

REGULAR meeting of the Board of Equal Rights Commission held Wednesday, January 18, 2012 in room 301-A of City Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Roman, Chair  
Linda Reaves, Vice-Chair  
Leslie LaBonte  
Mayhoua Moua

EXCUSED: Jay Botsford

Staff: Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director

Excused: Marynell Regan, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Roman called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the October 5, 2011, Equal Rights Commission meeting were approved.  
(LaBonte/Moua)

### **Agenda Item #2**

#### **Welcome New Commissioner and Introduction**

This agenda item is held over as Commissioner Botsford was excused.

### **Agenda Item #3**

#### **Briefing from Rose Daitsman, Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network**

Ms. Daitsman provided the Commissioners with handouts related to her presentation prior to the meeting and referenced those documents during her presentation. She began with an overview of the history of human rights issues in the United States and the formation of the United Nations and three human rights treaties. Ms. Daitsman presented the Commissioners with a framed poster of the "Declaration of Human Rights", on behalf of the Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network (GMHRN). She then discussed the formation of the GMHRN and provided suggestions to the ERC on how the two agencies could work together toward common goals.

Chairperson Roman thanked Ms. Daitsman for her lifelong work in the area of human rights and for her presentation to the ERC and asked that the record reflect the

presentation from Ms. Daitsman on behalf of the Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network.

Ms. Daitsman stated that she would like the poster to be displayed and utilized as a learning tool. She added that the GMHRN is also planning a training session related to the human rights treaties called "Is Race Real". The training is planned for some time in spring and Ms. Daitsman stated that she would notify the ERC as soon as everything is finalized.

Chairperson Roman asked for questions/comments from Commissioners. Hearing none, he again thanked Ms. Daitsman and the Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network.

**NOTE: Ms. Daitsman's briefing is provided in its' entirety at the end of this document.**

#### **Agenda Item #4**

##### **Committee Assignments and Meeting Dates**

Ms. Monteagudo discussed how the work of the ERC could and should be accomplished via Committees and that there seemed to be a natural distinction of what those committees could be. Members expressed interest to serve on Committees and appointments with meeting date are as follows:

##### **Accountability Committee**

###### ***Commissioners Roman and LaBonte—Meeting on 02/01/2012 @ 3:30 pm***

Charged with identifying the extent to which departmental programs and services are designed and delivered in a manner consistent with the equal rights objectives of Chapter 109.

##### **Community and Neighborhood Engagement Committee**

###### ***Commissioners Reaves and Moua—Meeting on 02/08/2012 @ 3:30 pm***

Charged with identifying ways to establish and maintain collaborative relationships with community organizations to promote and support equal rights initiatives and educate and inform the residents of their rights and responsibilities under the law.

The next meeting of the ERC is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 29, 2012.

There being no further business, Chairperson Roman adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m. (LaBonte/Moua)

**Presentation of  
The Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network to  
City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission  
By Rose Daitsman  
January 18, 2012**

**I just came from a meeting where people spoke about how little faith they had that the city would promote Human Rights and Civil Rights. They told about how city contractors disregard city ordinances in hiring practices. They expressed dismay about the money spent by the city for studies on disparities in employment and procurement practices and yet had no money to spend for viable solutions to these problems. They were speaking not only about individual complaints but about the ongoing practices which produced these complaints. There is a crisis of faith in local government in Milwaukee.**

**Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today. I commend you for your generosity of spirit and your commitment to the people of Milwaukee by giving of your time and energy without pay and with meager resources to promote social and economic equity in the city of Milwaukee. This is truly a daunting task and I hope the future will bring to the Commission the resources necessary to carry out its mission. I also would like to honor the previous commission who recently retired.**

**My strong feelings about Human Rights originated 60 years ago during the Hitler era. At the end of World War II, there were two great fears of humanity – one was Fascism and the consequent Holocaust and the other was nuclear annihilation.**

**Fascism under the National Socialists of Germany meant complete subservience to the state, sacrifice and military strength. They came to power with heavy support from Big Business because they vowed to destroy trade unions. For some, it was considered a business man's "paradise" without strikes, labor parties, trade unions and other organizations. Only organizations sponsored by the state were permitted. The war economy which used slave labor made some businesses more successful than others. Politics consisted of friend – enemy relations with the opposition. No compromise was possible. Civil Liberties and Human Rights were non-existent.**

**The United Nations was formed to ensure that such a system would not rise again. To this end, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted and the United States Government signed on to it in 1948. In addition, various Human Rights Treaties have been signed and ratified by the nations of the world.**

**The United States is a party to three of these treaties:**

- **For Civil and Political Rights: It stipulates that no individual can be subjected to torture, enslavement, forced labor and arbitrary detention or be restricted from freedom of movement , expression and association**
- **Against Torture: It intends to eliminate torture and cruel and inhuman punishment.**
- **For the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: It prohibits any discrimination against persons on the basis of race, color or national origin.**

**All treaties are the law of the land under the U. S. Constitution. The Treaty on Ending Discrimination requires that the government submit periodic reports on enforcement of this treaty.**

**We are pleased to present to the City of Milwaukee this poster depicting the Three Human Rights Treaties of the United Nations signed and ratified by the US government which are now considered to be US Law. The poster describes the basic rights of people and the duties of the government under the treaty. We encourage the Commission to educate the city government – the common council and the administration - about these treaties and their responsibilities.**

**The Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network (GMHRN) was formed at a Human Rights Round Table at the Black Holocaust Museum in 2006.**

*The Mission of the Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network is to promote an understanding of human rights and to promote local actions that address social issues in Milwaukee within a human rights framework. This is to be accomplished through linkages between the community and the City of Milwaukee's Equal Rights Commission and through training and education of activist community groups.*

*The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King once said, "True compassion is more than throwing a coin to a beggar. It demands of our humanity that if we live in a society that produces beggars, we are morally commanded to restructure that society".*

