



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes - Final

EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION

CHAIR: Chez Ordonez

VICE CHAIR: TONY SNELL

Mayhoua Moua, Nathan Guequierre, Martha Collins, Reggie Jackson, Jennifer Bennett, William Crowley, and Jessica Boling

Staffing: Jessica Langill, 414.286.5532, jlangi@milwaukee.gov

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

3:00 PM

City Hall, Room 301-A

1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 P.M.

2 Roll Call

Present 6 - Ordonez, Snell Rodriguez, Jackson, Collins, Guequierre and Bennett

Excused 1 - Ashley

3 Approval of Minutes from November Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Snell, seconded by Commissioner Moua to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, November 20, 2019.

There were no objections.

4 Committee Reports (Human Rights Day, Inclusive Restrooms, JudLeg Presentation)

Human Rights Day: Rebecca Rabatin gave a report on the Human Rights Day Celebration held on December 14th, 2019. She stated there should be more entertainment and less speakers at the next event. Commissioner Snell stated that the event continues to grow each year, making it important to have an event budget for following Human Rights Day events. The planning committee will meet in February to further debrief and start preparing for next year's celebration.

Inclusive Restrooms: Commissioner Guequierre stated that the Inclusive Restrooms Committee had decided not to meet in November and December because of the holidays, but would be meeting in January to discuss creating the inclusive restrooms policy. Commissioner Ordonez asked Commissioner Guequierre to send Alderman Bauman an email to update him on when to expect a inclusive restrooms policy draft.

Judiciary & Legislation Committee: Commissioner Ordonez stated he presented an update on the ERC to the Judiciary & Legislation Committee on December 9th, 2019. The update included an ask for Commission size to be increased from 9 to 11, which was approved, and was later approved by the full Common Council. He stated that Alderman Zielinski asked about the ERC budget and requested that the ERC file be held until the February Judiciary & Legislation Committee meeting to present a future funding plan.

5 Hotel Policies in Milwaukee

Commissioner Ordonez stated there had recently been discussion about resident's access to hotels in the City of Milwaukee, which had also been called out as a nation-wide issue. Select hotels in the City were found out to have a policy that states anyone who lives within 30 miles of the hotel's location cannot rent a hotel room, which has been called out by community members as a racist policy. Ordonez shared that he has been in discussion with the Assistant City Attorney and DOA to figure out what role ERC has in this issue. He stated it was important for the ERC to find out more information about the issue to understand if discrimination is occurring.

Ben Roovers, Assistant City Attorney, stated the Chapter 109 Equal Rights ordinance does cover public accommodation, but 109-11 also states that the ERC does not have jurisdiction over any issue that would be heard by another State or Federal body. Roovers stated the ERC's role could be a point of advocacy. He stated that the City Attorney's Office is currently looking into the legality of the issue.

Commissioner Ordonez stated that the ERC needs to start looking at how it can start taking complaints from the community and how it can help in other ways, such as testifying at licensing committees. Commissioner Snell stated that the ERC has been running as a committee of the whole for too long and needs to discuss what ERC committee this issue would be assigned to. He recommended this issue go to the Compliance & Enforcement committee. Commissioner Bennett stated the Compliance & Enforcement committee has other important tasks to work on at the moment, before it can take on additional issues.

6 Snow Plowing Discrimination

Commissioner Ordonez stated this agenda item was brought forward after Alderman Bauman shared a chapter from a book titled "Is Snow Plowing Sexist?" at the last Judiciary & Legislation Committee meeting.

Laura Daniels, Director of Operations for the Department of Public Works, asked Commissioners to continue to work with her when equity concerns come up when it comes to snow plowing and other DPW tasks. Daniels stated DPW has met with local organizations to understand the needs of the community when it comes to snow and ice removal, which has informed their snow and ice removal plan. She said that while the "Is Snow Plowing Sexist?" chapter was interesting to read, she did not agree that Milwaukee's snow and ice removal is sexist. Daniels stated when clearing snow, all modes of transportation are considered and prioritized, including side walks, bike lanes, roads, and highways. Daniels stated that since 2008 DPW has been responsible for clearing over 42,000 crosswalks and corners, with the goal of clearing them all within two days of snowfall. She stated DPW has also met with MCTS to discuss bus stop clearing.

Commissioner Snell asked what the City can do about making sure property owners clear their sidewalks. Daniels stated brochures have been sent out to property owners and that there is a compliance arm in DPW that fines repeat offenders. Daniels said she would go back to her department to find out how residents are informed about how to submit complaints about uncleared areas.

