
CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Civil Rights Board
Wednesday, June 5, 2024 – 5:00 p.m. • City Commission Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Madison Lukeman, Sandra Calderon, Pamela Burpee, and Cathy Phason

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sharda Sims (Excused) and Commissioner Hoffman (Excused)

Ex-Officio Members: Tanya Hewitt-Smith and Commissioner Hoffman

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Marcia Jones (Assistant City Attorney), Lal Tluangi (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coordinator).

The Civil Rights Board meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Chair Phason.

Agenda: Vice-Chair Lukeman motioned to approve the agenda. Director Burpee seconded the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

Minutes: Vice-chair Lukeman motioned to approve minutes from April 3rd, 2024, supported by Director Burpee. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Public Announcements and Communications: None

New Business:

Addition of expanding Civil Rights Board Applicants – Chair Phason stated that this agenda item was included to discuss the potential of expanding CRB applicants to not include just city residents as the board has had vacant seats for awhile. The board discussed the potential of what limitations would be in place, if the limit would be expanding the application pool to Kalamazoo residents, or opening a third seat to include an applicant that has vested interest in the city (ex. Employment). Both Chair Phason and Vice-Chair Lukeman made it clear that City residents should still make up the majority of the board and that bylaw changes should coincide with ordinance edits. Director Calderon brought up the board meeting bimonthly which can slow down approval process of the ordinance and DEI Director Tanya clarified that the board can call a special meeting when needed. Chair Phason reminded the board that this is just a discussion not a vote, it is something for the board to ponder.

Edited Ordinance Discussion – Chair Phason thanked Attorney Jones for her prior edits to the voucher portion of the ordinance and the subcommittee members for their hard work. Chair Cathy began the discussion going over each change of the ordinance. Vice-Chair Lukeman noted that the source of income section was edited with the intention to remove the word money and replace it with funding and that vocabulary should be used throughout the ordinance. Director Calderon also noted that many of edits were word changes to assist in destigmatizing them such as changing victim to survivor in the ordinance. Chair Phason shared she inquired into providing the public with the edited ordinance draft for community input and requested Attorney Jones explain the process. Attorney Jones clarified that inputs from the community will be available during the first reading of the City Commission. Chair Phason thanked the subcommittee for their hard work.

- Chair Phason made a motion to approve the draft ordinance to be sent to the City Attorney's office for review. Vice-Chair Lukeman seconded the motion. Draft Ordinance approved by unanimous vote.

Public Comments:

Lewis Smith – Thanked the subcommittee for all their work. Stated that he is excited for the education portion and hopes that the education piece included books or written materials for community members to view.

Tobi Hanna-Davis (ISAAC) – Thanked the board for their continued work and getting the ordinance through. She stated that it would be appropriate for the board to include applicants from local municipalities and those that are heavily vested in the interest of the city. She went on to say that local townships have an interconnected relationship with the city.

Miscellaneous Board Comments: Chair Phason, Vice-Chair Lukeman, Director Calderon and Burpee all thanked the subcommittee and everyone who was involved in the ordinance edits along with DEI staff members and Attorney Jones. Chair Phason went on to thank ISAAC for being apart of the Fair Housing process and stated that the board will take opening up board seats and the educational material suggestions into consideration.

Closing Comments: None

Next Meeting: August 7th, 2024, at 5:00 pm

ADJOURNMENT: 5:37 pm

Lal Tluangi, Recording Secretary
Tanya Hewitt-Smith, Staff Liaison
Stephanie Hoffman, City Commission Liaison
Cathy Phason, Chair