

**Isabella County Human Rights Committee  
Minutes January 7, 2019**

**Members Present**

Maureen Eke, Chairperson  
Sarvjit Chowdhary  
Laura Gonzales  
Steve Swaney, County Commissioner  
Matt Mertz  
Alicia Paterni  
Amy Shawboose  
Cheryl Gonzalez  
Dawn Jevicks  
Anne Swift

**Un / Excused Absences**

Justin Knott-Unexcused

**1. Welcome**

Chairperson Maureen Eke called the meeting to order at 5:23 p.m. Maureen welcomed two new members to the HRC; Dawn Jevicks, a community advocate and volunteer, and Steve Swaney, County Commissioner liaison for the HRC. Welcome new members; we are happy to have you!

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Maureen Eke asked for a motion to approve January agenda. Alicia Paterni proposed a motion to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Amy Shawboose. Motion carried with full support of the HRC committee.

**3. Public Comment**

Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police, City of Mt. Pleasant, Paul Lauria, presented to the HRC committee how the public can make a formal complaint against an officer. Mr. Lauria also shared examples of complaint forms. This is in effort for the police department and the HRC committee to work closer together to advocate for and preserve the rights of all Isabella citizens. Amy Shawboose stated that some citizens are afraid to file a complaint against an officer because of fear of retaliation. Dawn Jevicks inquired if these complaint forms can be filled out

anonymously, so citizens feel safe reporting the incident. Mr. Lauria stated that he will look into that. Amy Shawboose inquired if the link to the complaint forms, which are found on the Mt. Pleasant Police Department website, could be linked to the HRC website. 'Lauria confirmed that he and Maureen Eke have already discussed this and he will look further into how to do this. Dawn Jevicks asked if the public can fill the complaint form out online and email it to the Police Department versus having to print the form out and hand it in to the Police Department. Mr. Lauria will also look into this and report back to the HRC.

Amy Shawboose had a "Dream" request for Mr. Lauria. She stated that it would be beneficial to the public for the Police Department to create a video of what a standard traffic stop would look like. What will the officer ask the citizen? Also what a citizen can do when they feel the officer is being biased or discriminatory towards them.

Matt Mertz stated that some citizens have reported to him that they are confused over which phone number they should call in a non-emergency setting, for example State Police, City Police, County Police, Tribal or Police. Mr. Lauria stated that by calling 911 the dispatchers will route the call to the appropriate police department.

Maureen Eke stated that the relationship between the Mt. Pleasant Police Department and the HRC will be ongoing. Mr. Lauria is invited to monthly HRC meetings, as his schedule allows, to report any Human Rights concerns the public has shared with him. Maureen Eke and Mr. Lauria will discuss a co-sponsored Town Hall event to address the public's concerns with the Police Department to take place in the Spring of 2019. Maureen Eke thanked Mr. Lauria for his presentation to the HRC and stated she is looking forward to building a strong community relationship.

#### **4. Approval of December 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Alicia Paterni made a motion to approve the December meeting minutes as amended. Sarvjit Chowdhary seconded the motion. Approval of the December meeting minutes passed unanimously. Alicia Paterni will make said corrections and email to chairperson Maureen Eke.

#### **5. Election of new officers: (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary)**

Amy Shawboose nominated Maureen Eke to Chair the HRC. Amy Shawboose asked all members if there was anyone else who was

interested in being nominated to Chair the HRC. No members responded. A vote was taken to elect Maureen Eke as Chair of the HRC. This vote passed unanimously. Thank you Dr. Maureen Eke for chairing the HRC for another year. Laura Gonzales nominated Cheryl Gonzalez for Vice-Chair of the HRC. A vote was taken to elect Cheryl Gonzalez as Vice-Chair of the HRC. This vote passed unanimously. Thank you Cheryl Gonzalez for being Vice-Chair of the HRC. Maureen Eke asked if Alicia Paterni would like to continue on as the Secretary for the HRC. She stated she would and a vote was cast to elect Alicia Paterni as Secretary of the HRC. This vote passed unanimously and Alicia Paterni will continue to serve as Secretary for the HRC. This concluded the election of new officers for 2019.

## **6. Reports: President's Report**

### **a. Report to County Board**

Steve Swaney is new County Commissioner liaison for the HRC. Welcome Steve Swaney. Maureen Eke will bring the end of year report to the County Commissioners meeting on February 5, 2019 at 4 p.m. at the County Building. Maureen will also email all HRC members this report for their review.

### **b. HRC Budget**

There have not been any changes to the budget this month.

### **c. Events Calendar - Laura Gonzales**

MLK Jr. Day is on January 21, 2019. Chairperson Maureen Eke will be participating in the MLK Jr. Peace Breakfast and March on January 21, 2019, this event is free and all HRC members are welcome.

Maureen Eke would like to do a HRC presentation to the Student Government Association (SGA) to make them aware of our committee and what we do for the community. Matt Mertz will locate a contact person on the SGA and pass along that name to Maureen Eke.

Laura Gonzales will email the calendar of events to all HRC members.

### **d. "Let Peace Reign" Event for 2019**

HRC members voted on the date for the 2019 "Let Peace Reign" event. Maureen Eke suggested two possible dates, September 14, or 21, 2019. A vote was taken and HRC members voted to hold the Peace event on

September 14, 2019. Maureen Eke will reserve the same pavilion the event was held in 2018.

## **7. Subcommittee Updates:**

### **a.) Study of Micro-Aggressions - Community Education Subcommittee (Gonzales)**

This sub-committee was not able to meet and has no update.

### **b.) Micro-Aggressions Study Budget (Gonzales)**

This sub-committee will bring budget updates to February 4th HRC meeting

### **c.) Reactivating the Law Enforcement Sub-committee**

Members: Maureen Eke, Laura Gonzales, Cheryl Gonzalez, Dawn Jevicks, Matt Mertz, Sarvjit Chowdhary. Maureen will set up a conference call or meeting and members will set the charge of this group at the February 4, 2019 HRC meeting.

### **d.) By-Laws sub-committee**

Members: Amy Shawboose, Matt Mertz, Alicia Paterni. will report back in February once the group has met.

## **8. Adjournment**

Chairperson Maureen Eke asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was supported by Laura Gonzales, seconded by Alicia Paterni, and passed unanimously. The HRC adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

## **9. Next Meeting**

February 4, 2019