

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024; 12:00 PM

VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84869608008?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84869608008?pwd=MUHUMUNSUNP4WLZNDK9TBXZIMLY1UT09)
PWD=MUHUMUNSUNP4WLZNDK9TBXZIMLY1UT09

AMID CONCERNS ABOUT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY, AS AN ONGOING MITIGATION MEASURE, IN COMPLIANCE WITH CDC RECOMMENDATIONS, THE COMMISSION WILL HOST ITS NEXT MONTHLY MEETING, SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 9, 2024 AT NOON THROUGH A VIRTUAL FORMAT. THIS ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN DUE TO SAFETY CONCERNS ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19. THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS, VISITORS, CUSTOMERS AND OUR STAFF AT THE DAVENPORT CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION IS ALWAYS A TOP PRIORITY. IT IS WITH THIS IN MIND THAT WE HAVE TAKEN THIS STEP TO MITIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SIGN UP TO ATTEND OUR NEXT MEETING, PLEASE REGISTER IN ADVANCE FOR THIS MEETING- YOU WILL FIND THE LINK IN THE AGENDA UNDER ROLL CALL. AFTER REGISTERING, YOU WILL RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION EMAIL CONTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT JOINING THE MEETING.

I. Roll Call

- A. VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84869608008?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84869608008?pwd=MUHUMUNSUNP4WLZNDK9TBXZIMLY1UT09)
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II. Approval of Agenda

III. Approval of Minutes

- A. December 2023 Minutes

IV. Directors Report

- A. December 2023 Director's Report
- B. December 2023 Case Status Report

V. New Business

- A. ED-0109-0002-14
- B. Commission Hiring an Investigator for the Performance of an Internal Workplace Harassment Investigation

VI. Old Business

VII. Public Comment and Presentation

VIII. Adjourn

IX. Next Meeting

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department:
Contact Info:

Date

Subject:
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84869608008?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84869608008?pwd=muHUMUNsUNP4WLZNDK9TBXZIMLY1UT09)
PWD=MUHUMUNSUNP4WLZNDK9TBXZIMLY1UT09

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Civil Rights	Musser, Stephanie	Approved	1/8/2024 - 8:54 AM

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department:
Contact Info:

Date

Subject:
December 2023 Minutes

ATTACHMENTS:

Type	Description
▢ Cover Memo	December 2023 Minutes

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Civil Rights	Musser, Stephanie	Approved	1/8/2024 - 11:25 AM

DAVENPORT CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Tuesday, December 12, 2023; 12:00 PM

The Davenport Civil Rights Commission (DCRC) met at 12:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 12, 2023, online using Zoom. Commission Chair Michael Guster, presided.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ethelene Boyd
Michael Guster
Frank Holley
Angela Reyes
Charlene Upchurch-Taylor
Jeff Transou

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

OTHER PERSONS PRESENT:

Director Lacey
Others from the community

AGENDA

Commissioner Guster called for the approval of the agenda. Commissioner Boyd made a motion to approve the agenda, Commissioner Holley second the motion. All Commissioners voted to approve the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Holley, seconded by Commissioner Upchurch- Taylor, the minutes of the regular meeting on September 23, 2023, were moved. All Commissioners approved.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Director Lacey stated there was no right to sue letters for the months of October or November. There were no cases resolved in mediation and conciliation in the months of October or November. The Director stated there were two new public accommodation cases, six new employment cases, three new housing cases, one new closed housing case. Director Lacey stated she has been planning and organizing sessions to discuss upcoming outreach and education initiatives on racial trauma for the community in collaboration with Transitions Mental Health, St. Ambrose School of Social Work, and the Davenport Branch of the NAACP. The training will focus on the ways that racism and racial discrimination may impact emotional well being, causing racial trauma. The Director stated these experiences can affect physical and mental health and can create PTSD. There will be learning about the impact of racial trauma and provide tips for active coping to reduce stress. Director Lacey stated the first event is tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2024 at the MLK Interpretive Center. There will be a second component of the training for mental health providers, scheduled for the Fall of 2024, there will be additional details when the specifics are finalized. Commissioner Holley asked Director Lacey if all of this is open to the public, Director Lacey stated that yes it certainly is. The Director stated that Facebook was the advertising choice for the events and that email will be sent with a link to a flier.

