

**COUNCIL BLUFFS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 18, 2010 MEETING**

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m. by Chairperson Alba. Roll call was answered by Alba, Carle, Christie, Jacoby and Rodasky. Absent and excused were Bettis and Mendoza. Also absent was Rhatigan. Additionally present were Director Tamra Madsen, special guest and prospective Commissioner Susannah Go, and VISTA Member Sarah Marfisi.
2. After discussion and a recommendation by Madsen, a motion to approve the agenda was made by Christie and seconded by Carle. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.
3. The draft of the minutes of the September 21, 2009 meeting were reviewed and discussed. A motion was made by Carle to approve the minutes, seconded by Rodasky. This motion was approved unanimously.
4. Several items were discussed under New Business:
 - A. Election of Vice-Chairperson. Rodasky moved to elect Christie. The nomination was seconded by Jacoby. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. Christie is now Vice-Chairperson of the Commission.
 - B. New Commissioner Gilda Bettis was not in attendance due to an emergency. She will be introduced at the Commission's next meeting.
 - C. Madsen, Carle, and Christie discussed the December 1, 2009 League meeting by ICN. State Commissioner Dr. Keith Johnson was at Council Bluffs' ICN site. The meeting consisted of updates from various commissions on their current activities; presentations from several commissions on community education, specifically addressed to post-secondary students; and, a discussion of League legislative priorities.
 - D. The League legislative breakfast and quarterly meeting will be held March 16th in Des Moines. Marfisi and Madsen plan to attend. Jacoby also stated that she would like to attend. Other Commissioners will check their calendars and let Madsen or Marfisi know by mid-February if they will attend.
 - E. The League's legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session were discussed.
 - F. The Commissioners unanimously agreed, without a formal vote, that the Commission's 2010 educational emphasis area should be disability. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Commission discussed several possible activities:
 - ADAAA study session for Commissioners and staff. This study session would educate the Commission about the ADA and what the law means. The Great Plains Center for Disabilities offers such training sessions.

-Jacoby mentioned accessibility issues in Council Bluffs and suggested that the Commission take part in surveying businesses and suggesting how they can be more fully accessible.

-Carle suggested the Commission get a booth at the spring health fair at the MAC to discuss disability issues.

G. Marfisi asked whether the Commission would like to resurrect its former practice of giving out an annual Martin Luther King Day community service award. Alba recalled that the Commission had difficulty getting nominees for the award in the past. Carle suggested giving out an award for another national civil rights day in April or May and said that she would look into when the day was.

H. Marfisi discussed her recent submission of an Iowa West Foundation grant application to fund the VISTA program in Council Bluffs. The Commissioners thanked her.

5. Several items were discussed under Old Business:

A. Marfisi discussed the human rights coloring books the Commission distributed at First Night. Marfisi and Christie will serve on the planning committee for next year.

B. Martin Luther King Day was the day of the meeting. In celebration, the Mayor presented a proclamation to the Commission. The City and Commission sponsored a food drive. The Commission purchased the recently re-published book *Stride Toward Freedom* by Dr. King for the Council Bluffs Public Library.

C. Madsen and Marfisi discussed the follow-up report on the Brush up Nebraska paint-a-thon that Madsen submitted on behalf of the Commission's team. Marfisi will send the report, which details some of the difficulties and successes of the project, to the Commissioners.

D. Madsen reported that she ordered a new copy of *Little Salsa on the Prairie* since the Commission believes that former Commissioner Bruce Wallace still had Christie's copy when he moved from the state.

6. Community Education:

A. Marfisi updated the Commission on the November 16th One Iowa Forum that the Commission co-sponsored. The event went well and was well-attended. Rodasky and Go were on the panel. Rodasky told the Commission that Representative Shomshor attended and was complimentary.

B. Madsen updated the Commission on the Martin Luther King Day lecture with speaker Dr. Peggy Jones. She attended the event and passed out Commission brochures, magnets, pencils, and business cards.

C. Madsen opened the floor for other ideas about Community Education. Christie asked Marfisi for an update on some of the ideas presented at earlier meetings. Marfisi mentioned the ideas of a Hearing on the Status of Civil Rights in Council Bluffs and a Junior Civil Rights Commission. Christie and others were interested in moving forward on the hearing and Marfisi offered to send out an email soliciting ideas for stakeholder groups to present at the hearing. In another idea, Rodasky suggested a children's art contest to coincide with the national civil rights day mentioned by Carle. Rodasky suggested a partnership with the Bluffs Arts Council and agreed to make contact with them.

7. Executive Session

- A. At 5:45 p.m. Christie moved, seconded by Rodasky, pursuant to the Municipal Code of the City of Council Bluffs, § 1.40.070, to go into Executive Session to discuss pending cases. Go excused herself from the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
 - B. At 6:04 p.m. Christie moved, seconded by Rodasky, to close executive session and return to regular session. Motion passed unanimously.
8. A motion to adjourn was made by Rodasky and seconded by Carle. It passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m. by Chairperson Alba.

Minutes prepared by:

Tamra L. W. Madsen