

# MINUTES

Monday, February 8, 2016



Sioux Falls  
Human Relations  
Commission

12 Noon—1 p.m.  
Commission Room  
First Floor, City Hall

## Commissioners:

**Present:** Sarah Bouwman, Deborah Deng, Joanne Haase James, John Jones, James Larson, Jack Mortenson, Alex Ramirez, Bill Wood

**Absent:** Stephen Brennan, Henry Scere

**Staff:** Julie Briggs, Human Rights Community Coordinator, Colleen Moran, ADA Manager

**DAC Member Present:** Walter Schaefer

**Guests Present:**

## 1. Call to Order/Welcome Guests

Commissioner Joanne Haase called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

## 2. Approval of Minutes

Ramirez moved to approve the January 11, 2015 meeting minutes. Larson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

## 3. Civil Rights Update

- A. January 15, 2016: The Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against a Waunakke, Wisconsin landlord, alleging violations of the Fair Housing Act based on disability. The suit alleges that the landlord refused to renew a resident's lease because of the disabilities of the apartment's occupants. The landlords demanded the residents develop a plan to deal with the "behavior" of one of the residents, who is a person with Down syndrome. In addition, the apartment manager failed to take action, when the residents reported that other tenants made offensive comments to the residents, which included calling one of the residents "retarded" and stating the resident didn't belong there and belonged in an institution. The proposed settlement would require the landlords to be damages of \$40,000 and require they maintain non-discrimination policies, advertise that they are equal opportunity housing providers and attend fair housing training.
- B. February 2, 2016: Rental Pro, an equipment rental company in Kentucky, agreed to pay \$37,000 to settle an age discrimination lawsuit filed by the EEOC. Rental pro terminated the employed of a 52-year-old male, stating the company wanted "younger and peppier" employees and wanted to bring "young blood" into the company
- C. February 3, 2016: A Canton, Mississippi, Save-A-Lot franchise has been ordered to pay \$125,000 to settle a sexual harassment lawsuit. The lawsuit alleged that a Save-A-Lot cashier was subjected to severe and pervasive sexual harassment to the former store manager. The harassment included lewd comments and repeated request for sexual favors that escalated to physical harassment, and sexual assault. The cashier informed

the store owner of the sexual harassment and assault, but the employer failed to take corrective action. (This was the second lawsuit filed against a Mississippi franchise).

**4. Appointment of Case Panel A:**

Sarah Bouwman, Jim Larson, Alex Ramirez, Henry Scere

**5. Continuing Business**

- A. Outreach Committee: After adjournment the committee met
- B. Communications Committee: After adjournment the committee met
- C. Compassionate Sioux Falls: We will be filming the next two spotlights, Spread The Word To End The Word ( STWTETW) and CASA. We will be taking donations to the Bishop Dudley House, toiletry items such as shampoo, soaps, etc. Please bring to the HRC office by the middle of March. Please remember to sign the affirmation and encourage others to sign as well, go to [siouxfalls.org/compassion](http://siouxfalls.org/compassion). Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month.

**6. New Business –**

- A. Cinco de Mayo – May 7<sup>th</sup> – Decision on having a booth will be made in the near future – We will have discussion at the March meeting
- B. SF Pride – June 18<sup>th</sup> – Decision on having a booth will be made in the near future – We will have discussion at the March meeting
- C. Festival of Cultures- June 11<sup>th</sup> – Decision on having a booth will be made in the near future – We will have discussion at the March meeting
- D. Marketing materials- Committee met after to discuss what we may want
- E. 3<sup>RD</sup> officer – Vicki Harkness has resigned from the HRC, we will be voting at the March meeting for officers

**7. Disability Awareness Commission Report**

- A. Meeting was held January 20<sup>th</sup>, Kristi Eisenbraun, Ms. Wheelchair South Dakota was a guest, Kristi discussed her platform is to raise awareness of service dogs. Kristi offered to speak at events.
- B. ArtAbility – Deadline was the 29<sup>th</sup> of January. Art will be on display March and April, April 8<sup>th</sup> will be the reception
- C. Tina from the Human Relations office attended the meeting to discuss Fair Housing

D. Spread The Word To End The Word is March 2, 2016 – Please sign the pledge

**8. Public Comment**

**9. Adjournment**

Having no further business, Commissioner Jones moved to adjourn; Bouwman seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

***Minutes respectfully submitted by Julie Briggs.***