

**City of Edwardsville
Human Relations Committee
Special Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: February 28, 2022

Location: City Hall, Council Chambers, 118 Hillsboro Avenue, Edwardsville, IL 62025

Members Present:

- Paul Pitts (Chair), Anya Covington, Violet Evans, Keith Page, David Boyer, Brian Pezza, Jean McGurk O'Brien (Secretary)
- Quorum present

Others Present:

- Amanda Tucker (City Liaison), Jeffrey Berkbigler (City Attorney)

Called to Order: by Paul Pitts at 5:00 p.m.

Moment of Silence: Paul Pitts requested a moment of silence for the conflict in Ukraine and the other conflicts around the world, wishing for the conflicts to end in a peaceful way.

Public Comment:

- None

Approval of Minutes:

- Action reserved for next regular meeting.

Administrative:

- Amanda Tucker clarified that the purpose of today's Special Meeting, as decided by the committee at the last meeting, was to have a focused discussion about the HRC ordinance, Article II Sec. 58-16 through 58.27. Jeffrey Berkbigler was in attendance to assist with answering any legal questions which might arise in the discussion. What is ultimately approved by the HRC will be sent as a recommendation to the ACS.
- The HRC decided to only discuss aspects of the ordinance which pertain to the complaint process, and leave discussion of other aspects of the ordinance for a later discussion.
- The HRC decided that, at this time, it would not act as an investigation force, but would make recommendations regarding complaint process procedures and would review all complaint cases.
- David Boyer distributed a handout (attached) suggesting recommendations for several aspects of the ordinance.
- Recommendations regarding the complaint process which have so far been discussed, though none have been finalized:
 - All complaints of discrimination will be submitted, either online or in writing to the Mayor's office, and will then be referred to the appropriate department head for review and investigation as appropriate.

- The Mayor's office will notify the HRC Chair of each received complaint and its distribution.
- Once complaint has been investigated a report will be made and shared with the HRC for review. The HRC may agree with the final resolution or may request additional action. Additionally, the HRC will be looking to identify any particular patterns of discrimination which could be addressed more broadly.
- Any complaint against a City employee will be deliberated in private, though results may be made public, as legally required.
- The complaint process and access to complaint process must be transparent and accessible. The ordinance, process and complaint forms are meant to be available online as well as by request at the City administration building.
- The HRC would like the ordinance to clearly state that the City administration will keep the HRC apprised of progress or problems with an investigation and will bring the report to the HRC for review and further recommendations.

Specific ordinance changes recommended:

- Sec. 58-16. Purpose – add “or transgender status,” after “sexual orientation” in the first sentence.
- Sec. 58-17. Establishment; composition; terms of office. First sentence change to clarify that city liaison is not a voting member of HRC.
- Sec. 58-18 (a) (9) – replace whole sentence with “To provided oversight to the city in the event of complaints or violations to this chapter.”
- Sec. 58-20. Investigations, research and publications. – remove “Investigations” from title. Change text to read: The human relations committee may receive complaints based on discrimination because of membership in groups identified in Section 58.16 against any person or group. Additionally, may carry on research, obtain factual data and conduct public meetings to ascertain the status and treatment of such persons or groups in the city, and the best means of progressively improving human relations in the entire city, and may issue such publications and such results of investigations and public meetings and make such recommendations to the mayor and council as in its judgement will effectuate the policy of this [article]. Complaints filed under this article shall be referred to the office of the mayor.”
- Sec. 58-21. Meetings – remove the second sentence which refers to the police department.
- Sec. 58-22. Definitions – move to either the end or the beginning of the ordinance, and remove the definition for “Attorney” as the word is not included in this ordinance.
- Sec. 58-25 (a). Change text to read: “*Who may file.* Any person claiming to be aggrieved by an act of discrimination may file a complaint. Any person filling such a complaint shall be referred to as the complainant.
- Sec. 58-25 (b). Change text to read: “*Where to file.* Complaints may be filed online or in person in the office of the mayor., who shall promptly notify the chair of the filing of the complaint.

- Sec. 58-26 (a). *Filing an answer*. Change "...within 21 days..." to "...within 30 days after being notified of the complaint unless employee handbook is relevant and indicates a lower number of days allowed."
- Sec. 58-26 (b). *Failure to answer*. Change "21 days" to "30 days", and to read: "...30 days after being notified of the complaint the city may deem this failure..."
- Sec. 58-27. Investigation of a complaint. Change this title.
- Sec. 58-27 (a). Change to read: "...the City shall appointment an investigator or co-investigators. The City will promptly..."

Next Meeting

- The next regular scheduled meeting of the Human Relations Committee will be Monday, March 7, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by David Boyer, seconded by Keith Page. Motion passed; meeting adjourned by Paul Pitts at 6:47 p.m.



Paul Pitts, Chair

Minutes Prepared by: Jean McGurk O'Brien, Secretary, 3/7/2022

Approved Signature: _____



Approved Date: _____