**We expect the ERC to:**

- 1) Educate the community on issues of discrimination and cultural diversity;**

**2) Periodically assess the extent to which the human rights of the citizens of Milwaukee are adequately and satisfactorily protected and recommend necessary remedies.**

**We believe that the ERC should be creative about what changes could be made to enable all the people of the city to live with dignity and responsibility.**

**We respectfully request that the Equal Rights Commission look into the following:**

- **Number of cases of discrimination and their disposition that are handled by City County State and National offices.**
- **Number of complaints received by the city with respect to compliance with Civil Rights Law**
- **Approval of the audit request from the NAACP about whether city practices are in compliance with Civil Rights Law.**

**The following are ways in which the Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network could work with the Commission:**

**The Greater Milwaukee Human Rights Network could partner with the ERC and the Mayor's Committee on the United Nations to arrange a celebration of Human Rights Day December 10, 2012 to educate the community about Human Rights Treaty obligations at the local level.**

**We could assist the Commission to identify resources for research and consultation such as:**

- **International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHA) which can provide access to research of University Human Rights Institutes.**
- **Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute which can provide a poster describing the three Human Rights treaties that would be useful for educating city administrators and the general public.**
- **Information about the California Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 129—Relative to international treaties which relates to city government reports on treaty implementation.**
- **Identifying student interns for specific research projects.**

**/**  
**A student intern from Marquette University working for the GMHRN completed a Report on Racial Disparities in Housing, Employment and Criminal Justice in Milwaukee for review by the United Nations.**

**We could assist the Commission to arrange open hearings in the community through our network of organizations to relate to their concerns about:**

- **Human trafficking exacerbated by homelessness, unemployment and the vulnerability of children separated from parents who are incarcerated.**
- **Underutilization by the city of businesses operated by minorities and women despite city ordinances.**

- **Racial Disparities in Employment in Milwaukee**
- **Compliance with Human Rights Treaties**
- **Poverty**
- **Penalizing parents of sick children for staying home to care for them.**
- **Requiring people who handle food to work although sick.**

**The Equal Rights Commission can serve as the conscience of the community!**

REGULAR meeting of the Board of Equal Rights Commission held Wednesday, March 21, 2012 in room 301-A of City Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Roman, Chair  
Linda Reaves, Vice-Chair  
Leslie LaBonte  
Mayhoua Moua

EXCUSED: Jay Botsford

Staff: Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director

Excused: Rebecca Reyes Duke, HR Compliance Officer  
Marynell Regan, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Roman called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the January 18, 2012, Equal Rights Commission meeting were approved.  
(LaBonte/Moua)

### **Agenda Item #2**

#### **Welcome New Commissioner and Introduction**

This agenda item is held over as Commissioner Botsford was excused.

### **Agenda Item #3 & #4**

#### **Briefing from Donald Sykes, Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board And Briefing from Myra Edwards, Mayor's Office**

Mr. Sykes began with a brief history/overview of the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB). He stated that the WIB receives federal funds to primarily provide residents with job training, job search assistance, and work-readiness. It was reorganized with Milwaukee's mayor as its chief local elected official in 2007. The mayor now appoints WIB members and its CEO, who serves on the mayor's cabinet. Prior to 2007, it was under the direction of the Milwaukee County Executive and was known as the Private Industry Council.

The Workforce Investment Board was set up as a part of national legislation not to be a service-agency but rather be a partnership between government and business that plans, administers and coordinates employment and training programs for adults and youth in Milwaukee County. MAWIB accomplishes this through the One-Stop system which are career centers that work with partner agencies to provide employment, training and educational services. In the Milwaukee area, there are three such centers. On the north side at the YWCA on MLK Drive; on the south side UMOS on Chase Avenue, and on the West Side, Maximus near 70<sup>th</sup> and Greenfield. In addition to these One-Stops, our headquarters is located at 27<sup>th</sup> and North Avenue. Funding for these programs is divided into three categories of adults, youth and dislocated workers with each category receiving approximately \$3 million in funding.

### **Current Key Initiatives**

Mr. Sykes explained that in addition to the One Stops, MAWIB has “sector programs” that bring together industries and companies with similar interests. National best practices demonstrate that targeting workforce efforts to meet identified industry sectors more efficiently provide access to job seekers and promote an understanding of the skill sets and competencies that are essential to educate and train a competitive workforce. The MAWIB has an overall sector focus on: green jobs, advanced manufacturing and a detailed focus on the healthcare and hospitality industry.

Mr. Sykes stated that the focus on the healthcare industry has resulted in the opening of the Healthcare Training Institute which is a one-stop career center that provides jobseekers and employers access to services and information targeted to their specific needs. The training institute is located in the central city and provides targeted training and education in the healthcare field, healthcare employment services and a wide range of supportive services. For employers, it provides a centralized approach to employer engagement and centralized access to resources that support employer-based trainings. Other initiatives include a sector-wide partnership that brings together healthcare providers, technical colleges and economic development agencies and University of Wisconsin Institutions focused on helping workers obtain certifications for advancement in the healthcare industry. Mr. Sykes stated that getting workers certified provides them with a set of transferrable skills that gives them more opportunities to grow and prosper in the field of healthcare.

Mr. Sykes stated that the MAWIB’s other focused sector is the retail, hospitality, and tourism industry. “Career Works” is based upon the same model as the Healthcare Training Institute in that it partners with Bayshore Towne Center and provides a Job Resources Room and hosts Customer Information Specialist training. Career Works is located in the Bayshore Towne Center and partners with them to unite job seekers in the retail and hospitality industry with job openings and industry recognized skills certification.

