



Approved

**CITY OF YPSILANTI
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, February 25, 2013
7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Claudia Pettit	Absent	Commissioner Darlene Scott	Present
Commissioner Arika Lyan	Absent	Chair John Shuler	Present
Commissioner Krista Nordberg	Present	Vice Chair Jennifer Symanns	Present
Commissioner Glen Sard	Absent		

A quorum was present.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Shuler suggested adding discussion of the forum topics to the agenda.

Commissioner Scott moved to approve the agenda with the addition. Vice Chair Symanns seconded this motion.

On a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes from September 24, 2012 and January 28, 2013

Commissioner Scott moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Nordberg seconded this motion.

On a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Invitation from City of Grand Rapids Human Relations Commission

Chair Shuler stated that there is a fee for attendance and that was an issue because there was not a budget to support the cost.

Commissioner Scott stated that she does not believe it is a City of Grand Rapids Human Resources event, rather, she thinks it is an annual Gala that is being sponsored by the Commission.

Vice Chair Symanns moved to decline attendance at the City of Grand Rapids event. Commissioner Scott seconded this motion.

On a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion of Forum topics

Chair Shuler asked if it was legal for a Commission to have a fundraiser, similar to the City of Grand Rapids event.

Vice Chair Symanns mentioned that they could be operating as a 501(c).

Chair Shuler asked if the Commission could operate as a 501(c).

Vice Chair Symanns mentioned that she was not able to prepare the report on the survey results but she would be working on it and would send it before next month's meeting.

Commissioner Nordberg stated that she could help Vice Chair Symanns with gathering information for the disability forum. She mentioned that, as a part of her work, she would be preparing a presentation and participating as a member of a panel with other organizations in the County that do disability work.

Vice Chair Symanns mentioned that Commissioner Petit would also be assisting with gathering resources and contacting potential speakers for the disability forum.

Commissioner Nordberg asked if the Commission wanted to focus more on assistance and benefits or on legal protection and advocacy.

Vice Chair Symanns mentioned that the Commission had decided to focus on physical disabilities. She added that it would be nice to have people come and speak about their experiences as well as having organizations come to speak about the services they provide. She mentioned that Commissioner Nordberg could be a speaker because of her disability work in the County.

Commissioner Nordberg stated that Elizabeth Warren, a Social Security and Disability Attorney, would be a wonderful resource.

Vice Chair Symanns mentioned that people may be more willing to talk about challenges they have faced rather than outright discrimination that they may have experienced. She said this would assist with community awareness.

Commissioner Nordberg stated that they might want to narrow their focus even further. She said her preference would be to focus on the resources available.

Chair Shuler commented on the different definitions of discrimination and how discrimination can occur even when it is not done consciously or overtly. He stated that education on the challenges of having a disability may make people conscious of discrimination they were not previously aware of. He suggested the Commission see what planning they could get done without targeting a specific date.

Vice Chair Symanns mentioned that she would have liked to have the forum in April so that students would be able to attend.

Commissioner Nordberg mentioned that they may have more information, as well, about Medicaid expansion, if they wait to have the forum at a later date. She mentioned that she could coordinate with Vice Chair Symanns and Commissioner Petit to come up with further information and resources for the forum.

Chair Shuler stated his goal for the forums is to uncover any potential issues the Commission needs to address.

Commissioner Nordberg discussed healthcare reform in the State of Michigan and how the City of Ypsilanti can get the word out on healthcare and enrollment.

Vice Chair Symanns stated that perhaps the Commission could do a Community Service presentation to inform citizens about open enrollment.

Chair Shuler asked if there was a specific City organization or department that would be tasked with healthcare initiatives.

Commissioner Nordberg stated that she wasn't aware of one in the City, rather it is usually taken care of at the County level.

Chair Shuler suggested partnering with organizations at the County level to assist with informing the community.

Commissioner Scott asked if there would be local sites, within the City, where people could begin the process of enrollment.

Commissioner Nordberg shared her understanding of the different ways that people can complete applications and where they can get assistance.

Chair Shuler asked what resources would be needed in the City, in addition to the efforts that the County would be taking on.

Commissioner Nordberg stated that there were no additional resources that would be needed, just more advertising to get the word out.

Chair Shuler stated that maybe a forum would be appropriate to not only get the word out, but to also educate the Commissioners, as well as the public, on the process involved with open enrollment.

Commissioner Nordberg stated she would be brining flyers with her to the next meeting, for the Commissioners to share, about the re-opening of State Plan A and she shared a bit of background behind the plan and what it covers.

VII. NEXT MEETING DATE

March 25, 2013

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Symanns moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Nordberg seconded this motion.

On a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.