

AGENDA

IOWA CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION (CONTINUATION) - 2018

Thursday, March 29, 2018

Emma Harvat Hall

City Hall

5:00 p.m.

1. Introductions and Opening Comments
2. General Overview of the Meeting
3. Review/Confirm – Goal Setting Priorities per February 22, 2108 Strategic Planning. Session
4. Review 2014 Organizational Effectiveness Initiatives
5. Review/Discuss 2018 Organizational Effectiveness Initiatives
 - a. Review Questionnaire responses
 - b. Additional input
 - c. Selection of initiatives
 - d. Follow-up/implementation
6. IPA Report to the Commission
7. Adjourn

If you will need disability-related accommodations to participate in this meeting please contact the Equity Director, Stefanie Bowers, at 319-356-5022 or at stefanie-bowers@iowa-city.org. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

**IOWA CITY
HUMAN RIGHT COMMISSION
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION
REPORT
2018**



Facilitated by:
Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
University of Iowa

**IOWA CITY
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION
2018**

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IOWA CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION 2018

Introduction

The Iowa City Human Rights Commission (ICHRC) requested the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) to assist the Commission with strategic planning. IPA agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to ICHRC Commissioners regarding: the key purposes of the Commission, recent accomplishments, issues/trends/concerns/opportunities, potential new initiatives, programs, or policies and suggestions to improve organizational effectiveness;
2. Conduct a strategic planning session with Commission members;
3. Preparation of this report.

Strategic Planning Session

A strategic planning session with ICHRC was held on February 22, 2018, at the Helling Conference Room in Iowa City City Hall.

The following Commission members were in attendance and participated at this meeting: Eliza Jane Willis (Chair), Joe Coulter, Adil D. Adams, Jeff Falk, Tahuanty Pena (Vice Chair), Arianna Aron, Cathy McGinnis, and Jonathon Muñoz. Also in attendance and participating in the session was ICHRC Coordinator Stefanie Bowers.

Update - 2014 Goals/Priorities

The participants reviewed the status of implementing the following goals/priorities as established during ICHRC previous planning session in 2014:

2014 Review

On-Going Commitments

- Youth Awards.
- Awards breakfast.
- Building Blocks to Employment Job Fair.
- Mayoral proclamations.
- ~~Continuing~~ Educational programs.
- ~~Continuing~~ Outreach efforts.
- Compliance with Chapter 2 of the Municipal Code.

New Priority Projects, Programs, and Initiatives

- Develop listening posts for outreach to target communities.
- Enhance presence with quarterly presentations to City Council on Commission events, programs and initiatives.
- Affordable/universal/accessible housing – educational programs
- Hold meetings with various community groups.

General Duties of the Human Rights Commission

HRC Coordinator Stefanie Bowes reviewed the general duties, powers and responsibilities of HRC as set forth in Chapter 2 of the Iowa City Municipal Code.

Areas of Interest

The participants reviewed and discussed the following areas of interest that the Commissioners felt HRC should be involved in:

Community

- Events revolving around people of color and their history in the form of activities, conferences, programs etc.
- I would also like to see little libraries in underprivileged neighborhoods. Part of that, would be inviting the community to participate in the making of these libraries.
- Any area under the broad range of topics in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights within the geographic area of Iowa City and its immediate surroundings. These would include discrimination in employment, housing, schooling, and facilities, standards of living, law enforcement, and judicial proceedings.
- Get more involved with housing issues in the community, especially in terms of the impact on undocumented and documented immigrants who appear to be suffering from discrimination.
- Consider the equity issues raised by current eviction policies and practices. We should maintain and expand our relationships with organizations working for greater equity and nondiscrimination in our community.
- Developing a list of community organizations concerned with social justice issues that may benefit from our assistance.
- Community education regarding Racial Equity
- LGBTQI – community education
- Social equity in affordable, accessible housing.
- Increased funding for social justice and racial equity grants
- Johnson County/Iowa City Access Center Project.
- More community meetings and townhalls and events.
- Social justice activities for young generations to participate in all activities and try to get donations.
- General education regarding human rights and the role of the commission. For example, explaining the power of municipal HRCs in general and the federal and international framework, e.g. ICERD, which informs that power.
- The HRC should be able strive to educate the residents of Iowa City how to best practice human rights in their day to day interactions with others, and the resources available to them to help them do that.
- Voter registration in areas of the city that are under-represented
- Voter participation rates in non-presidential elections
- Community ID
- Immigrant rights