7 Accessible Bikes Update (James Hannig - DPW & James Davies - Bublr)

James Hannig, DPW Pedestrian & Bicycle Coordinator and James Davies, Executive Director of Bublr Bikes presented an update on the City's adaptive bike pilot. The pilot has been under operation by Bublr Bikes since August, 2019. Davies stated that public input was collected in various ways before the pilot was finalized. Milwaukee is the first municipality to incorporate adaptive bikes into the full bike share system.

Hannig stated the pilot introduced 12 adaptive bikes into the system. As of the third week in December, there were 152 adaptive bike checkouts that started and/or ended in the City of Milwaukee, which resulted in 109 trips averaging 70 minutes. 54% of the trips started and ended at the same station and about 80% involved trips where the bikes were checked out and returned within a mile of each other.

Davies shared that the City has purchased 17 bikes, 3 of which are hand cycles that have not been incorporated into the bike share program as of yet. The adaptive bikes that are out include side-by-side bicycles and tricycles. He stated that there were several mis-docking issues that resulted in the bikes not being able to be checked out through the system. Davies also stated that there was a high amount of vandalism on these bikes as well as theft, including 4-5 bikes being stolen. He stated GPS options have been researched. Currently, 6 adaptive bikes are available in Milwaukee.

Hannig stated that the final pilot data will be compared to Wauwatosa's program. Davies stated he believed the pilot was successful, but that other options will need to be considered in the future, though that might be met with financial constraints. Hannig stated that the pilot program will need to be evaluated for sustainability.

Hannig stated the pilot program officially ends December 31st, 2019. DPW will discuss how to solicit user feedback and include the adaptive bikes workgroup in the final evaluation. A few months will be needed to evaluate the program and future operational needs and funding support. Commissioner Ordonez requested financial estimates for the pilot program and future operating costs.

8 Compliance & Enforcement Committee Policies & Procedures Manual

Ben Roovers, Assistant City-Attorney stated that the Complaint Policies & Procedures Manual has been edited per feedback from the previous meeting. Roovers edited the manual to state that service of documents can be done through mail.

Commissioner Ordonez requested that DOA and the Compliance & Enforcement Committee track expenses once the complaint process is live.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Collins to adopt the Complaint Policies & Procedures Manual.

There were no objections.

9 2019 Priorities

Jessica Langill, Equal Rights Specialist, stated that committees need to review any remaining 2019 priorities and complete them before the end of 2019.

10 2020 Meeting Schedule

Commissioners unanimously agreed to bi-monthly meeting of the whole on the last Wednesday of the month at 4:30 P.M., starting on January 29th, 2020.

Meeting of the Whole dates for 2020:

Wednesday, January 29, 2020

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

Wednesday, November 25, 2020

11 Governance Committee Documents & Processes

The Governance Committee; Commissioner Ordonez, Commissioner Snell, and Commissioner Guequierre, met with Ben Roovers, Jessica Langill, and Sharon Robinson to discuss next steps for moving strategic planning forward. Commissioners received a charge for each committee, a description of Chair and Vice-Chair roles, and the formal process of electing the chair and vice-chair. Commissioner Ordonez requested a committee chair description from Denise Patton to be reviewed at the January meeting.

Commissioner Guequierre stated the ERC will be voting in a Chair and Vice-Chair at the January meeting, per the Chapter 109 ordinance. Once the Chair and Vice-Chair are voted in, they will assign Commissioners to the various committees. Commissioner Ordonez stated that the election process draft includes a verbal nomination for Chair and Vice-Chair which can be accepted or declined by the nominee. If accepted, nominees have up to three minutes to make a statement and then a verbal roll-call vote will be taken. Commissioners can abstain from any vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snell, seconded by Commissioner Guequierre to approve the ERC election process. Roll call vote was taken, passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snell, seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the description of Chair and Vice-Chair roles. Roll call vote was taken, passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve the four committee charges. Roll call vote was taken, passed unanimously.

12 Community Dialogue & Upcoming Events

Rebecca Rabatin, ADA Coordinator, requested that accessible on-street parking be added to a future ERC agenda. She shared that this concern has been brought up to DPW and other City Departments by the community several times, but it has not yet been addressed. Commissioner Snell requested this issue be moved to the Compliance & Enforcement committee.

13 Next Meeting - TBD

The next meeting was set for January 29, 2020 at 4:30 P.M.

14 Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 P.M.