

Erie County Human Relations Commission

Minutes – January 23, 2018

Attendance

Commissioners: Bob Howden, George Morgan, Sean Calhoun, Tracy Leet, Willie McAdory
Staff: Charlotte Scalise, Wayne Harbison and Joe Aguglia

Commission Members Not in Attendance

Tony Logue was not in attendance.
Connie Manus called to say she would not be in attendance.
Amy Danzer called to say she would not be in attendance.
The position from Carl Anderson on the Commission is still open.

Meeting was called to order at 6:50 pm

Approval of Minutes

Tracy Leet made a motion to approve the minutes from November, 2017. This was seconded by Sean Calhoun. They were approved unanimously.

Directors Report

Joe Aguglia discussed the HRC ordinance and proposed changes (re: criminal history) that has not yet been approved by County Council. April is fair housing month and the commission would like to see the new ordinance passed by then. Commission may organize grassroots to get ordinance passed.

Testing firm from Ohio, Fair Housing Resource Center is again an option for future proposed testing as the commission has \$5,000 of Act 137 money left from 2017 for testing. Testing has been done in Northeast and Edinboro but these are not the testing areas that are in the proposal for the Act 137 monies. More money is needed to increase sample sizes and target preferred testing areas. Joe Berdis, Erie County CDBG Program Administrator, found the results from the old testing firm undesirable and is recommending the commission use a different firm. Education is needed in West County but this is not a recommended way to spend the money allotted. Commission has requested an extension for the use of the 2017 money in order to get higher sample sizes in testing in desired areas. Commission has considered targeting areas in other ways, i.e. education and outreach, but testing is the best option. Commission will explore other testing firms and/or finding testers to work with other firms that do not provide their own testers. Tracy Leet will explore getting volunteers. The commission will explore costs/location and how many tests we could get for the money. It was \$1600 per paired test in 2014 and the desired number of tests would be 10-20 pairs. Commission will explore if original testing firm in Ohio will give more tests for the amount of money allocated.

There may be a hearing coming up.

New Business

Election of new officer: nominations for Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.

Tracy Leet nominated Bob Howden for Chairman, and this was seconded by Sean Calhoun.

Bob Howden nominated Amy Danzer for Vice Chairman and Tracy Leet seconded.

Tracy Leet nominated Sean Calhoun for Secretary and George Morgan seconded.

Tracy Leet moved to vote, George Morgan seconded and all nominations passed unanimously and will take effect in February, 2018.

March meeting date will be changed from Tuesday, March 27, 2018 to Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 6:30pm and will be a joint meeting with the Advisory Board.

As there has been no vote by County Council on the proposed ordinance change, the printing of the general brochure is on hold. After the vote, we can determine if changes to the brochure will be needed prior to printing.

Housing Seminar will be on April 25, 2018

Potential topics discussed for the seminar were:

- a. Erie County Care Management presenting on Mental Health and Homelessness as well as resources available in the county.
- b. Transgender discrimination in housing
- c. Present ordinance changes
- d. Personal story speaker about discrimination in housing
- e. HANDS Program on housing for the disabled and disadvantaged
- f. Present outcomes of discriminatory behavior
- g. Landlord rights vs. tenant rights and where to get help
- h. CODE evictions and tenant intimidation

Commission is applying for City of Erie CDBG funding, requesting \$12,000-\$18,000 for testing and/or education/outreach. Commission will propose the number of paired tests and costs needed to get valid results.

Old Business

WSEE and the CW were chosen to air the PSA/commercials and they are running currently.

Public Comment or Open Discussion

None

Adjournment

Tracy Leet moved that the meeting be adjourned. It was seconded by Willie McAdory and approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.