In addition to these sectors, Mr. Sykes spoke about some other important core sectors of MAWIB including the Windows-To-Work program. He stated that every year, approximately 4,000 men and women are released from prison and return to the Milwaukee area. The program targets inmates in the Oshkosh and Racine Correctional Institutions prior to their release. The program integrates critical reentry supports including risk assessment tools, cohesive and comprehensive pre and post release case

planning activities, a six-month transition planning process, post-release community supervision and housing, health, mental health, AODA, family and victim services in the community. A career assessment and reporting system is used to identify offender's strengths and interests and the need for continuing vocational education. In addition, financial literacy, housing competencies, conflict resolution, stress management and problem solving instruction is provided to build the ability to reintegrate successfully.

Mr. Sykes then spoke about Milwaukee Builds, which is a take-off of the Youth Build program (ages 16-24), and is geared towards the large population of unemployed minority adult males in the Milwaukee area. Milwaukee Builds is funded partially through a grant from the City of Milwaukee that funds the salaries of participants and through MAWIB funds that support the training portion. The Milwaukee Builds program links adults to transitional employment with hands-on training and education/skills training focused on moving participants into sustainable jobs in the construction field. Milwaukee Builds partners include the MAWIB, the Milwaukee Christian Center, Milwaukee Community Service Corps, Northcott Neighborhood House, Esperanza Unida and the Wisconsin Regional Training Program/BIG STEP. Key supporting partners to the project are Milwaukee Area Technical College, Housing Authority City of Milwaukee and the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Grants Administration.

### **Youth Programs**

Mr. Sykes stated that MAWIB runs the largest summer and year round youth employment program in the State of Wisconsin in collaboration with Mayor Barrett's Earn & Learn program which places youth in community based organizations and private businesses. The program provides an opportunity for Milwaukee youth to earn money while developing job skills and explore career possibilities. Mr. Sykes added that approximately one-third of MAWIB funding is used to support youth programs and supports anywhere from 1,000 to over 3,000 youths depending upon the amount of funding received. Because funding has been reduced over the past few years, Mayor Barrett put forth special effort towards raising money from private organizations and corporations to help support the Summer Earn & Learn program. In its' first year, nearly \$332,000 was raised. Mr. Sykes said that with limited federal funds available for this year, it is imperative that additional funds are raised or the program could be jeopardized. Without this type of program available to our youth, he anticipates a lot more problems involving youth this upcoming summer if we can't find constructive activities for the kids to participate in.

Ms. Monteagudo inquired as to what agencies need to do in order to receive funding from MAWIB.

Mr. Sykes responded that the only funding given to agencies through the wide-open Request for Proposal (RFP) process is for youth related programs. All of the adult programs have long-term contracts with particular entities such as the One Stop agencies. For agencies to participate in the summer youth Earn & Learn program, a minimum standard of fiscal soundness and proof of adequate insurance is required. Agencies that apply and meet these standards will be reviewed against the following criteria:

- 1) Organizational Description
- 2) Demonstrated past performance working with youth
- 3) Quality of the proposed youth work experience

- 4) Ability to incorporate High Growth/High Demand Skills Sets
- 5) Program Supervision

Mr. Sykes stated that in addition to the criteria listed above, reviewers from the Mayor's Office and the MAWIB will take into consideration the historical performance of applicants with past experience as subsidized-employment worksites. All RFP respondents providing satisfactory proof of fiscal and programmatic criteria will be considered for available worksite slots. The equitable distribution of work-experience opportunities across the geographic area served, as well as the total funding available, will dictate how slots are assigned.

Ms. Monteagudo asked who actually hires the kids that are accepted into the program.

Mr. Sykes responded that Myra Edwards is the liaison between the MAWIB and the Mayor's Office. He stated that the Mayor makes the initial pitch for the program, but it is Ms. Edwards who handles all of the organization and follow-up, including hiring the kids for the Earn & Learn program.

Myra Edwards of the Mayor's Office joined in the briefing stating that she wanted to emphasize how well the MAWIB, under Mr. Sykes leadership, leverages relationships, resulting in programs such as Milwaukee Builds and the Urban Forestry Project. We have taken these relationships and funding streams and have leveraged them in a way that expands the possibilities and maximizes their impact on the community.

Ms. Monteagudo and Commissioner Moua both asked how the availability of these programs is communicated to potential participants in the community.

Mr. Sykes responded that it is the One Stops that provide the information and that many participants hear about the One Stops from other community agencies or from other participants. He stated that if there is a concern that not enough people know about these programs, keep in mind that approximately 7,000 youth applied for the Earn & Learn program with room for only about ½ of that number. He stated that he does not want to "oversell" what cannot be delivered.

Commissioner LaBonte then asked about the issue of transportation as it relates to getting workers across county lines, from Milwaukee to the outlying areas, where many of the jobs are located.

Mr. Sykes stated that this has always been an issue, particularly for Milwaukee's inner city population who depend heavily on public transportation. He stated that the MAWIB has funding from the Wisconsin Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP). This program is operated through the Milwaukee Careers Cooperative and provides transportation within a 45-mile radius of the City of Milwaukee. Another strategy that we have is to bring more jobs to the city so that we don't have to worry about transportation.

A brief discussion was then held regarding the outsourcing of many manufacturing jobs to other countries and how it relates to capitalism versus utilitarianism in the corporate world. Mr. Sykes discussed the desire of today's companies to have workers come in the door already possessing the needed skills to do the job as opposed to the past when companies would train their own workers. He added that the type of skills needed has

changed to focus on a more technologically skilled workforce in a global economy and there is a need to prepare our workforce more efficiently.

Commissioner LaBonte asked Mr. Sykes if he foresees an opportunity to tap into the engagement efforts of the ERC to work with groups across the city, and identify opportunities to partner with agencies that are not currently a part of the One Stop programs.

Mr. Sykes responded that when he began working with the MAWIB, he first identified funding sources and then formed a Coordinating Council that includes our major public funders and deliverers of workforce services for the purpose of:

- Identifying ways to better coordinate existing public sources;
- Identifying barriers to collaboration and needed policy changes;
- Seeking additional resources for workforce development.

