



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR) Minutes of Board Meeting

August 13, 2020, 1:00-2:30 pm

The meeting was held virtually via Google Meet video and phone conference due to COVID-19.

Members present

- Chair Floyd Winter, Public Member
- Dr. Ahmadu Baba-Singhri, Commission on the Status of African Americans
- Beth Coonan, Commission on the Status of Women
- Ben Jung, Commission of Asian/Pacific Islander Affairs
- Karen Mackey, Commission of Native American Affairs
- San Wong, Director, Iowa Department of Human Rights (ex-officio)

Members Absent

- Michelle Ray Michalec, Commission of Persons with Disabilities
- Anna Brown, Commission on Community Action Agencies
- Gilbert Nunez, Commission of Latino Affairs
- Judge Jeff Neary, Justice Advisory Board
- Rep. Holly Brink, Iowa House of Representatives (ex-officio)
- Rep. Phyllis Thede, Iowa House of Representatives (ex-officio)
- Senator Zach Wahls, Iowa Senate (ex-officio)
- Senator Zach Whiting, Iowa Senate (ex-officio)

DHR Staff Present

- Bill Brand, Administrator, Division of Community Action Agencies
- Jim Mezera, Fiscal Officer
- Steve Michael, Administrator, Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning
- Monica Stone, Deputy Director and Administrator, Division of Community Advocacy and Services
- Sonya Streit, Executive Officer

Others Present

- Caroline Barrett, Assistant Attorney General

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Winter called the meeting to order. A quorum was present introductions were made.

2. Approval of Minutes

Coonan moved to approve minutes, seconded by Mackey. Motion carried by voice vote.

3. Department Report

Director Wong reported that a derecho storm moved across Iowa and damaged many parts of the state. The storm left many Iowans without electricity and internet. Many homes, property, and farms were severely damaged. In addition to the coronavirus pandemic, Iowans are dealing with the aftermath of the storm. DHR continues to be a resource for Iowans in need.

4. Board Updates

a. Commission of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (CAPI)

Jung:

- The Commission met the previous week. Members discussed responsibilities of the Commission's work and how to be more nimble and efficient.
- The Commission is drafting a letter with recommendations regarding the census to have a more effective count of the population. The state had shared Iowa Department of Transportation data with the federal government which may cause the census results to be undercounted. Commission is monitoring the data collection process and working on next steps. The overarching goal is for Iowa to have a high response rate and for everyone to be counted. Accurate results would reflect more of the changes of state's population, including immigrants and refugees. Census deadline is end of September.
- The State's Complete Count Committee will meet on August 19.

b. Commission on the Status of African Americans

Dr. Baba-Singhri:

- The Commission will meet on August 14.
- Listen and Learn sessions continue; the next one will be in Sioux city.
- The Commission submitted a letter to the Governor's Office regarding COVID-19 and the impact on the African American community.

- The Commission would like to collaborate more with other Black organizations such as NAACP.
- The Commission will hold a strategic planning session.
- The Commission continues to work on issues of discrimination, employment, education, criminal justice, and COVID-19.

c. Commission of Native American Affairs

Mackey:

- The Commission will meet on August 17 via Zoom.
- On the agenda are reports from the state archeologist and Indian health care.
- Mackey expressed interest in possibly joining CAPI'S letter regarding the census.

d. Commission on the Status of Women

Coonan:

- Kristen Corey, DHR/Office on the Status of Women, accepted a new job at another state agency.
- The Women's Hall of Fame ceremony is postponed. A video will be produced in honor of the inductees.
- The Commission is participating in the trail markers program for women's suffrage.
- The Commission would like to revive the Iowa Women at Work project.
- The Commission continues to look at the impact of COVID-9 on working moms.
- Next meeting to be determined.

5. DHR Division Updates

a. Division of Community Action Agencies

Brand:

- DHR/Division of Community Action Agencies received \$10.8 million in supplemental funds from the CARES Act towards the Community Services Block Grant program. The funds are to be used by states and community action agencies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. Iowans can apply for other types of assistance related to food, rent, and disaster-related needs, given the August 10 derecho storm.
- DHR also received \$4.2 million in LIHEAP CARES Act funding which will be used primarily for crisis assistance for households facing disconnection.

b. Division of Community Advocacy and Services (CAS)

Stone:

- Gilbert Nunez, member of the Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs, will be representing the Commission on the DHR Board.
- The Latino Hall of Fame inductees have been selected. Information about the inductees can be found on the DHR website.
- COVID-19 has affected underserved communities disproportionately due to the prevalence of chronic conditions, lack of access to health care, and other factors. The pandemic has shone a light on the inequities and systemic hurdles that vulnerable communities face. DHR is working to focus on inclusion, equity, and reducing barriers to help the populations it serves.
- Eight youth participated in the Youth Leadership Academy was held August 3-11. The program is a partnership with the University of Iowa, Center for Disabilities and Development, and the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council. Virtual instruction was provided regarding goal setting, leadership skills, civic engagement and self-advocacy, along with a panel discussion of young persons with disabilities.

c. Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP) and Justice Advisory Board

Michael:

- DHR/CJJP is recruiting youth for the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council for the 2020-2021 term.
- DHR/CJJP is also seeking to fill two AmeriCorps positions who will coordinate the youth programs.
- Kayla Powell has been hired as the new National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Coordinator, as well as to oversee DHR's youth initiatives.
- CJJP received COVID-19 stimulus funding in the amount of \$212,779 from the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP). The funds will be used to start a project in which the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) is partnering with healthcare networks to share inmates' health records in real time with jails and prisons.

6. Public comment - No public comment.

7. The next meeting will be scheduled for sometime in October.

8. Jung moved to adjourn, seconded by Mackey. The motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned.

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