

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

Wednesday, October 24, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.

1. Meeting began at 5:07 p.m. with the Roll Call and Call to Order:
Members present: Byron Bangert, Darcie Fawcett, Doris Parlette, Eric Sader, Kathleen Sideli, and Paul White.
Staff present: Margie Rice, County Attorney.

2. The Commission approved the minutes from the September 26, 2018 meeting.

3. Margie provided the Commission updates on inquiries received informally, including one new call received by Beth Reed who had been working on a temporary basis at PTS, through a temporary placement agency MFG. Ms. Reed claimed she was not allowed to work at her sit-down job after she broke her leg and was in a wheel chair, because PTS said she could not get her wheelchair through their metal detector. After discussion, it was decided more information was necessary to determine if an investigation was warranted.

The case of Dana Conway looked as if it was going to be resolved by Ms. Conway's lawyer, but the County was working to find a temporary home for Ms. Conway's dog. Information was still being sought from attorney John Richards in the Kaitlyn Miller informal complaint.

Eric had to leave early, but brought up a concern about possible discriminatory treatment by Henson's Mum Farm and Greenhouse, which is based in Owen County but does business in Monroe County. The farm had originally agreed to provide flowers for a wedding of a same-sex couple, led them along and then backed out at the last minute. A reference to the owner's faith preventing them from providing flowers was mentioned. A review was written and posted on the Farm's website, but the review was removed by the Farm owners who thought it was harassment. The HRC discussed the fact that written complaints are required by the Monroe County Code for an investigation to be initiated. A letter could be written to the Farm, though, without an investigation being opened.

4. It was briefly noted that John Clower was going to meet with the Herald Times to discuss bias crime.
5. Kathy provided an update about her conversation with County Commissioner Julie Thomas and Darcie Fawcett discussed her conversation with County Commissioner Amanda Barge. Commissioner Thomas was pleased that the HRC had talked to so many different people and done their homework. She like the HRC's energy, but thought it should be held for the moment. She indicated that the timing may not be ideal for the HRC to take any action at this time; however, the HRC may have a role to play in the future when conversations occur about the current facility and how to improve conditions there. Commissioner Barge was, at first, a little caught off guard about the HRC's activities and why the HRC would be discussing the Correctional Center, but Darcie explained that the HRC wanted to be an ally when the Commissioners get ready to make decisions. The HRC discussed facility and space issues, including space in the County's parking garage that may be used, and other possible options to help including Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program and greater use of electronic bracelets for monitoring.
6. In closing, the Commission touched on the January 21, 2019 MLK Day and its contribution and appointing a member as secretary, pursuant to Monroe County Code 216. These issues would be revisited in the future. Doris indicated she would not be at the next meeting in person, but available by phone. She will be back in March of 2019.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.