Mr. Sykes added that this year the Council is focusing on engaging the business community in a more direct manner. This means publicizing more and funding the addition of a public relations staff.

Ms. Monteagudo asked how a dislocated worker that comes from a small business setting, a “mom & pop shop” for example, find out about the opportunities available to them through the One Stops.

Mr. Sykes responded that when a larger company is going to lay off employees, they must notify the State, who in turn, notifies the MAWIB, who in turn contacts the employer and offers to meet with the affected employees. This does not happen with a small “mom & pop” shop. He stated that to address this problem, he sends his staff out to meet with area business associations and provide them with information so they can share it with smaller business owners who in turn can inform their affected employees how to access the programs available to them. He stated that in addition to his staff making direct contact, staff from the One Stops also go into neighborhoods to access these smaller businesses and inform them of the availability of their programs.

Chairperson Roman asked Mr. Sykes how the ERC can assist the MAWIB in getting the word out about these programs allowing more people to benefit from these services.

Mr. Sykes said that he would need to think about it a bit, but initially, he would ask who are the Equal Rights Commission’s community links and contacts and would then flood those connections with information.

Commissioner Reaves responded that the ERC is currently in the process of establishing those links and contacts.

Mr. Sykes responded that once the ERC has established those contacts, the MAWIB’s public relations person would be able to work with the Commission on a collaborative effort.

Commission LaBonte asked Mr. Sykes about how new entities are brought into the Coordinating Council and a brief discussion was held regarding that process and the responsibility and ongoing evolution of the Council as a whole.

Ms. Monteagudo then asked Mr. Sykes again about creating a link between the ERC and the MAWIB. She referred back to the issue of the estimated 4,000 individuals re-entering the general population after incarceration and what, if anything, needs to be done with the employers that are not willing to employ these individuals.

Mr. Sykes stated that the discrimination surrounding re-entry is enormous. He said the business community needs to be educated on employing the people who are here as opposed to who they would like to hire. He said that recently, a State official was holding recruiting meetings in Waukesha and Washington counties regarding manufacturing jobs that are located in Milwaukee. What he heard from business leaders at these meetings is that ex-offenders "don't want to come to work" or "don't want to do XYZ". Mr. Sykes said that when he asked for personal experiences in working with ex-offenders, he found that there wasn't any first-hand experience, but rather it was hearsay. He said that the first thing we need to do is educate these businesses on re-entry employment. Secondly, he would like to reach out to companies who have had good experience with re-entry employment and utilize them as examples of success in this area. Mr. Sykes used Milwaukee Gears as an example of an employer took the risk and was pleased with the result and is trying to get the owner on board as an example of how successful re-entry employment can be.

Ms. Edwards stated that Wisconsin Community Services and Word of Hope Ministries both have pretty good track records in dealing with the re-entry population. She added that S.B. 207, which would allow employers to refuse to employ an individual based upon their conviction record, may be an opportunity for the ERC to become involved.

Chairperson Roman added that the MAWIB already has a working model in place, referring to the Coordinating Council and its' purpose, and that it may be possible for the ERC to work with Mr. Sykes in replicating something similar to that but for the purpose of educating businesses on re-entry employment.

Mr. Sykes replied that it would be good to have the ERC attend a Coordinating Council meeting in the near future. He said that the Council members are at a point where they are willing to address the issue of re-entry employment.

Ms. Monteagudo stated that in her experience, one of the barriers to re-entry employment is the applicants themselves. She said that some are so afraid of what will happen if they list their conviction record on the application that they just don't put anything down. This makes it very easy for employers to legally eliminate these applicants from consideration due to either falsification of the application or failure to provide required information. Had they listed their convictions, the employer would have had to defend a rejection based upon Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

Chairperson Roman stated that the issues of re-entry employment, in addition to many other areas that Mr. Sykes discussed, provide opportunities for the ERC to work with the MAWIB and build a partnership to address the issues at hand.

Ms. Monteagudo added that once the MAWIB has their new public relations person in place, the ERC's Community Engagement Committee could work with that person on building this partnership and address the opportunities that were discussed today as well as identify new opportunities to work together.

Mr. Sykes stated that he did have a list of issues to discuss today and covered most with the exception of driver's license recovery and pre-employment drug testing. He said that these are also barriers to employment and may be another opportunity for MAWIB to address with the ERC. He said that once he has his public relations staff onboard, further discussions could take place.

Chairperson Roman asked if there were any other questions or comments. Hearing none, he and the Commissioners thanked Mr. Sykes for his presentation. He then moved to Ms. Edwards briefing from the Mayor's Office.

Ms. Edwards stated that she had just a few areas to cover as much of her briefing was covered in the combined discussion with Mr. Sykes around the Mayor's Earn & Learn Summer Youth Program, one of which is funding. This program is made up of three components; community work experience, summer youth internship, and private-sector job connection. She said that last year, in an effort to address the dwindling funds for the community work experience component, Mayor Barrett began soliciting funds from corporate entities. Last year, his efforts resulted in gaining an additional \$332,000 to fund this component. She stated that his efforts in this area are continuing this year and have already resulted in over \$100,000 being contributed to date. In addition to getting monetary support, the Mayor has established a "Corporate Lead Team" made up of leaders in the corporate community, who are also making calls to their peers in an effort to raise money to support this program. In addition to the Mayor's efforts, the program also receives funds from the State of Wisconsin and from the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) although, these funds are not always guaranteed. She said that in championing this program, the Mayor's message has been that we all have a moral obligation to the youth of this community. She said that this message is resonating with the corporate community and many have stepped up and gone above and beyond in their efforts to provide young people with an amazing work experience that they can take with them moving forward. Johnson Controls, Palermo's Pizza and the Business Journal, to name a few, are reaching out to other employers and encouraging them to become involved in this program through radio and newspaper advertising. The more employers that are involved, the more youth that are off the streets this summer and have something constructive to do. Ms. Edwards said that in preparing for this briefing, she read a portion of the ERC's mission that relates to addressing economic equity in the City of Milwaukee. The Mayor's Summer Youth Earn & Learn Program, and the efforts of these corporations, is a starting point to address the issue of economic equity.

