I. Call to order

Commission Chair Sherry Carter-Allen, called to order the regular meeting of the Fair Employment Commission at 4:45 pm on 07/09/2020, meeting held electronically.

II. Roll call

Amelia Hufeld, Case Manager as City of Peoria Staff Liaison, conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Amelia Hufeld as City of Peoria staff liaison; Commissioners—Sherry Carter-Allen (Chair), David McGinty (Vice Chair), Carl Holloway, Dr. Melanie Andrews, Laraine Bryson, Pastor Chuck Brown; Arriving Late (After Roll Call) Councilwoman Denise Moore; Absent: Rev Barry Robinson; Quorum Established.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Commission Chair Sherry Carter-Allen calls for approval of the meeting minutes from the February 13, 2020 meeting and the Special Commission Meeting held on March 5, 2020. Motion to approve the minutes is made by Commissioner Laraine Bryson and seconded by Dr. Melanie Andrews. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

Commission Chair Sherry Carter-Allen request that the record show that the minutes for the meeting held 3/12/2020, will be called for approval at the August 13th, 2020 meeting.

IV. Unfinished Business

None.

V. New business

Agenda Item I. Recap and Conclusion on Employment Waiver Request.

Chair Carter-Allen provides an update to the commission that since the Special Commission Meeting on March 5th, 2020; Emily Ambrosio could terminate her employment with the city. The decision was made by the City administration to allow Ms. Ambrosio to leave the city to avoid potential furlough or layoff.

Chair Carter-Allen request that a motion be made on the record to close the case. The motion to close is made by Carl Holloway,
and 2nded by Dr. Melanie Andrews. The motion carries by unanimous vote.

Agenda Item II. Reviewing and Updating 2020 Commission Goals

No Action Taken

Agenda Item III. Review Chapter 17 Ordinance

No Action Taken

VI. Commissioner Reports

Chair Carter-Allen calls for updates from the Commission as it relates to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the effects on employment and unemployment issues in the Peoria area.

Councilwoman Moore states that a lot is going on with employment due to the current COVID pandemic both in the community and in City Hall. Councilwoman Moore shares that now more than ever the Commission will be vital. Councilwoman Moore goes on to discuss the E.R.I. (Early Retirement Incentives,) that are being offered and highlights the importance of being mindful of minority recruitment when it comes time to fill those positions again.

Chair Carter-Allen asks for input from Commissioner Laraine Bryson on youth employment and the Tri County Urban League

Commissioner Bryson shares that Tri-County Urban League was closed from March 20th-June 1st due to the COVID Pandemic. Commissioner Bryson states that since reopening the primary focus has been on the Summer Youth Employment Program, which is a program for individuals 21-24-year old’s seeking employment. Commissioner Bryson states that the program ends 8/31/2020. Commissioner Bryson shares that Peoria Public Schools is running a similar program for 16-20-year olds. Commissioner Bryson states that in addition to employment, program participants are provided with career development services, amongst others. Commissioner Bryson states that this program was created through Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth.

Chair Carter-Allen calls for an update from Dr. Melanie Andrews.

Commissioner Dr. Andrews states that “we” are in a bizarre situation in the healthcare system, in which adjustments are being made daily; including changes with telehealth, HIPAA suspensions, and furloughs and layoffs of healthcare staff despite huge demand for healthcare. Commissioner Andrews goes on to state that some of these changes may affect things long term and have led to graduates being
provided different career advice, and the prospect that thanks to the improvements and accessibility of telehealth fewer staff may be needed in the office. Commissioner Andrews also touches on the concern for mental health as it relates to children returning, or not returning to school in the fall.

Chair Carter-Allen states that she believes that society is experiencing a paradigm shift as it pertains to healthcare workers being laid-off and furloughed during a health crisis.

Commissioner Andrews goes on to state that new attention is being drawn to issues of systemic racism as the disparity of effects from COVID-19 are seen in different racial and ethnic populations. In addition, to highlighting the need to fix issues due to disparity in the healthcare system.

Chair Carter-Allen thanks Dr. Andrews for her input, and request that Commission Vice Chair McGinty give an update.

Vice Chair McGinty states that currently at SC2 they are seeing an increased need for hiring, as the supply chain is an essential business. Vice Chair McGinty states that he feels that low income people should take advantage of the opportunity to get those jobs; as the demand in the supply chain is high for now but will likely be going down in the future.

Chair Carter-Allen states that it is apparent from the comments so far that Peoria is certainly impacted in many ways by the Pandemic.

Chair Carter-Allen request an update from Commissioner Pastor Chuck Brown.

Commissioner Brown shares that he has spoken with employers, and that while jobs are available most of them are low income right now.

Commissioner Brown shares that the pandemic has made it difficult for them to hold the typical job fairs that are traditionally held. Commissioner Brown states that they are currently looking into some virtual and/or outdoor options for Job Fairs, perhaps taking people by appointment, etc. Commissioner Brown highlights the importance of being responsible with health and safety while still providing some resources to the community.

Chair Carter-Allen calls for an update from Commissioner Carl Holloway.

Commissioner Holloway states that early in the pandemic, during the month of March he was doing more and more home visits, etc. to keep youth on track during the unusual time. Commissioner Holloway states that he was however laid off from Peoria Public Schools on May 22nd. Commissioner Holloway shares that
has been doing some work at the Carver Center starting a new program for young people there, of which 32 have already signed up. In addition, Commissioner Holloway shares that he was called by Peoria Public Schools to assist with their Summer Youth Employment program.

Chair Carter-Allen thanks Commissioner Holloway for this update

Commissioner Holloway inquires if Councilwoman Moore could facilitate some connection with the new head of the Greater Peoria Chamber of Commerce.

Chair Carter-Allen agrees it would be good to have the new Head of the Greater Peoria Chamber of Commerce come to a future commission meeting. Councilwoman Moore agrees to follow-up to get something set up for an upcoming meeting.

Chair Carter-Allen shares that she would like to have Debra Bush, with the City of Peoria’s HR department come to the August meeting to discuss minority recruitment.

Chair Carter-Allen request that a motion be made to have Debra Bush attend the next meeting, Motion made by Commissioner Holloway, and 2nded by Commissioner Brown. The motion carries by a unanimous vote.

VII. Unfinished Business for Next Meeting

None.

VIII. Community Input

None.

IX. Proposed Agenda Item’s for Next Meeting

1. Presentation on the City of Peoria’s Minority Recruitment Efforts by Debra Bush from the City of Peoria’s HR Department.

2. Review and Update Chapter 17 Ordinance.

X. Adjournment

Commission Chair Sherry Carter-Allen called for a motion to adjourn at 5:37pm. Motion made by Commissioner Laraine Bryson, and seconded by Commissioner Chuck Brown.

Meeting Adjourned.
Submitted by Amelia Hufeld

Minutes approved by: Name