



**AGENDA
CITY OF CEDAR FALLS, IOWA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2021
5:10 PM AT CITY HALL**

The meeting will also be accessible via video conference and the public may access/observe the meeting in the following ways:

- a) By dialing the phone number +13126266799 or +19292056099 or +12532158782 or +13017158592 or +13462487799 or +16699006833 and when prompted, enter the meeting ID (access code) 962 7287 1738.
- b) iPhone one-tap: +13126266799,,96272871738# or +19292056099,,96272871738#
- c) Join via smartphone or computer using this link: <https://zoom.us/j/96272871738>.

Call to Order by the Mayor

1. Joint Work Session with Human Rights Commission to discuss future roles, responsibilities and City Council expectations for the Human Rights Commission.
(70 Minutes, Mayor Rob Green)



MAYOR ROBERT M. GREEN
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MEMORANDUM
Office of the Mayor

TO: City Council
FROM: Mayor Robert M. Green
DATE: DRAFT
SUBJECT: Creation of Steering Task Force for the Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission
REF: (a) “The Worst Cities for Black Americans” – 247wallst.com report of 11/9/2018 ¹
(b) Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised
(c) Iowa Code §21, Official Meetings Open to Public (Open Meetings)
(d) Iowa Code §22, Examination of Public Records (Open Records)

1. **Purpose.** This memorandum creates a Task Force to provide direction to the Human Rights Commission in response to long-term racial challenges within Cedar Falls. This memo provides the Task Force’s scope of work, member selection process, and a timeline for completion.

2. **Background.**

- a. *24/7 Wall Street Report.* In November 2018, an article published by *24/7 Wall Street* (reference (a)) named the Waterloo - Cedar Falls metropolitan area as the nation’s worst place for Black people to live, based on metrics surrounding income, employment, and homeownership. According to *24/7 Wall Street*, our metropolitan area continues to rank as the one of the worst places for black Americans, ranking 3rd in 2019 and 5th in 2020.
- b. *Council Referral and Action.* At its regular meeting on February 1, 2021, the City Council directed city staff to develop a structure and schedule for a Task Force to serve as a “steering committee” for the Human Rights Commission. On Tuesday, February 2, 2021, Council Member Darrah, Ron Gaines, Jennifer Rodenbeck, Toni Babcock and I met with three experienced members of the Human Rights Commission (Willie Barney, Susan Langan, and Teri Lynn Jorgensen) to gain perspective on how the task force could be most helpful and productive for the ongoing efforts of the Human Rights Commission.

3. **Charge.**

- a. The Task Force will use the *24/7 Wall Street* report and similar resources as a foundation to build a common understanding of the challenges of diversity and racial equity in Cedar Falls.
- b. The Task Force shall identify problems, concerns, and reasons the community currently ranks as one of the worst places for Black Americans to live, in order to provide guidance and direction to the Human Rights Commission.

¹ <https://247wallst.com/special-report/2018/11/09/the-worst-cities-for-black-americans-4/4/>

4. **Deliverables.** The Task Force shall provide, no later than December 10th, 2021, a final report to the Mayor and City Council that identifies specific problems and shortfalls. The Task Force shall also make formal recommendations for follow-on action, including policy and procedure change recommendations, and identification of ongoing efforts needed to promote an inclusive and diverse community and to eliminate both real and perceived racial inequity in Cedar Falls.

5. **Task Force Membership and Staff Liaisons.**

a. *Initial Membership Selection.* The first four members shall be two members of the Cedar Falls City Council (as Chair and Vice Chair) and two members of the Human Rights Commission. These four will be appointed by the Mayor. These four members will work immediately to identify, recruit, interview and select the remaining Task Force members.

b. *Remaining Membership Selection.*

(1) The full Task Force shall consist of either ten or twelve members, with preference given to those who reside or work in Cedar Falls. The chair is included in this count, but shall be a non-voting member.

(2) Members should ideally be community leaders and decision-makers with the authority and perspective to enact change within their organizations. If the Task Force is to be successful, the membership should be selected on the basis of leadership, dedication, and ability to analyze problems and develop solutions that create an environment for change in organizational policies and practices, and ultimately in the community as a whole. Members must be active, open minded, and willing to have difficult and uncomfortable conversations about diversity and racial injustice in Cedar Falls.

(3) Member selection from the following key stakeholder groups is recommended: Cedar Falls Community Schools District; University of Northern Iowa; Black Hawk County NAACP; Grow Cedar Valley; and the Cedar Falls Housing Commission. Ultimately, four initial members of the Task Force shall have the discretion to select members which will best suit the needs of the group.

(4) The Task Force Chair shall provide a full slate of proposed members no later than Thursday, March 11th to the Mayor for final approval; the Chair may request from the Mayor a time extension if needed.

c. *City Staff Liaisons.* The following staff members are assigned to support the Task Force and to participate in meetings in a liaison (non-voting) role:

(1) Jennifer Rodenbeck – *Director of Finance and Business Operations*

(2) Kevin Rogers – *City Attorney*

(3) Toni Babcock – *Human Resources Manager*

(4) Craig Berte – *Police Chief*

Other staff may be called upon to provide input and perspective as needed.

6. **Budget.** A budget has not been established for the Task Force. The Chair shall make a request to the Mayor to fund the materials, travel, education, invited speakers, and other expenses necessary for the Task Force's success.

7. **Duration.** The Task Force will exist until the Final Report is presented to the Mayor and City Council. Once the final report has been delivered, the Task Force will only convene at the direction of the Mayor. If the Task Force needs additional time to deliver the final report, the Chair may request in writing an extension from the Mayor.
8. **Proposed Schedule.**
 - a. The Task Force's productivity and success require respect for participant time; these volunteer members are making a significant time commitment for this important work. For this reason, each meeting should have a time budget of no more than 90 minutes.
 - b. Meetings will be held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, unless the Task Force determines a different schedule and/or location is more amenable to the participants.
 - c. The Task Force may change, cancel, or add meeting dates and locations as needed to effectively carry out its work.
9. **Parliamentary Procedure.** The Task Force will be guided by the basic provisions of Robert's Rules (reference b) to deliberate and take action on the business of the day, as well as to create agendas and minutes. These agendas shall be published at least 24 hours in advance, as required by the Iowa Open Meetings Law (reference (c)). The Chair shall decide the level of formality appropriate for each meeting, and preside accordingly.
10. **Committees.** The Task Force may create committees as described in reference (b) §50: Committees to allow for greater focus on certain aspects of the Task Force's charge. This may be advantageous for deliberating and developing plans and recommendations prior to consideration by the entire Task Force.
11. **Public Participation.** The Task Force Chair shall have the discretion to determine the degree of public participation (through public comment) at each meeting, depending on the business before the Task Force. As a working group, the Task Force must balance the democratic benefit of public participation with the reality of a limited time budget each day for carrying out the Task Force's charge. A solution may be to invite these interested public participants to be featured speakers at relevant future meetings, with dedicated time slots to present their valuable perspectives.
12. **Compliance with State Law.** The Task Force shall comply with the provisions of both the Iowa Open Meetings Law (reference (c)) and the Iowa Open Records Law (reference (d)) in accomplishing its work. As a public body investigating a controversial and high-visibility topic, open and transparent deliberations are vital to the success of the Task Force's mission.

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