



**Milwaukee County Human Rights Commission
November 3, 2016
United Community Center, Milwaukee WI**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Commissioners Jason Rae, Rob Smith, Rev. Willie Brisco, Lukischa Ramos, Danielle Bailey and County Executive's Representative Nate Holton.

Absent: Commissioners Supreme Okomunde-Moore and Martha Love

- I. Call to Order- 8:21 a.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes- Hold until next meeting.
- III. Public Comment- Anita Cortez present. Invited by R. Smith.
- IV. Old Business
 - a. End of terms: April 2017- Bailey, Ramos, Brisco. February 2018- Smith, September 18- Love & Rae. Moore stays on as County Board Representative.
 - b. Website- Bailey waiting on 2 more bios- will send to Holton when done.
 - c. Budget Update-
 - i. HRC signed on to letter, which was sent to County Board.
 - ii. New amendment cut vehicle registration fee by ½, going forward with \$30 version
 - iii. Didn't give Sheriff big budget increase as he requested... have gone along with most of the items in letter HRC signed.
 - d. Office on AAA- Board voted down Community Engagement Coordinator, cut budget in half (from 600K to 300K), rest is on hold until Director selected. Director search is ongoing. New HR positions within County ay help to aid process.
 - i. Rae proposed sending a letter to Board re: importance of community engagement position and reconsideration in budget (\$77K for position)
 1. Motion by Rob, Seconded by Danielle. Vote: All in favor. Motion passes
 2. Rae to draft & circulate letter this week... Next County Board meeting 11/&
 - ii. Criminal Justice Reform Project- Update from Holton
 1. Building a database from CCAP, to analyze larger trends in County, i.e. recidivism rates as they relate to programs the County funds, help identify people to help with expungement eligibility. No one really grabs data like this en masse & look at larger trends.
 2. Question from Cortez re accuracy of data and lack of identifiers sometimes, i.e. race- Holton agreed there will be some obstacles, which has prevented people from attempting same in the past, but are going to work with the data they have and do their best
 3. Question from Bailey re: Any legislative advocacy from OOAAA? Per Holton- Will use County lobbyist after election to set an agenda... with an aim on realistic legislative changes, for example, expungement expansion, employment laws... Can also open up for public input on direction for this.



- a. Rae to invite Eric Peterson- County lobbyist to December Meeting
 4. Brisco will be bringing issues of mass incarceration & criminal justice reform to HRC in coming meetings... for example, the idea of retroactive forgiveness for individuals convicted of cocaine charges, the same types of reform we are looking at for Heroin users now....
 5. Question from Smith re: Structure of Reform Project- County to look at what it means to grab this kind of data first. Limited to an extent in what County can do with data, but will help to assess County programs, & will also help with advocacy from County and from other outside groups.
 - a. MCHRC could potentially create report from data, and present data to community for open input/advocacy
 - b. Timeline? In first phase, looking at what it means to get data, should be done by end of 2016. Goal to have data by first half of 2017. Data will go back for 10 years, and update on monthly basis.
 6. Other efforts of OAAAA re: reentry resources?
 - a. Will be through House of Corrections.. One program is Opportunity Knocks- County takes foreclosed houses-uses ex-inmates to do renovation, then sells to section 8 individuals. Working with Ezekiel House who has been doing a similar project.
 - e. Water as a Human Right-
 - i. Bill re water passed in County Board. James Tarantino in process of research, was invited to November meeting, but in early stages still, so will come to a future meeting.
 - ii. MCHRC to invite City Water Quality Task Force to a future meeting as well.
 - iii. Brisco gave background on his involvement with the Freshwater Coalition. After much research and meetings with folks from Freshwater School, concluded that Milwaukee is years behind where it should be in terms of water quality & safety. No amount of lead is acceptable in drinking water. Mentioned Asia's efforts at potable water even for agricultural purposes. Also, discussed how filters on market are not as efficient as they should be. There will be many cities in the situation Flint was soon, so this is a very urgent matter for Milwaukee.
 - iv. Smith noted that Freshwater School was recently earmarked for being cut from budget by the State, so imperative to stay on this issue, support the work, in case the School does get cut.
 - v. Motion by Bailey for Commission to vote that: Water is a human Right & to commit the Commission to investigation of this issue further & to pursuing ways to support efforts to ensure Water is truly a human right for all Milwaukee County residents. Seconded by Smith. Vote- All in favor. Motion Passed.
- V. Human Rights Day-12/10/16
- a. Discussed collaboration with other organizations, asking County Executive to make a declaration, writing an op-ed, ramping up Facebook page.



- b. Decided that Rae will draft op-ed to re-introduce Commission and our aims for 2017, as well as, discussing the importance of Human Rights in the County on Human Rights Day. Rae to circulate to Commission in a couple of weeks for feedback.
 - c. All Commissioners will submit a paragraph on an important human right to be posted to Facebook page leading up to Human Rights Day.
- VI. Planning for 2017
- a. Main Focuses for 2017
 - i. Water as Human Right
 - ii. Criminal Justice Reform/Mass Incarceration
 - 1. Discussion on how to engage community around these topics and how we can support efforts within the County that are already underway.
 - a. Will invite folks involved with efforts to make Milwaukee's water quality a priority to come and speak to Commission and determine ways in which the Commission can support such efforts
 - b. Commission members to bring issues around these topics to the table to discuss and also to invite community organizations to educate us about the work they are doing and ways we can support such work.
 - c. Aim of connecting often isolated/separate non-profits and community groups working on similar issues, in an effort to create more connected community leadership around these issues
 - iii. Commission to use Op-Ed, Facebook posts, revamping of website as an effort to introduce Commission to people who could utilize us towards these goals.
 - iv. Additionally, Commission to write letter to community organizations and non-profits, similar to OP-ED informing of our 2017 goals, and extending open invitation to attend a Commission meeting and engage us with their work and mission and potential collaborations.
 - 1. Rae to draft and circulate. Holton to help with list of recipients for the letter.
 - b. Brisco mentioned a new group for Commission to learn more about: EXPO- ex prisoners organizing, quickest growing part of WISDOM, started a year ago, more information at prayforjustice.com, based in Milwaukee, via "Project Return"
- VII. Adjourned at 9:26 a.m.