



**AGENDA
CITY OF CEDAR FALLS, IOWA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 08, 2020
6:00 PM AT CITY HALL VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**

To protect against the spread of the COVID-19, the meeting will be held via video conference. The public may observe 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. Role of Human Rights Commission.

Adjournment

Role of Human Rights Commission Council Work Session

September 8, 2020



Human Rights Commission

- ***Per Iowa Code any city with a population of 29,000 or greater shall maintain a local civil rights commission***
- ***There currently are 9 members on the board per City ordinance***
- ***A staff person is assigned to help the Commission (take minutes, post agendas, etc)***
- ***Staff person spends about 3 hours a week on HRC activity or 150 hours in a year***
 - ***working with the Commission and helping claimants complete forms***

Human Rights Commission - Purpose

- ***The purpose of the commission is outlined in 12-33 of City Code of Ordinances.***
 - ***Seek to conciliate complaints, hold hearings when necessary.....***
 - ***Investigate and study the existence, character, causes, extent and effects of discrimination in public accommodations, employment,***
 - ***Investigate possible areas of discrimination in city government.***

Human Rights Commission - Purpose

- ***Formulate and carry out educational program designed to prevent and eliminate discrimination.***
- ***Adopt such rules & regulations as may be necessary to govern, expedite and effectuate the provisions of this article***
- ***Render to the city council, not less than once a year, a written report of activities and recommendations***

Human Rights Commission - Purpose

- Cooperate with federal, state, regional, county and city agencies..... in developing courses of education.....***
- Make recommendations to the mayor and council for such further ordinances concerning discrimination as it may deem necessary and desirable***

Investigations

- ***Cedar Falls is allowed by state law to refer complaints to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) – annual agreement***
- ***Estimate 5-10 calls a year that are referred to the state***
- ***Historically we have had on average 1 formal complaint a year that our local commission investigates***

Investigations

- ***Benefits of sending investigations to the State:***
 - ***More cost effective – the State does not charge us anything***
 - ***Professional staff investigating the complaints***
 - ***State has better perspective because do several complaints***
 - ***Difficult for local commission or staff to keep trained and up to date if only do one complaint a year***
 - ***Does not put City in a conflict of interest situation***

Other Communities

- *Reached out to other cities comparable in size:*
- *Ames, Ankeny, Mason City, & Urbandale – Refer complaints to ICRC*
- *Bettendorf – Cross files with ICRC, private attorney retained to investigate locally*
- *Dubuque – paid staff investigate complaints or refer to ICRC*
- *Marion – partners with Cedar Rapids for intakes and investigations*

Other Communities

- ***Larger cities - Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, & Des Moines – paid staff in those cities investigates complaints, not commissioners***

- ***No other city has the commissioners investigate the complaints***

Recommendation

- ***Human Rights Commission – Focus on outreach, education, and advocacy.***
- ***Revise the city ordinance to eliminate investigating complaints and refer all to the State ICRC***
 - ***More consistency with investigations***
 - ***Professional trained staff at the State performing investigations***
 - ***More cost effective***
 - ***Does not put the City in an undesirable position***

Questions