The Director discussed environmental discrimination and that she is working with certain community members who have vast knowledge of this topic and are concerned with that type of possible discrimination in our area. The Director mentioned examples of this type of discrimination such as organizations polluting in mostly diverse cultural areas of a community.

Director Lacey stated that Carol Johnson from the DOJ would like to set up discussions with the Commission sometime in January on future training. The Commission discussed times and how we would meet. Commissioner Guster asked individual Commission members what they thought. Director Lacey stated she could send out a poll to all Commissioners to answer the best times for the training for them. All Commissioners agreed to the poll being sent out by the Director.

Director Lacey stated that in November she and staff worked on the 2025 budget request. The Director also stated they worked on the 2024 budget increase request and attempted to obtain further clarity from the Finance Department on the suggested budget amendment for security updates as proposed by the Commissioners. Discussion ensued over an allocation of \$30,000 to salaries accounts for additional staff.

The Director stated that the Assistant Director/Housing Programs Manager worked with the Davenport Library, Sage Sisters of Solidarity, and the Native American Coalition of the Quad Cities on planning and then hosting a Native American History program. "We Are Still Here: An Indigenous Journey." The Director stated the event was well attended by the public.

Director Lacey stated COVID-19 rates continue to be monitored and its impact on office functions. The Director stated that the level of infection was rather high in our area. She stated they continue to mask in the office.

Director Lacey discussed the meeting that Commissioners Guster and Transou had at City Hall with the Mayor and Mallory Merritt. Director Lacey mentioned one of the topics was office furniture, Commissioner Transou stated that whatever furniture is needed, that he and Commissioner Guster were told that the Civil Rights office could ask Ms Merritt for those kinds of items by putting an order in. Commissioner Holley asked about the security updates. Commissioner Transou stated that was discussed also and that the City still planned on having a window installed with a paper pass and that they might have to change the door to the office as well. Commissioner Transou also stated that Director Lacey's vacation hours were also discussed at the meeting. Mallory Merritt told Commissioner Transou and Commissioner Guster that back vacation hours were going to be given to Director Lacey at the City Hall meeting. During this Commission meeting Director Lacey stated she had wanted the back vacation hours to be paid to her especially since she has waited several years to get them after asking numerous times. Commissioner Transou stated that he and Commissioner Guster were told during the City hall meeting with the Mayor and Mallory Merritt that Director Lacey could respond to the agreement that the Commissioners were given to give to her. Commissioner Guster stated that the City went above what they can normally do to give the back vacation pay, but Director Lacey could respond back with her interest to have the time paid to her. Commissioner Guster suggested the CRC send communication asking for what we need for security, office furniture, and the Director's vacation being paid to her instead of it being in her vacation bank. Commissioner Guster discussed the ongoing harassment of the Commission by the City and his frustration with it.

The Commission then discussed the budget. Commissioner Holley asked about staffing. Director Lacey asked if everyone was okay with submitting the budget. All Commissioners agreed to accept the budget. Director Lacey stated she would send requests in for office furniture, etc. Commissioner Guster discussed Director Lacey attending the next meeting at City Hall instead of her getting information second hand and then she would be able to talk directly with City staff as well. Director Lacey stated she would like the Commission to hire a law firm to deal with the harassment from City Hall. The Director stated that local, State, and Federal laws have been violated. Commissioner Holley suggested the Commission do this. Commissioner Guster stated that he would put hiring a law firm on next month's meeting agenda. Commissioner Guster and Director Lacey stated we would have to call a special meeting to discuss getting an attorney for the Commission's harassment. Director Lacey discussed mail addressed to the Commission that was opened by someone else and we don't know whom. The letter was stamped confidential. Director Lacey stated the City apparently has hired an attorney on behalf of the Commission without even telling the Commission about it. Director Lacey discussed the harassment of the Commission further and how unfair it is for the Commission to have to work in such a hostile environment. The Commission ended its discussion with deciding to put hiring a law firm on the next month's agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Director's Vacation Pay

