

**MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 22, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.

1. Meeting began at 5:05 p.m. with the Roll Call and Call to Order:
Members present: Byron Bangert, Darcie Fawcett, Doris Parlette, Kathleen Sideli, and Paul White. Staff present: Margie Rice, County Attorney.
2. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the July 25, 2018 meeting.
3. The Commission briefly touched on the letter that they sent to Indiana Public Media and the fact that no response had yet been received. Byron mentioned that the issue of hate crime legislation continues to be discussed with no mention of the bias crime reporting law that is already on the books.
4. The summary of the Commission's past activities, which Kathy put together, was reviewed. Everyone felt as if it accurately captured and reflected the conversations the Commission had with visitors and no changes were suggested. Questions of who to talk with and what the next steps should be were raised. Byron mentioned that Owen Johnson sent an email asking about the Correctional Center overcrowding and Byron thought Kathy's summary was helpful to have to send in response. Whether persons in the Correctional Center were there serving sentences or for probation violations was discussed. It was pointed out that Judge Kellams' visit was about one year ago (August 2017) and he stated there was a very low number of persons actually serving a sentence in our Correctional Center and that most were there for other reasons. Paul told the Commission about a conversation he recently had with the man who was in jail and who initiated the original lawsuit against Monroe County for overcrowding in the Correctional Center. Ultimately, the Commission agreed that regardless of why persons are incarcerated, our current facility seems inadequate from a human rights perspective. For an advanced community, with so many things we do well, the Commission felt as if we could be doing better in the way in which persons who commit crimes are housed. To not bring this conversation up would be a "missed opportunity". Paul suggested the Commission might want to write an article to the Herald Times or start an informational campaign. Kathy thought the Monroe County Board of Commissioners should be with the Commission, so a conversation with them would be a better next step than a publicity campaign. She said a future step could involve publicity or public outreach. It was agreed that Darcie would reach out to Amanda Barge and Kathy would reach out to Julie Thomas to discuss how the Commission could be most helpful to Monroe County on the topic of facilities for those incarcerated in Monroe County. Doris said she would be willing to talk with Amanda Barge about the benefits of seeking accreditation from the American Correctional Association. Byron mentioned a meeting John Clower wanted to have with the Monroe County Sheriff and a member of the Commission to discuss bias crimes. Byron was willing to attend, but did not want to preempt Kathy's attendance as the Commission Chair. It was agreed that Byron would attend. On the topic of bias crime reporting, it was mentioned that there may have been an incident in July of 2014 referred to the Monroe County Sheriff by the Bloomington Police Department. Margie was asked to inquire about that incident.
5. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.