Fair Employment Commission
Meeting Minutes
9/12/2019

I. Call to order

Amelia Hufeld called to order the regular meeting of the Fair Employment Commission at 4:32 pm on 9/12/19 at Peoria City Hall.

II. Roll call

Amelia Hufeld conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Amelia Hufeld, Case Manager; as City of Peoria staff liaison; Councilwoman Denise Moore; Commissioners—Sherry Carter-Allen (Chair), David McGinty (Vice Chair), Rev. Barry Robinson, Pastor Chuck Brown, Carl Holloway, Laraine Bryson; Melodi Green, Assistant City Attorney, City of Peoria. Absent—Angel Cruz, Commissioner.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Commission Chair Sherry Carter-Allen makes motion to approve minutes with the following corrections:

Concerning section I.--Chair request that record show that the reason for no past meeting minutes reflect that there were no past minutes to approve as the August 8th meeting was the first of the newly formed Fair Employment Commission.

Concerning section V.-- Chair request that a correction be made to show that Chair stated that she had years of experience with “City of Peoria Housing Commission,” and not the current commission.

Concerning section VII. —Should say article II, not 11—in addition Chair requested that the language reflect that chair stated that the commission could go “online,” to look at the code and not “to the library,” as currently reflected in the minutes.

Concerning the section “... agenda items for next meeting”—Chair request that the record reflect that chair requested that Assistant City Attorney come in and give guidance on how the current ordinance, as it stands, directs the commission and what power it grants the commission.

Staff liaison agrees to notate on the record the requested corrections, Chair Sherry Carter-Allen makes motion to accept minutes with corrections, Commissioner Bryson moves to approve, seconded by Commissioner Holloway. Chair takes vote- 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 not voting (absent).
IV. Unfinished Business

n/a-no unfinished business from the past meeting noted.

Prior to discussion of new business items, Commission Chair makes motion to change the order of the agenda items: agenda item I and agenda item II will be switched, with agenda item II being addressed first, due to Councilwoman Moore needing to exit the meeting early in order to meet other professional commitments. Commissioner Holloway moves to approve, 2\textsuperscript{nd} by Vice Chair McGinty. Chair calls for vote—6 "ayes", 0 nays, 1 not voting (absent).

V. New business

Agenda Item I. Councilwoman Moore provides history on why the two commissions (Fair Housing/Fair Employment) were split. Councilwoman states that she discovered other cities had separate commissions for housing and employment and requested that the mayor do the same for the City of Peoria.

A. Per Councilwoman Moore, the commission has split in half but are under the same guidance as before.

B. 1\textsuperscript{st} goal to define what the commission is supposed to do as dictated by the current ordinance.

C. 2\textsuperscript{nd} Goal is to update the current ordinance which is out of date, and reactive in nature, to create a more relevant and proactive ordinance under which the commission will operate.

D. Councilwoman Moore notes that the decisions made going forward are under the ownership of the commissioners; and encourages commissioners to make it their own.

E. Councilwoman Moore shares that it will be her place to advocate to the council on any changes recommended by the commission.
F. Chair request clarification on two comments made by Councilwoman Moore concerning the commission being a working committee,” and a comment about “the scope to widen the commission to address specific employment issues.”

i. Councilwoman Moore provides the following clarification: 1) Commission may add commissioners if needed/wanted 2) There is a disparity in the unemployment rate between the majority (5%-unemployment rate) and 61605 area (25%-unemployment rate).

ii. Councilwoman Moore shares that each commissioner plays a role and brings something valuable to the table. Recommends that commissioners find out how they can use their relationships to help agencies working in workforce development.

iii. Councilwoman Moore states that she recognizes the value of understanding the existing ordinance before acting.

iv. Councilwoman Moore shares she wants to add funding to the group.

*Councilwoman inquires if commissioners have any other questions for her, all deny—councilwoman wishes all well and exits the meeting.*

**Agenda Item II.** Assistant City Attorney Melodi Green for the City of Peoria provides guidance on existing ordinance 17.

a. Chair inquires if Ms. Green will be present at all meetings—Ms. Green reports that she will not be present at all meetings but will attempt to be present when requested.

b. Ms. Green states that the existing ordinance appears to show that the original intention of the Fair Employment commission was to hear complaints.

c. Ms. Green provides the commission an outline of the ordinance. *(Commission Chair request that copy of handout be entered into record.)* Ms. Green shares that it is her opinion that the existing ordinance is entirely reactive in nature. Ms. Green shares that the
ordinance currently provides the following format for how complaints are handled—Complaints are to be made first to EOO who determines probable cause and attempts resolution, if no resolution is reached the complaint then comes to the commission for proceedings. The Commission then holds an administrative trial, in which three commissioners act as judge. If a party does not agree with the findings of the panel, they have the right to appeal. Appeals are heard in circuit court.

d. Ms. Green shares that in the past no cases have gone to trial. Ms. Green shares that the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Dr. Muhammad currently can end cases prior to them coming to the commission. Ms. Green provides information as to the process of receiving complaints, completing investigations, and reaching findings.

e. Clarification is made that if a case is taken to the state, the state trumps the municipality and the municipality no longer has jurisdiction on the case.

f. Discussion is made around the rights of individuals whose cases are denied and what avenue they have for appeal, the number of cases received annually, and jurisdiction.

g. Commissioner L.B. inquires as to how many cases are received each year, Ms. Green reports not having that information at this time and shares that the structure of the department has changed from being fully staffed to being just the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

h. Commission Chair states that the commission may want to recommend to council that more money be budgeted to staff the department.

i. Ms. Green request that commissioners contact her via email with any question and she will compile them.

Commission Chair requests that discussion of ordinance be continued to the next meeting as Ms. Green needs to exit early. Chair calls vote—6 yeas, 0 nays and 1 not voting (absent), motion approved.
Agenda Item III. Commission Chair Sherry Carter-Allen and Commissioner Bryson request that 3rd agenda item be deferred to next meeting, all in agreement.

VI. Fair Housing Commission Proceedings (General Discussion)

A. Commissioner C.B inquires if something can be put out to the public at the upcoming job fair to inform people of their rights?

i. Commission Chair S.C.A. request that Dr. Muhammad let Commission know if this is something that can be done.

B. Commissioner D.M. expresses concern that the commission exists as currently stated in the ordinance to hear complaints, but no complaints have been heard, states that the commission needs to be more involved in hearing cases.

C. Commissioner Rev. B.R. states that it used to be that complaints would first come to the commission and the commission determined what cases would be heard by the EOO.

D. Commission Chair S.C.A shares that this why time needs to be spent going over the ordinance and presenting questions to MS. Green and Dr. Muhammad.

VII. Unfinished Business for Next Meeting

A) Corporate Council Melodi Green to return to continue discussion of the existing ordinance.

B) Commission Chair request Melodi Green’s contact information be sent to the commission Chair for questions to be submitted.

C) Commission request that Dr. Muhammad email mission statement that was drafted at the June Meeting of the then joint commission so that the Commission can review it.
VIII. Proposed Agenda Item’s for Next Meeting

A) Agenda Item III from current meeting, “Discuss Mission Statement and Goals,” to be added to next meeting agenda.

B) Further Discussion of existing Ordinance with Attorney Melodi Green.

IX. Adjournment

A) Chair Sherry Carter-Allen makes motion to adjourn the meeting; approved by 6 aye’s and 0 nay’s – 1 not voting (absent)

B) Meeting called Adjourned by Amelia Hufeld at 5:43 pm.

Submitted by: Amelia Hufeld

Minutes approved by: Name