Commissioner LaBonte commented that for these corporations, like Johnson Controls, that have been models for the Earn & Learn Program, it may be possible for the ERC to provide some type of recognition for their efforts.

Ms. Edwards agreed stating that some level of recognition is always great in building relationships. Ms. Edwards then touched on a few other components of the program that are geared to attracting more employers including a job hotline, radio airtime and full-page print ads—all funded/donated by corporate partners.

Chairperson Roman asked Ms. Edwards if she has any specific ideas on how the ERC can help move this program forward.

Ms. Edwards responded that, as was previously suggested, it would be great if the ERC could provide some type of commendation to those corporations that have done great things with the program. She added that in retrospect, there would have been an opportunity for the ERC to weigh in on S.B. 207, relating to job applicants' conviction records. She said there is an opportunity to stay focused on economic equity, specifically identifying affected groups such as the re-entry population. Finally, she said that MPS recently formed seven committees charged with addressing the issue of school safety which provides an opportunity for a member or members of the ERC to be appointed to one of those committees. This would provide an obvious connection between the ERC, the Mayor and the work that needs to be done in our schools.

Chairperson Roman thanked Ms. Edwards for the great opportunities she identified and added that the ERC would discuss a potential appointee to the school safety committees. He asked for any other questions/comments. Hearing none, he moved on to the next agenda item.

#### **Agenda Item #5**

#### **Committee Reports**

This agenda item was held over until the next ERC meeting.

#### **Agenda Item #6**

#### **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the ERC is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9, 2012 in room 301-A of City Hall.

There being no further business, Chairperson Roman adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m. (Moua/Reaves)

REGULAR meeting of the Board of Equal Rights Commission held Wednesday, May 9, 2012 in room 301-A of City Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Roman, Chair  
Linda Reaves, Vice-Chair  
Leslie LaBonte  
Mayhoua Moua

EXCUSED: Jay Botsford

Staff: Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director  
Rebecca Reyes Duke, HR Compliance Officer

Excused: MaryNell Regan, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Roman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the March 21, 2012, Equal Rights Commission meeting were approved.  
(LaBonte/Moua)

### **Agenda Item #2**

#### **Briefing from Lonnie Anderson, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS)**

*(Due to a technical glitch, this is a very condensed version of Mr. Anderson's full presentation)*

Mr. Anderson's briefing focused on the MPS Office of Family Services and the initiatives of this office to assist the families of the nearly 80,000 students attending Milwaukee Public School. Their mission is to "Educate, Inform, and Empower" MPS families as they are the primary stakeholder's in the lives of their children. The goal of this office is to increase parent/family participation in the success of their children, reduce risk factors that may impede success, build strong partnerships and promote good citizenship in and out of school. This is accomplished in part through partnerships with non-sector and faith-based organizations in an effort to leverage resources and achieve common goals. Mr. Anderson stated that a new program currently in development is called Parent University that will assist parents in supporting their children to achieve academic success. The University will provide opportunities for parents to collaborate with schools and the District to fully participate in their child's education. The curriculum design will accelerate student and parent learning outcomes and strengthen parenting skills and knowledge. Mr. Anderson stated that Parent University will provide opportunities and support for parents to achieve their personal academic and non-academic goals through classes and workshops.

Ms. Monteagudo stated that the Parent University may provide an opportunity to foster a partnership with the ERC in an effort to educate parents on issues relating to equal rights.

Mr. Anderson agreed and stated that because this program is currently in the primary stages of development, it may benefit the ERC to have a follow-up meeting in the near future with the Office of Family Services Executive Director, Patricia Gill.

Chairperson Roman agreed and said that the Commissioners would make this an item for follow-up at the next Community & Neighborhood Engagement Committee Meeting. He then asked for any further questions and/or comments for Mr. Anderson. Hearing none, he and the other Commissioners and Staff thanked Mr. Anderson for his briefing before moving on to the next agenda item.

### **Agenda Item #3**

#### **Committee Reports**

The agenda item will be held over until the next regularly scheduled ERC meeting.

### **Agenda Item #4**

#### **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting date will be scheduled following the appointment of a new ERC Commissioner.

There being no further business, Chairperson Roman adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m. (LaBonte/Moua)

REGULAR meeting of the Board of Equal Rights Commission held Wednesday, August 1, 2012 in room 301-A of City Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Roman, Chair  
Linda Reaves, Vice-Chair  
Mayhoua Moua  
Chez Ordonez

Staff: Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director  
Rebecca Reyes Duke, HR Compliance Officer

Excused: MaryNell Regan, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Roman called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the May 9, 2012, Equal Rights Commission meeting were approved.  
(Moua/Ordonez)

### **Agenda Item #2**

#### **Briefing from Clarence Johnson-Wisconsin Community Services (WCS)**

Mr. Johnson, who serves as the Deputy Executive Director of WCS, began with an overview of the core programs and services that his agency provides. He said that WCS was established 100 years ago and began as a "Friend of the Friendless" agency that worked primarily with the re-entry population. It has grown over the years and expanded its' core services to include Behavioral Health Services; Court Services and Community Alternatives; Residential Re-Entry Services; Policy and Workforce Development; and Youth Services including Excel High School and Holton Youth and Family Center. Program services are provided at the WCS Employment and Training Center located at 37<sup>th</sup> and Wisconsin Avenue, the Day Reporting Center in Waukesha, and at the Downtown MATC Campus. Services include immediate employment attachment assistance and long-term career planning; computer literacy; sector-specific technical training; and support services to ensure long-term employment retention.

