Minutes of the Des Moines Civil & Human Rights Commission Meeting on July 11, 2019, 4:30PM at Municipal Services Center, 1551 E. Martin Luther King Pkway, Des Moines, IA 50315.

**Commissioners present:** Kameron Middlebrooks, Emily Shields, Claudia Schabel, Izaah Knox, Veronica Ouya  
**Commissioners absent:** Rachelle Hunt Russian  
**QUORUM PRESENT**  
**Staff present:** Doug Philiph, Joshua Barr, Manisha Paudel

Middlebrooks called the meeting to order at 4:39pm. Schabel took roll.

**Approval of Minutes** –  
May 9, 2019 Regular Commission Meeting Minutes – Ouya moved to approve. Shield seconded. Pass.  
July 1, 2019 Regular Commission Meeting Minutes – Ouya moved to approve. Shield seconded. Pass.

**Committee Reports** –

**Officers Report:** Shields reported back that the main activity of the officers since our last meeting was planning for and executing our summer retreat on July 1st. That was a very productive day. The Commissioners spent a lot of time revisiting our rules and objectives. The Commission talked a lot about continuing to focusing our efforts going forward on the Bridging the Gap Recommendations and continuing to have dialogue efforts and subcommittees focused on Bridging the Gap topics. The Commission streamlined lined what roles commission members will have with subcommittees and that type of thing.

**Internal Committee Report:** Shields shared they have been focused on meeting with the City Manager and Police Chief and the LadderUp pilot.

**External Committee:** Schabel reported that at their last meeting they talked about engaging the community about housing conversations which is one of the top topics when it comes to Bridging the Gap. During the Commission retreat the Commission talked about aligning our subcommittees such at LGBTAC and RIAS with some of those Bridging the Gap outcomes and deliverables. So, they are going to be looking into doing that.

**Community Spotlight:**
A. Civil Service Commission
A discussion about the Civil Service Commission, presented by Deputy City Attorney Carol Moser and HR Director James Wells. Wells shared that under state law, cities are Civil Service employers are required to have three members, but the ordinance of the City Council created the threshold that our City Council requires seven members. Presentation focused on the commission’s role with establishing guidelines for hiring Civil Service Employees and for creating the process for which employees can appeal certain disciplinary actions including suspensions, demotions, and discharges. Presenters stated that everyone is covered except for part time employees, the city manager, the city clerk, the city attorneys and department/division heads. To be on the Civil Service Commission a person has to be a resident of Des Moines. The Civil Service has no input on departmental policy. The Civil Service Commission does not receive citizen complaints or review citizen concerns.

The presenters stated that for the police department officers are promoted from within. An example was that if somebody has been a major in Omaha, Kansas City who is Black or Latina and his family moves to Des Moines and he wants to continue to be a police officers, he has to start from the bottom and not as a major. The presenters also stated that in 1997 the Department of Justice evaluation stated that Police Department was doing everything that they could to recruit a diverse environment. They also stated regarding the diversity of the Police department, that the City loses candidates because Civil Service law caps the applicants at 40 in size. Wells stated that doesn't work very well for diversifying the police department.

When asked whether there was any conflict with having a board or commission that reviews citizens’ complaints of a city employee, Moser stated that there may be a conflict because a citizen review board would not be aware of the statutory rights that employees have.

B. Minority Impact Statement
Wayne Ford spoke about his work during his tenure as an Iowa legislature and how they developed a Minority Impact Statement for the state of Iowa to review how legislation affects minority groups. Mr. Ford now wants the City of Des Moines to adopt a minority impact statement to address disparities in the city of Des Moines. Mr. Ford also asked for a member of the Des Moines Civil Rights Commission to be a part of the National Advisory Board of the Wayne Ford Minority Impact Institute.

Ordinance and Policy on Equitable Provision of City Services and Racial Profiling Prohibition: Commissioner Middlebrooks stated that he met with the city manager, chief of police, and city attorney post the June 17th special meeting and further stated that the draft submitted to the commission would not be supported by the commission as is. Commissioners in the research and gathering phase of what can and cannot be done. Commission needs to do their own independent research and understand what the city is willing to do. The commission understands that they're not going to get everything but are willing to meet with the city and understand what the city is willing to do and negotiate along those lines.

Director’s Report: Barr reported that there were 17 complaints filed in May-June, with 11 cases closed, 7 opened. Director mentioned that the Source of Income as protected class will go into affect September 1st. The Director and Equity Coordinator coordinated with West Des Moines to put together a convening on the Role of Government in addressing Racial Equity with the
Government Alliance on Race and Equity. Director Barr also mentioned a dialogue on “When They See Us” Netflix movie working with the DMPS and the library to see if they can make it happen. Director Barr indicated that the annual report should be ready by the November meeting. Director Barr mentioned that Department had a deliberative dialogue on the Zoning Ordinance with affordable housing providers and the city on July 9th. The department will have a human rights scavenger hunt at the State Historical Museum on July 26th, Commissioner Shields volunteered to participate.

Director Barr discussed the Human Rights Awards and the process the Commission would like to see moving forward. Commissioner Shields stated that if staff is involved in nominating they should not be involved in scoring the finalist and vice versa. Commissioner Schabel stated that she would like to have a matrix to score who the finalist would be. Commissioner Schabel stated that she would share a draft matrix.

**Equity Report:** Equity Coordinator Manisha Paudel spoke about the Equity Team comprised of the various departments and how it is her goal to present to the city council their work by the end of the year. Paudel mentioned the MEI Index score by the Human Rights Campaign. Barr mentioned that the scoring criteria has changed which caused a slight reduction in the Des Moines score from 97 to 93.

**Equity Report:** Paudel reported that she was working across departments to formalize leading with equity through the equitable services team. They have had four meetings so far with all departments bringing ideas to update policies. Paudel emphasized the growth in learning noticeable on the team and its advance in efforts. Paudel also added that she was still working with NPO as a consultant.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Department Funding:** Barr spoke on the need for additional funding because the general fund and other revenues are not sufficient. Director Barr showed his hierarchy for the department and stated the need for managers to oversee the equity and investigative work separately which would reduce the burden on all staff.

**Commission Elections and Vacancy:** Commissioner Middlebrooks was nominated for Chair of the Commission, Commissioner Shields was nominated for Vice Chair, and Schabel for Secretary. Shields motion, Ouya Second. Pass 5-0.

**LGBTAC:** Two members of the LGBTAC were present to request the name change from LGBTAC to LGBTQAC. Pass 5-0. LGBTAC also spoke about the hate crime ordinance and having one here in Des Moines. Commissioner Schabel suggested that the ordinance be review by the Internal Committee and then brought again before the larger Commission at the September meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**BTG:** Update provided in equity report.
RIAS: Director discussed upcoming meeting about the future of RIAS at Commissioner Ouya’s home.

Public Comment: Representatives of CCI made comments about the Racial Profiling process. Harvey Harrison stated that he had data on police traffic stops and evidence that they do list or track race when a ticket is written or arrest is made. After some discussion Mr. Harrison stated that he could meet with members of the Commission to discussed the data. Other members of CCI expressed their concern about the process and made comments regarding City Council placing the burden on the Commission. The Commission expressed concern about the lack of trust from the group and how the Commission is in a negotiation process with the City about human rights concerns of members of the community. An ask was made as to what the group was not willing to compromise on. Members of CCI expressed that they wanted racial profiling banned by ordinance and that they wanted data collection.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.