Schools

- Changing the curriculum used in schools around history.
- Having the accurate information on black history.
- Learning about other people in the civil rights era vs. year after year learning about the same individuals.
- Having administration, teachers, and support staff of color throughout the district.
 - Racial equity in the school system and the wider community.
- Tate High School is often forgotten about when it comes to outreach efforts. Tate is part of ICCSD but often the stigma surrounding Tate prevents community members and programs from reaching out.
 - Programming that is offered in West and City should also be offered at Tate.

Public Safety

- A role in responding to hate crimes or incidents when they occur.
- Developing a rapid response team with re: to hate crimes and bias crimes.
- Obtaining information regarding Community Police Review Board and
- Obtaining information/communication with Police Department

Accomplishments

The following were identified as recent accomplishments of ICHRC:

- Outreach to Broadway and Pheasant Ridge (Overcharging on rent).
- Organizing a number of programs and panel discussions.
- Co-sponsoring similar events with other groups.
- SJRE Grants:
 - Evaluating and submitting recommendations for the City SJRE grants.
 - Designing procedures for the SJRE grant.
- Review & responses to requests for funding
- Human rights awards and recognition program.
- Participated in planning, sponsorship, and activities re: MLK Day.
- Participated in Iowa City Pride.
- Participated in planning and sponsorships of Juneteenth activities.
- Community building exercise in 2016.
- Community IDs.
- Focus on the issues involving immigrants/Muslims.
- Obtained recognition for Indigenous Peoples Day.
- Participation in City Manager's Roundtable.
- Crossing Bridges conference.
- Know Your Rights –Domestic Abuse.
- Activities at the Coralville and Iowa City library with immigrant communities.
- Preparation/distribution of educational materials by HRC staff.

For a more complete list of accomplishments, refer to the Commission's annual reports.

Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future ICHRC services, policies, programs or operations:

Community Outreach/Support

- Find more supports, activities or programming for young men specifically young men of color.
- Status and quality of life for undocumented or documented immigrants.
- Access to parks and outdoor /indoor recreational activities.
- Education about human rights and a need for people to speak out against some of the hateful things we are seeing and hearing.

Education

- Establish programming in/out of school, extracurricular activities, trips that will be inclusive for all youth, backgrounds, race, ethnicity, and gender.
- Classes devoted to the real history of ALL youth of color.
- Create 3 events that align with the trimester system used in high schools in ICCSD. Each trimester, there will be an event, activity, program etc. made for all youth of color.
- The financial and geographic disparity within the ICCSD needs to be investigated and discussed for its current effects and future implications.
- Fairness and equity in the school environment.

Housing

- Housing conditions and building code enforcement.
- Evictions: trends and enforcement in small claims court for fairness and compassion. Domestic violence and violence in general.
- Affordable housing.
- Mortgage red-lining practices, primarily against Latino applicants (Iowa City has high percentage of denials).

Public Safety

- Information regarding police training and recruitment, for example training on the use of a weapon.
- Iowa City Substation needs to be community friendly. The doors are always closed and are tinted so you never know if they are open or not.
- The grave threats faced by undocumented immigrants.
- Hate crimes.
- Increase in bias incidents.
- Increase in incidents of violence; need to promote ALICE training.
- Disproportionate minority contact and incarceration.
- Equity for criminal defendants.
- Opioid epidemic.
- Access Center development.
- Racial and Ethnic diversity of police force – need to reflect the community.
- Language access, including for persons accused of crimes.