All of these services/programs are focused on providing "at risk" individuals with the resources and training needed to overcome whatever adversity has touched their lives.

Mr. Johnson stated that part of their re-entry clientele come from the Residential Re-entry Services Division that consists of five halfway houses and two rooming houses. The goal of the halfway houses is to assist in the successful community reintegration of men and women coming out of incarceration. The hope is that individuals will be able to develop the necessary skills to achieve an independent, pro-social approach to life and that they will return to the community to live a drug-free lifestyle and to participate as a crime-free

neighborhood resident. Each halfway house provides 24-hours per day supervision and the following services as needed by residents: AODA treatment, employment assistance, parenting and fatherhood classes, individual and group counseling, anger management, cognitive intervention groups and living skills. Both WCS rooming houses serve men with mental health and/or AODA issues providing safe, affordable shelter in a supportive environment.

In addition to the re-entry clientele at the halfway houses WCS also contracts with the Department of Corrections (DOC) whereas they send job seekers to attend employment readiness classes that teach soft skills (getting along with coworkers, getting to work on time, getting along with their supervisor, etc.); attend a "criminal background primer" class that focuses on not avoiding their past but acknowledging their mistakes and how to show/convince an employer that he/she is a good applicant; and learn how to conduct a structured job search. Mr. Johnson said that overall, WCS clients come from three pathways; halfway houses, the DOC and walk-ins.

Mr. Johnson stated the WCS Employment and Training Services programming helps high risk residents secure decent jobs and live crime-free lives through vocational training, employment skills training, job placement and job retention. A new addition to the Employment and Training Services program is the Green Trades Training Program (GTTP). Graduates of the program receive a nationally recognized certification (Pre-Apprenticeship Certification (PACT) and OSHA 10 workplace safety credentials. Participants, most of whom are re-entering the workforce after incarceration, learn general construction skills and how to apply these skills in an actual deconstruction setting. WCS then works to place graduates into full-time unsubsidized employment in construction or a related field. Mr. Johnson said that this is a 6-week program that has an intensive screening process as they are looking for those that show great skill and enthusiasm in the program.

Ms. Monteagudo asked about the WCS success rate with clientele in this type of program.

Mr. Johnson said that it is difficult to track their clients after they leave the program, but that his Employer Advisory Group would like them to come up with ideas on how to accomplish that.

Commissioner Reaves asked what the wages are for participants.

Mr. Johnson responded \$8.25/hour.

Commissioner Ordonez asked if WCS had additional funding, would they consider accepting the disenfranchised as well as ex-offenders.

Mr. Johnson replied that WCS already accepts those that are "at risk" for offending.

Commissioner Roman asked about the demographics of WCS's clientele.

Mr. Johnson stated that their clientele is 97% African American males, ages 20-39.

Commissioner Roman followed up by asking if Mr. Johnson knew of any other agencies that work specifically with the re-entry population.

Mr. Johnson replied, the YMCA, UMOS, Northcott Neighborhood House, Word of Hope Ministries and Goodwill Industries, to name a few.

Some additional question and answer discussion was had regarding WCS programming before Ms. Monteagudo asked Mr. Johnson if there was anything more that the city could do to assist WCS in carrying out their mission.

Mr. Johnson replied that WCS is holding a "53208" Community Resource Fair on September 19<sup>th</sup> from 10-2. He said it would be great if the city would be willing to have a representative there to inform participants about employment opportunities with the City of Milwaukee.

Ms. Monteagudo asked Mr. Johnson to give her the information and let her know what areas of the city that he thought would be important to have there and she would make it happen. She followed up by saying that the city's hiring process is under civil service rules so you have to compete and participate in this extensive process, which may not appeal to some of WCS's clients; however, she added, the city also has seasonal positions that can be filled through a 90-day temporary appointment that could provide exposure to "real world" work experience. Ms. Monteagudo asked Mr. Johnson if he thought there might be an opportunity here to partner.

Mr. Johnson responded that Ms. Monteagudo just provided a terrific segue into a new Alternative Staffing Organization (ASO) model, designed by the Department of Labor that WCS is currently looking at. ASO is designed to take advantage of civil service temporary positions. Mr. Johnson said that he just met yesterday with a rep from Chicago to help them fashion the ASO initiative and that it would be stunning if WCS could partner with the city on this initiative.

Ms. Monteagudo said that 90 days of working in public works, whether it is in Forestry, Streets, or Sanitation, will give them a taste of what it would be like working for the city and in the meantime, they can apply for regular employment status just as anyone else would.

Mr. Johnson added that being able to add the city as an employer would be a great addition to their resumes for future employment opportunities.

Ms. Monteagudo said that this type of partnership is exactly the reason why the ERC meets with community agencies. Without having Mr. Johnson here today, we probably would never have had the opportunity to partner on this initiative.

A short discussion ensued regarding the 90-day temporary appointments and a few more questions were asked of Mr. Johnson before Chairperson Roman asked if there were any final questions. Hearing none, the Commissioners and Staff thanked Mr. Johnson for taking time to meet with them. Chairperson Roman said that he and other Commissioners and Staff planned on attending the "53208" Career Fair on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Chairperson Roman then moved onto the next agenda item.

**Agenda Item #3**

**Committee Reports**

This agenda item will be held over until the next regularly scheduled ERC meeting.