Commissioner Guster stated he had a letter sent to Mallory Merritt stating what Director Lacey wanted with her back vacation pay which was to have it paid out instead of in the vacation bank as the Director has waited several years for the reimbursement already. Commissioner Guster stated he was still waiting on a reply on that request. Director Lacey stated she viewed the withholding of the vacation pay not being paid out as further harassment from the city. The Director stated the Commission has voted on it twice and it's very frustrating the response from the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

Commissioner Boyd asked if there was a holiday event at the Commission office. Director Lacey stated that there would be one and that invitations with the day and time would be sent out to Commissioners.

Commissioner Upchurch-Taylor stated on January 20, 2024 is the Friends of MLK Organization 1st Annual Gala. 5 p.m. social hour, wine samples, and horderves, and a band as well. The program would start around 6 p.m. Tickets can be purchased from Commissioner Upchurch-Taylor or Commissioner Guster.

Commissioner Boyd stated that the last Thursday in January, there would be a Kwanzaa Celebration at the King Center in Rock Island, IL. The start time will be 6:15 or 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Holley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Commissioner Boyd. All Commissioners approved the motion to adjourn.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Commission is January 9, 2024, at 12 noon.

Submitted by Jeff Transou, Secretary

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department:
Contact Info:

Date

Subject:
December 2023 Director's Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Type	Description
▢ Cover Memo	December 2023 Director's Report

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Civil Rights	Musser, Stephanie	Approved	1/8/2024 - 11:25 AM

DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE DAVENPORT CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION FOR December 2023

I. CASE STATUS

1. No "right to sue" letters were issued in the month of December.
2. No cases resolved in mediation and conciliation in the month of December.

II. OTHER ACTIVITY

1. Director participated planning sessions to discuss upcoming outreach and education initiative on racial trauma for the community in collaboration with Transitions Mental Health, St. Ambrose School of Social Work and the Davenport Branch of the NAACP. The first event is tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2024 at the MLK Interpretative Center.
2. Director completed case processing documentation.
3. Director worked on pre-hearing and post-hearing preparation.
4. Director continued to monitor COVID-19 rates and its impact on office functions.
5. Director worked on case resolution documents.
6. Director worked on litigation.
7. Director submitted the FY2025 budget request.
8. Director submitted the FY2024 budget increase request to: (1) move two positions from the Fair Housing Fund into the General Fund; (2) move the \$30,000 for "events expenses" into full-time salaries, allowing the part-time staff member to be moved to full-time and (3) implement the security updates as proposed to the Commissioners.
9. Director worked with DOJ CRS staff to plan and schedule upcoming training with the Commission.
10. Asst. Director/Housing Programs Manager worked on investigations.
11. Asst. Director/Housing Programs Manager worked on housing investigations.
12. Asst. Director/Housing Programs Manager worked on housing inquiries.
13. Asst. Director/Housing Programs Manager worked on case resolutions.
14. Civil Rights Specialist worked on intakes.
15. Civil Rights Specialist worked on case investigations.
16. Civil Rights Specialist worked on case resolutions.

III. OLD BUSINESS

1. Ongoing discrimination, harassment and bullying of Commission staff.
 1. Retaliatory actions against Commission staff and further examples of different treatment.
2. Legal Department refusal to accept Commission referral.
3. Use of racial slurs in City Hall. City's failure to initiate complaint investigation.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Investigation of hostile working environment.
2. Volunteers for February 4 event.

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department:
Contact Info:

Date

Subject:
December 2023 Case Status Report

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Civil Rights	Musser, Stephanie	Approved	1/8/2024 - 11:26 AM

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department:
Contact Info:

Date

Subject:
ED-0109-0002-14

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Civil Rights	Musser, Stephanie	Approved	1/8/2024 - 9:02 AM

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department:
Contact Info:

Date

Subject:
Commission Hiring an Investigator for the Performance of an Internal Workplace Harassment Investigation

REVIEWERS:

Department	Reviewer	Action	Date
Civil Rights	Musser, Stephanie	Approved	1/8/2024 - 11:26 AM