



Governor Terry E. Branstad  
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds  
San Wong, Director

## **Iowa Commission on the Status of African Americans**

3rd Quarter Meeting

Minutes

March 3, 2016

Lucas State Office Building, Room 319

321 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

**Call to order** at 9:45 am by Chairperson Clair Rudison

### **Welcome/Introductions:**

**Present:** Clair Rudison, Bryan Burton, Madai Taylor, Rita Davenport (teleconference), Ken Morris (teleconference), San Wong, Ex-officio

**Absent:** Lynn Sutton, Kimberly Wayne

**Staff:** Kim Cheeks

### **Visitors:**

Doyle Landry – Positive Vision

Mary Chapman – Des Moines Branch NAACP

Arnold Woods – Des Moines Branch NAACP

Ini Augustine – Iowa Black Business Coalition

### **Approve Minutes:**

Commissioner Burton motioned to approve minutes of December 4, 2015 meeting as written, Rudison second, approved unanimously.

### **Financial Report:**

A copy of the DHR budget was handed out and included with the commissioner meeting materials in Monica Stones absence.

### **Public Comment:**

Augustine reported she was having difficulty finding meeting information on the website. Cheeks walked her through the steps to find the meeting dates, agendas, and minutes on the website calendar.

**Division of Community Advocacy and Services**

**Reports:****Director:**

No report

**Division:**

Stone, in her absence, submitted a written report with an attached list of 2016 Legislative Bills of interest to Community Advocacy and Services Division.

Rudison highlighted bill SF 2193 – an act relating to wage discrimination under the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965, making penalties applicable, and establishing an equal pay task force and its relevance to the African American community. He explained how bills SF 2130 (An act modifying the criminal offense of harassment, and providing penalties) did not pass and SF 2236 (A bill for an act relating to county funding of mental health and disability services and the mental health and disability services property tax levy) and its' effect to possible reduction in services if funding is taken away to Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines.

Davenport remarked access to mental health services in the African American community and the barriers associated; faith, culture, spiritual, and education. She is a NAMI member and there is family training that focuses on people of color and reducing the stigma attached to it.

**Office:**

Cheeks included a written report, and emphasized the following items;

- 2016 Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration
- Iowa NAACP Day on the Hill
- Ft. Dodge Criminal Justice Summit
- listing of criminal justice bills in the legislature she created that could be supported by the commission

**Commissioner Reports:**

Chair Rudison stressed the importance for each commissioner to provide a written report for meetings.

Commissioner Taylor:

- Attended Criminal Justice Summit in Ft. Dodge
- Prison ministry – increase in African American male population at the correctional facility, feels there has been no impact made on reducing those numbers

Arnold Woods, NAACP – commented about the progress of legislation introduced by NAACP and how they had made it through the first funnel. He mentioned how getting the support of both

houses can be difficult, and the process is long term. He explained that they were meeting with Dep't. of Corrections (DOC) and had received the informational quarterly "Quick Facts" sheets.

Dr. Mary Chapman - explained the importance of having a seat at the table and her engagement since the 1970's. She has served on Board of Corrections, attended DOC board meetings, and asks questions about alternatives to corrections, etc.

Cheeks asked Mr. Woods if the quarterly meetings with the Governor and NAACP are open to the public and do they accept recommendations from individuals or organizations?

Woods response was NAACP can invite allies to attend the meetings and the schedule is available to view.

Commissioner Burton:

- Waterloo has a new African American mayor, who started on January 10.

Commissioner Rudison:

- Will submit written report
- Continues to work on African American contractors submitting bids to Dep't of Transportation (DOT) for state construction contracts
- Attended I'll Make Me A World in Iowa (IMMAWII) and Criminal Justice Summit in Des Moines
- Continues to work at Evelyn Davis Center on re-entry program and wraparound services
- Traveling to Washington D.C. to talk about funding to programs

Commissioner Davenport:

- Attended MLK Celebration
- Continues to work on higher education issues; access and completion of degree programs, predatory lending for education, and counseling for students of color on campus

Commissioner Morris:

- Took students to IMMAWII event
- Participated in discussions with school district about shootings in the community
- Non-profits serving students of color under one umbrella, gather and create consortium for all organizations due to competition of funds
- Diversity initiatives committee: city, county & schools, working on diversifying candidate pools, student body, etc.
- Education funding in crisis, staff cuts, 30% students of color, staff 4-5% cut in staff of color in leadership roles

End of reports.

**Old Business:**

**1. DHR Board Report:**

Rudison – no report

**New business:**

Rudison proposed due to shortage of time to table until the next meeting.

**Next meeting:**

Burton motioned to adjourn and submit meeting dates to Cheeks, second by Taylor, approved unanimously.

**Adjourned at 11:08 am.**

Respectfully submitted by Kim Cheeks

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Cheeks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.