**Agenda Item #4**

**Next Meeting Date**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Equal Rights Commission will be held on Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012. Starting time and location are yet to be determined. There being no further business, Chairperson Roman adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m. (Ordonez/Moua)

REGULAR meeting of the Board of Equal Rights Commission held Wednesday, October 3, 2012 in room 301-B of City Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Roman, Chair  
Linda Reaves, Vice-Chair  
Mayhoua Moua  
Chez Ordonez

Staff: Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director  
Rebecca Reyes Duke, HR Compliance Officer

Excused: MaryNell Regan, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Roman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the August 1, 2012, Equal Rights Commission meeting were approved.  
(Moua/Ordonez)

### **Agenda Item #2**

#### **Briefing from Steve Mahan, Director, City of Milwaukee Community Block Grant Development (CBGD)**

Mr. Mahan began with a brief overview of the CBGD, its' mission and the requirements attached to federal grant monies that the City of Milwaukee receives and how those requirements relate to the Equal Rights Commission. He said that as a prerequisite to receiving funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and for the Department of Labor (DOL), there must be an EEO component involved with the entity receiving the monies. Mr. Mahan stated that the ERC is that component for the City of Milwaukee and as such, there are HUD related statutory goals that can be addressed through collaboration with the CBGD, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Fair Housing Council (MMFHC) and the ERC. The specific areas to be addressed are:

- **Decent Housing:** The ERC component relates to increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing in standard condition to low-income and moderate-income families without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability;
- **A Suitable Living Environment:** The ERC components relate to increasing access to quality public and private facilities and services; and, reducing the isolation of income groups with areas through spatial de-concentration of housing opportunities for lower income persons and the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods.
- **Expanding Economic Opportunities:** Many ERC components with the main one relating to the availability of mortgage financing for low-income persons at reasonable rates using non-discriminatory practices.

The long-term outcomes linked to these goals are:

- **Availability and Accessibility:** This outcome relates to programs that make services, housing, infrastructure, public services or shelter accessible available to low- or moderate-income persons, including those with special needs and/or disabilities;
- **Affordability:** This outcome relates to programs that provide affordability to low- or moderate-income persons and can include affordable housing;
- **Sustainability:** This outcome relates to programs that improve communities and promote viability such as removing slum and blight or other services that sustain communities.

Mr. Mahan stated that there are barriers or impediments in the way of achieving some of these goals which were identified in the 2005 City of Milwaukee, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. These are just a few examples of the identified impediments:

- Suburban policies (exclusionary zoning codes, exclusionary public housing or Section 8 rent assistance vouchers) to name a few;
- Social class, racial and cultural barriers;
- Housing and employment discrimination;
- Racial disparities in mortgage lending; and
- Racial steering.

*(Mr. Mahan indicated that a 2012 version of this study will be available very soon.)*

Mr. Mahan stated that many of these impediments generate complaints from persons trying to obtain housing and are turned down for illegal discriminatory reasons. He said that his office receives a large volume of complaints that are then referred to either the MMFHC or Legal Aid for review and follow-up. He stated that the problem with this referral system is that there is no official tracking system to follow these complaints from beginning to end. Mr. Mahan said that he believes he has a solution to this problem that will address this problem issue by utilizing his staff, the ERC and the MMFHC/Legal Aid in a collaborative effort to receive, formally refer and track complaints of housing discrimination. He believes that this collaborative effort will ultimately strengthen the City of Milwaukee's Fair Housing Ordinance.

Mr. Mahan said that the city currently has 18 strategic planning area neighborhoods with one full-time CDBG funded employee assigned to each neighborhood. These employees are "community organizers" that are charged with identifying specific outcomes within their assigned neighborhoods. These outcomes are based upon community needs but can be, for example, hosting community meetings, conducting door knocks, organizing neighborhood cleanups, reporting crimes or suspicious activity to the police, etc. These organizers are familiar with the issues affecting the residents and have gained the trust of residents. Mr. Mahan envisions having these organizers take complaints of issues related to housing (discrimination, neglectful landlord, etc.) as part of a formal process. He stated that this is going to take some planning to tailor the process in an effective manner, but it is a starting point that does not require any additional funding to implement.

Commissioner Ordonez asked when Mr. Mahan would like to implement this plan.

Mr. Mahan responded that he would like to start strategizing as soon as possible. He stated that he would submit a formal white paper to Ms. Monteagudo that will include a more detailed plan but in the meantime, he would like to convene a sub-committee made

up of reps from his office, the ERC, MMFHC and Legal Aid to begin strategizing right away.

A brief discussion was had among the group regarding the influx of non-English speaking refugees that are coming into Milwaukee and the issues facing these group regarding sub-standard living conditions and the barrier of not speaking English. Chairperson Roman then asked for any final questions/comments.

Ms. Monteagudo told Mr. Mahan that once the white paper is received and reviewed, the ERC will schedule a special meeting with reps from the other agencies to discuss implementation of this plan.

Chairperson Roman and the rest of the ERC Commissioners thanked Mr. Mahan for his presentation and indicated that they all look forward to working on this plan.

### **Agenda Item #3**

#### **Committee Reports**

##### **Accountability Committee**

###### Departmental Survey Letter

Responses to the annual survey letter to city departments have been received back from several departments. The survey letter requested the following information:

- What information or feedback do you collect from Milwaukee residents regarding the quantity, quality and timeliness of the services you provide? How is that information collected, summarized and used?
- What community based organizations do you partner with to ensure that residents have access to information and services provided by your department?
- What if any areas of improvement have you identified as a result of the feedback collected?
- What if any changes have you implemented as a result of the feedback?
- Do you have a point person in your department who formally serves as a "community liaison"? If you do, please provide the name, contact information and a list or summary of that person's activities over the last year.

Ms. Monteagudo asked the Commissioners to review the responses and come up with any questions and/or concerns regarding the responses. These will be discussed at the next meeting.

###### Website Update

Ms. Reyes Duke stated that she will be working with the city's internal IT staff to re-construct the ERC's website. She requested bio's and pictures from Commissioners and asked them for any ideas that they have to improve the overall ERC website.

###### Update on Milwaukee County Human Rights Commission

Ms. Monteagudo stated that the MCHRC is reactivated and appointments have been made. She stated that we will look for opportunities for collaboration with them. Ms. Monteagudo said that she will keep the ERC updated on any developments.

