

MINUTES	Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 12:00 PM	
Human Relations Commission Meeting	Commission Room 1st Floor—City Hall 224 West Ninth Street Sioux Falls, South Dakota or by teleconference at (605) 367- 8898 Code 134-1512	

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Alex Ramirez, Nassir Yemam, Bill Wood, Anny Libengood, Kassidi Smith, Megan Grode Wolters, Megan Myers **PRESENT BY PHONE:** Ryan Chase
BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Gourley, Justine Schoolmeester
STAFF PRESENT: Beth Jost, Sharla Svenes

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 12:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Wood and seconded by Grode Wolters to approve the minutes from the November 2020 meeting. Motion passed.

BUSINESS OR PENDING ISSUES BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

Criteria and Makeup of Citizen Boards, Kira Kimball: Libengood invited Kira Kimball to come to the meeting to discuss the criteria and makeup of citizen boards. Kira serves on several boards and Libengood feels the citizen boards are often not representative of population they are serving. Libengood said she wondered about how the criteria for citizen boards is created, and if changes to the criteria fall within the commission’s roles and responsibilities. Libengood referenced some information she provided to the commission about the current requirements for each citizen board (see Attachment A) and a list of the Human Relations Commission roles and responsibilities (Attachment B). Kimball spoke about her work with Pathways, and suggested that the commission could work with the Leaders of Tomorrow program also. Kimball encouraged the commission to be active about going out and recruiting individuals to serve on citizen boards in order to create more diversity. Grode Wolters added that she would be curious to know if there is a lack of diverse applicants or if there are diverse applicants that are not being chosen. Libengood would like to see the boards make an effort to recruit diverse applicants and made a motion to develop a committee to recruit diverse representation for membership on citizen boards. Wood seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Libengood, Kimball, Grode Wolters, Smith, and Wood volunteered to be on the committee. Libengood will arrange to have the committee meet before the next HRC meeting.

HUMAN RELATIONS DIVISION STATISTICS

There are currently 49 active discrimination cases, and the top three bases are race, disability, and retaliation. In November the Human Relations Office had 52 walk-ins or phone calls regarding housing, and 22 regarding employment.

CIVIL RIGHTS UPDATE

12/1/20 The Justice Department filed a lawsuit against the Ashland, Alabama Housing Authority alleging that the Housing Authority denied African American applicants the opportunity to live in predominantly White housing complexes, and steered White applicants from properties that were predominantly African-American.

12/1/20 A settlement was reached by the Justice Department with owners and managers of housing in Honolulu, Hawaii resolving a lawsuit alleging the defendants discriminated based on familial status. It was alleged that defendants refused to rent to families with children.

11/12/20 A settlement agreement was reached with Federal Way Public Schools in Washington resolving an investigation into allegations of peer-on-peer harassment on the basis of religion and national origin. The complaint alleged that students had experienced harassment because of their national origin or religion, and the district did not respond adequately. The settlement also resolved complaints that the district failed to properly communicate with parents and guardians who are not English language proficient.

PUBLIC INPUT

Alicia Roy from East River Legal Services was present by phone, she wanted to add a comment about community representation and diversity on citizen boards. Alicia suggested it might be a good idea to post about citizen board openings on LinkedIn as a volunteer opportunity.

NEXT MEETING

January 14, 2020

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Libengood and seconded by Smith to adjourn the meeting.
Meeting adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Jost
Human Relations Specialist