sellers has moved from the neighborhood to another state. Mr. Sellers admitted fault and wishes to move on from this situation stating he has suffered PTSD. Clayton will contact Ms. Teague to ask if she is willing to acknowledge Mr. Sellers apology and consider the complaint resolved. If she chooses not to, Clayton will guide her on moving forward with a complaint to further resolve the complaint.

B. Subpoena powers: Mayor Mike Thoms, City Manager Randall Tweet and City Attorney Dave Morrison attended the meeting to discuss subpoena powers to determine the next steps. David Morrison discussed looking at other cities, such as Champaign/Urbana. Their commission handles approximately 10-15 complaints per year and they have 2 lawyers doing human rights work. Mr. Morrison stated we have fewer resources in Rock Island. Currently we would need an ordinance to be written and a process for handling issues that arise. He estimates the cost being \$5,400-6,000 worth of time to develop an ordinance. Once the ordinance is in place, a lawyer would only be needed if the commission needed to utilize subpoena power.

The commission discussed issues such as judicial review, fines, education, consequences of non-compliance, conflicts with private information. Committee members insisted on action and next steps to obtain subpoena power, reiterating the long process that has already been endured and the desire to be more effective in handling human rights complaints.

Mayor Thoms agreed to broach the topic informally with council members this coming week. Mr. Tweet agreed a preliminary ordinance can be modeled after Champaign/Urbana's ordinance and a draft could be made available to the human rights commission in November for review, input and modifications.

b. 71-2020-DR - A letter declaring a default ruling for the complainant was mailed to the two parties. Rhoden contacted Jerry Jones who gave him the contact information for the state EEOC.

c. Yearly training was addressed in the conversation regarding subpoena powers.

VII. PENDING COMPLAINTS

A. 73-2020-SW: The human rights commission has a limit of 60 days from the time of the incident for an individual to file a complaint. Due to the length of time the commission is unable to take action. However, Ms. Williams still falls within the time of 300 days with the state of Illinois to file a complaint.

A letter will be drafted and mailed to Ms. Williams in regards to her complaint and her rights to file with the state of Illinois. A letter will also be drafted and mailed to the Rock Island School District and Frances Willard school informing them that several complaints have been filed against them and in order to prevent future complaints, they will want to consider training for all district staff members, not just teachers.

The commission discussed making changes to the ordinance that allows a longer time for the commission to take a case that reflects the timeline offered by the state.

VIII. FURTHER EDUCATION

A. None

IX. COMMISSION COMMENTS

- A. Jason restated his interest in getting involved with the Rock Island school district to further educate individuals on the role and responsibilities of the human rights commission.
- B. Vince shared his concern over white supremacists in our community and backlash during the election. Quincy shared individual responsibility for safety within families and smaller communities within our city. Tamara is an election judge and stated, as a commission, we are not in a position to reassure citizens or guarantee protection for them.
- C. Thurgood shared his work with the development of a police relations commission. He is working with the city, Mayor Thoms and city attorney, Dave Morrison. The goal is for this commission to become a city commission. There was discussion of the policy within the city that allows individuals to only serve on one commission at a time.

X. ADJOURN: Quincy Davis made a motion to adjourn at 6:42pm, Jason-2nd, Consensus

NEXT MEETING: The Rock Island Human Rights Commission normally meets the third Thursday of each month, **November 19, 2020**, 630 Martin Luther King Dr. Rock Island, IL 61201 beginning at **5:00 p.m.** Due to COVID-19, the Commission will continue to meet through Google Meeting set up by Jerry Jones, until further notice.