Transportation

- Transportation availability and its relation to financial ability
- Sidewalk accessibility in certain parts of town

Other

- Coping with climate change – equity impact.
- A new set and clear goals and objectives, or a strategic plan, for Commissioners to follow.
- Responsibilities and expectations of the Human Rights Commission in the coming years as our community continues to grow.
- Recruiting more leadership from the immigrant communities.
- Support for Neighborhood Centers.
- Support for organizations who positively impact community.
- Publish a magazine every three months that reflects on human rights.
- Keep addressing the issue of diversity among the community.
- Promote social justice and other values of the Commission.
- Human rights issues that are important for the city but cannot be addressed by the city. Relationship between the city and university on human rights issues.

On-Going Commitments

The following were identified as on-going commitments of the Commission for the upcoming 24 – 36 month period:

- Continue Youth Awards.
- Continue Awards breakfast.
- Building Blocks for Employment Job Fair.
- Mayoral proclamations.
- Continue educational programs.
 - Continue educational programs re affordable/universal/accessibile housing
- Continue outreach efforts.
- Continue voter registration activities in areas of the city that are under-represented
- Continue support for Community ID program
- Compliance with Chapter 2 of the Municipal Code.

New Priority Projects, Programs, and Initiatives

The following were identified as new priority projects, programs, and initiatives of the Commission for the upcoming 24 - 36 month period (listed in priority order):

1. Affordable housing – work with landlords regarding background and credit checks which can make it very difficult for some to find adequate housing
2. (Tie) Have more speakers of color and other diverse backgrounds to come to Iowa City to talk about current issues

(Tie) Develop youth-oriented education programs and activities

(Tie) Develop and disseminate city and/or county-wide newsletter listing events and programs related to human rights
- 5 (Tie) Year-round event, all of which should take place in Lakeside, Broadway, Pheasant Ridge and all mobile home courts.

(Tie) More Commissioner participation in events.
7. (Tie) Develop plan/program to more effectively collaborate with other city agencies, organizations, non-profits.

(Tie) Involvement with Johnson County/Iowa City Access center development and staffing

Organizational Effectiveness Initiatives

Due to time limitations, review and discussion of ideas relating to improving organizational effectiveness were deferred to a subsequent session.

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to once again assist the Iowa City Human Rights Commission with this project.

It is important to note that the prioritization of projects and initiatives is not “cast in stone.” They can be modified as new circumstances may occur.

It is recommended that staff prepare an “action plan” for accomplishing the planning goals. The action plan would define the steps that would be needed to accomplish each goal, identify who is responsible for implementation, and establish a timeline for accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the Commission for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the Commission the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
The University of Iowa
February 23, 2018

Exhibit A

Iowa City Human Rights Commission
Strategic Planning Session – 2018

**SIGNIFICANT NEW INITIATIVES, PROGRAMS, OR POLICIES
CONSIDERED**

- Having more speakers of color come to our City and talk about current issues.
- Youth version of Human Rights Commission or create a group made specifically for youth in our community.
- Year-round events all of which should take place in the Lakeside, Broadway, Pheasant Ridge, and all trailer home courts.
- Perhaps a citywide “contest” to increase voter participation in city or county elections in non-presidential years.
- City and/or county wide newsletter listing events and programs related to human rights.
- Develop plan/program to more effectively collaborate with other city agencies, services, organizations, and non-profits, etc.
- Affordable housing - working with landlords regarding their background and credit checks, which can make it very difficult for some people to find adequate housing.
- Encourage more immigrant membership on city boards/commissions
- Support soccer competitions with other communities or cities.
- Involvement with Johnson County/Iowa City Access Center Development and Staffing.
- City-sponsored grant writing workshops (e.g. general principles and methods).
- More Commissioner participation in events
- Develop rapid response team to respond to hate crimes
- Develop youth-oriented education programs and activities