



## **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **REGULAR MEETING**

**Wednesday, May 28, 2014**

**5:30 – 6:30 pm in City Hall Council Chambers**

**301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX 78701**

Chair Paul Rhea called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m.

Commission Members in Attendance:

Paul Rhea, Chair

Sara Clark

Judy Cortez

Will Krueger

Human Resources Department Staff Present:

Joya Hayes, Assistant Director, Human Resources

Jonathan Babiak, Administrator, Equal Employment/Fair Housing Office (EE/FHO)

Rose Xavier, EE/FHO Staff Liaison

#### **1. CITIZENS' COMMUNICATION**

Charles Looser introduced himself as the new LGBT Community Liaison with the Austin Police Department.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the April 28, 2014 regular meeting were approved with changes on a 4-0 vote; Commissioner Cortez motion, Commissioner Clark seconded; Commissioners Lofton and Brenner were not present.

#### **3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. City Council passed a resolution directing the City Manager to evaluate the City of Austin's performance on the Municipal Quality Index and work with stakeholders including the Human Rights Commission on the ways to improve the score.
- b. Due to construction at City Hall, the Human Rights Commission Meetings for July, August and September will be held at the Street-Jones Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1000 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin TX 78702.

- c. Jonathan Luu has moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, resigning his seat on the Commission and position as Vice Chair.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Presentation from Jonathan Babiak, Equal Employment/Fair Housing Office, related to the Stakeholder Input process following Council Resolution 20140417-048 proposing to add Source of Income as a protected class to City Code Chapter 5-1 (Housing Discrimination).
  - i. Stakeholder Meetings will be held on June 4 from 1- 4 pm and June 11 from 6 – 8 pm at the Street-Jones Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1000 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, Texas 78702. The public is invited to attend.
- b. Presentation from Morgan Morrison related to the Austin Tenants' Council's study of source of income discrimination and Council Resolution 20140417-048 proposing to add Source of Income as a protected class to City Code Chapter 5-1 (Housing Discrimination).
  - i. The Austin Tenants' Council has released a report finding that housing choice in Austin is extremely limited for people who hold housing vouchers.
- c. Public comment and discussion related to Council Resolution 20140417-048 proposing to add Source of Income as a protected class to City Code Chapter 5-1 (Housing Discrimination).
  - i. Several members of ADAPT Texas spoke on their difficulties in finding accessible affordable housing in Austin and the need for greater availability of providers that accept housing choice vouchers. Their belief is that it can have a transformative effect on people's lives, giving them self-sufficiency. If those with housing vouchers are forced out of the City, that changes the character of the City.
  - ii. Fred Fuchs, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, spoke on the need to have precise language in the proposal that would leave out loopholes that allow housing providers not to comply with federal mandates for housing programs.
- d. Election of Vice Chair; Sara Clark was elected Vice Chair by unanimous vote.

## **5. STATUS OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- a. The status of the Commission's goals and objectives for 2014.
  - i. Austin Affordable Housing
  - ii. Transportation Study for Disability Community
  - iii. PARD Congregate Meal Program
  - iv. Improve internal Commission/EE/FHO processes and procedures.
- b. Plans and strategies for meeting those goals and objectives.

## **6. STAFF BRIEFING**

- a. City Council passed a resolution directing the City Manager to evaluate the City of Austin's performance on the Municipal Equality Index and work with stakeholders including the Human Rights Commission on the ways to improve the score.
  - i. The EE/FH office will be holding meetings to set up a dialogue between the stakeholders on ways the City can improve its score on the Municipal Equality Index

## **7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- a. Recommendation to City Council on adding Source of Income as a protected class.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm without objection.