

**CITY OF LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
MINUTES**

Thursday, March 25, 2021
555 S 10th Street, 1st Floor
City County Building, Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER:

The March 25, 2021 meeting of the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights (LCHR) was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Carlos Garcia, Chair.

ROLL CALL:

The roll was called.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioners: Carlos Garcia (Chair), Precious Loving-Afuh (Vice Chair), Sheri Blok, Rose Godinez, Emira Ibrahimasic, and Terry Werner.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Commissioners: Jolene McCulley

STAFF PRESENT:

Mindy Rush Chipman, Abigail Littrell, Haefaa Hasan, Rob Rowan, Chassidy Jackson-Goodwin, and Sally Casillas.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 25, 2021 MINUTES:

A motion was made by Ibrahimasic and seconded by Werner to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Hearing no discussion, Garcia asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Garcia, Loving-Afuh, Blok, Godinez, Werner, and Ibrahimasic. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 25, 2021 AGENDA:

A motion was made by Werner and seconded by Ibrahimasic to approve the meeting agenda.

Hearing no discussion, Garcia asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Loving-Afuh, Blok, Werner, and Ibrahimasic. Motion carried.

CASE DISPOSITIONS:

LCHR #20-1029-010-H

A motion was made by Werner and seconded by Ibrahimasic to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Ibrahimasic questioned the timeline of the eviction during the moratorium and suggested that Respondent was not evicting for non-payment, and as such not in violation of the moratorium. Ibrahimasic opined that there was not enough substantive evidence to show Respondent failed to engage in the interactive process regarding Complainant's request for an emotional support animal (ESA) or to support favor reasonable cause.

Werner opined that the Respondent was collaborative with Complainant and perhaps going above and beyond by offering to obtain a note from Complainant's medical provider for ESA. Loving-Afuh also noted that the Respondent was willing and trying to help Complainant meet requirements for ESAs in the apartment complex.

Ibrahimasic questioned if Complainant's request to continue the eviction proceeding was a reasonable accommodation request, in which Littrell answered that the request to continue the eviction proceeding and the request for an ESA could be viewed as two different requests for reasonable accommodation based upon Complainant's daughter's disabilities. Commissioners discussed whether the reasonable accommodation request was mentioned in the scheduled eviction hearing in which Werner, Loving-Afuh, and Ibrahimasic agreed that there was evidence provided to indicate Complainant violated the "no dog policy", failed to pick up the dog waste, failed to provide the prescriptive letter, and did not report the dog to the Respondent. Godinez disagreed and clarified that punitive actions should not be taken against an ESA owner because of outside animal waste.

Hearing no further discussion, Garcia asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Loving-Afuh, Blok, Werner, and Ibrahimasic. Voting no were Garcia and Godinez. Motion carried.

LCHR #20-0604-009-E-R

A motion was made by Loving-Afuh and seconded by Godinez for **no reasonable cause** on the allegation.

Ibrahimasic commented that five employees were dismissed below the age of 40, and that those that were furloughed consisted of a variety of ages--with a majority being below the age of 40. Loving-Afuh agreed with Ibrahimasic's comment regarding the dismissed and furloughed employees. Godinez added that others who had the same job position as the Complainant were also either dismissed or furloughed.

Hearing no further discussion, Garcia asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Garcia, Loving-Afuh, Blok, Godinez, Werner, and Ibrahimasic. Motion carried.

SUCCESSFUL CONCILIATION:

LCHR #20-0629-011E-R

A motion was made by Werner and seconded by Loving-Afuh to accept and approve the proposed conciliation agreement.

Hearing no further discussion, Garcia asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Garcia, Loving-Afuh, Blok, McCulley, Werner, and Ibrahimasic. Motion carried.

PRE-DETERMINATION SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS:

LCHR #20-1113-011-H

A motion was made by Werner and seconded by Blok to accept the pre-determination settlement agreement.

Hearing no discussion, Garcia asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Garcia, Blok, Werner, Godinez and Ibrahimasic. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Outreach

Rush Chipman updated Commissioners on LCHR’s My City Academy’s (MCA) first cohort. Due to the success of the program, it will be extended to include additional sessions or a separate graduation session.

Rush Chipman updated Commissioners of the candlelight vigil taking place tonight, March 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at Tower Square in downtown Lincoln, to support the Asian-American and Pacific Islander community.

Rush Chipman updated Commissioners of the progress for Hasan’s anti-discrimination video production collaboration with high school students, and Rowan’s Redlining exhibit and video. Rush Chipman mentioned that the goal is to release and promote those two projects in April for Fair Housing month.

NEW BUSINESS:

Director Update

Rush Chipman introduced the Commissioners to LCHR’s new Sr. Civil Rights Investigator, Chassidy Jackson-Goodwin, and LCHR’s new Human Rights Commissioner, Kevin Abourezk who will be confirmed by Lincoln City Council on Monday, March 29, 2021. Rush Chipman added that the Mayor is in the process of appointing the second new Human Rights Commissioner, who will hopefully be confirmed before next month’s Commission meeting on

April 29, 2021.

Rush Chipman informed Commissioners that Rowan will be reaching out to them shortly to coordinate the new and annual Human Rights Commissioner training.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, April 29, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.
555 S. 10th Street, 1st Floor, Council Chambers