##### **Community & Neighborhood Engagement Committee**

###### Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) update

Mr. Clarence Johnson, Deputy Executive Director, WCS, briefed the ERC at their August 1, 2012. Mr. Johnson was invited as a result of a prior briefing that touched on the issue of the re-entry (ex-

offenders) population and the issues involving getting and maintaining employment following incarceration. As a result of the briefing, as well as excellent timing, the Department of Employee Relations worked with WCS and was able to hire 19 of their clients for 90-day temporary appointments in the Department of Public Works. These appointments provide the individuals with on-the-job-experience; a great addition to a resume, and the opportunity for future city employment.

In addition, three commissioners and one staff attended the WCS Community Resource Fair on September 19<sup>th</sup>. The City of Milwaukee represented four tables at the Resource Fair that provided information on city of Milwaukee employment opportunities and several programs and services available through the Milwaukee Health Department.

#### **Agenda Item #4**

#### **Next Meeting Date**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Equal Rights Commission will be held on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 301-A of City Hall. There being no further business, Chairperson Roman adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.  
(Ordonez/Moua)

REGULAR meeting of the Board of Equal Rights Commission held Wednesday, November 14, 2012 in room 301-B of City Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Roman, Chair  
Linda Reaves, Vice-Chair  
Mayhoua Moua  
Chez Ordonez

Staff: Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director

Excused: Rebecca Reyes Duke, HR Compliance Officer  
MaryNell Regan, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Roman called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the October 3, 2012, Equal Rights Commission meeting were approved.  
(Ordonez/Moua)

### **Agenda Item #2**

#### **Equal Rights Commission - Special Purpose Account (SPA)**

During the 2013 City of Milwaukee budget process, an amendment was introduced that would take \$25,000 from the Fire and Police Commission's budget and allocate that amount to the Equal Rights Commission in the form of a Special Purpose Account to be used to promote and support equal rights initiatives designed to inform and educate city residents of programs and services available within city departments as well as inform residents of their rights and responsibilities under Milwaukee's Housing and Employment Discrimination Ordinance. Although the amendment passed the vote of the Common Council, the Mayor vetoed it as written and provided a substitute action. The Mayor's substituted action (amendment) reallocates funds from the Department of Neighborhood Services rather than the Fire and Police Commission's 2013 budget.

Ms. Monteagudo stated that a final decision (vote) on the SPA should be coming in the next week or so and that the ERC, specifically, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Committee (CNEC) of the ERC, should schedule a special meeting to begin brainstorming on how to most effectively utilize the funds should the SPA be approved. Ms. Monteagudo suggested meeting in December to brainstorm and develop a plan that can be shared with the sponsor(s) of the SPA.

A short discussion was had amongst the Commissioners about how the SPA could be effectively utilized. The Commissioners agreed that a special meeting of the Community and Neighborhood Engagement Committee was necessary as this would fall under the

outreach component of Chapter 109. As a result, the members of the CNEC agreed to meet on Wednesday, December 12, 2012 for a brainstorming session.

Ms. Monteagudo told the Commissioners that she would keep them posted regarding any action taken on the SPA.

Chairperson Roman asked for any additional questions/comments. Hearing none, he moved on to the next agenda item.

### **Agenda Item #3**

#### **Committee Reports**

##### **Accountability Committee**

At the last meeting of the ERC, Commissioners received copies of responses to the ERC's annual survey of city departments and were asked to review the responses for discussion at the next meeting.

Ms. Monteagudo asked the Commissioners if, after reviewing the responses, they had any questions/concerns.

Commissioner Ordonez asked if the Milwaukee Police Department had responded yet, and, if not, could she follow up with them.

Ms. Monteagudo stated that MPD had not responded yet and she would follow up with them.

Commissioner Ordonez also commented on how the ERC could receive public feedback on city departments. He suggested developing a process that would allow the public to file complaints regarding city services and having the ERC facilitate getting the complaint to the right agency.

Ms. Monteagudo responded that we are already working with the City's IT section to develop an online referral system that would allow the public to notify the ERC about an issue with a city department that is not being addressed to their satisfaction. The online referral would allow the ERC to notify the department that a citizen has logged a "complaint" with them. The referral system would be used to log the complaint, facilitate contact with the appropriate agency, and ensure that follow-up was made. This system would also be used to track complaints for the purpose of identifying any patterns that may need additional follow-up.

Commissioner Ordonez commented that this is a very proactive measure and he would like the ERC to be known for not only being active, but proactive.

Chairperson Roman followed up by asking Ms. Monteagudo about the ERC's annual report.

Ms. Monteagudo stated that the annual report will be due shortly. She stated that the report will talk about what we have done this year and will provide a strategic plan on

what we plan on doing for 2013. She stated that Ms. Reyes Duke put together a two-page document for budget purposes that documented the activities of the ERC to date for 2012. She stated that she will send out that document to the Commissioners for review and comment. Otherwise, that document will be the basis for the annual report.

Chairperson Roman said that he had one other issue for discussion. He stated that for future ERC meetings, he would like to add an agenda item that would allow for Commissioners to announce any upcoming community events.

Ms. Monteagudo responded that we can add that as an agenda item. She added that we should also add a "Public Comment" item that would allow members of the public to come to a meeting and voice their concern over a particular issue. Chairperson Roman and the others all agreed that was a good idea.

Finally, a suggestion was made that a set schedule of ERC meetings be put together to aide in future planning. All Commissioners agreed that this was a good idea. A formal schedule will be introduced at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Chairperson Roman asked for additional comments/questions. Hearing none, he moved on to the next agenda item.

#### **Agenda Item #4**

#### **Next Meeting Date**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Equal Rights Commission will be held on Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 301-A of City Hall. The next meeting of the Equal Rights Commission Community and Neighborhood Engagement Committee will be held on Wednesday, December 12, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. There being no further business, Chairperson Roman adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m. (Ordonez/Moua)