

Sharon K. Williams, District 1
Junior Watkins, District 2
Betty Duncan, District 3
Chairperson-Andrew A. Rand, District 4
Brandy Bryant, District 5
Eden Blair, District 6
James C. Dillon, District 7
Phillip Salzer, District 8
Kathrin Pastucha, District 9



Andrew A. Rand - Chairperson
Rachael Parker, County Clerk

Robert Reneu, District 10
Linda Daley, District 11
Rachel Reliford, District 12
Vice Chairperson-James T. Fennell, District 13
Brian Elsasser, District 14
Steven Rieker, District 15
Matthew Windish, District 16
Jennifer Groves Allison, District 17
Paul Rosenbohm, District 18

**SPECIAL JOINT PEORIA COUNTY BOARD / PEORIA CITY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 29, 2020
6:00 PM**

www.peoriacounty.org/countyboard

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL BY THE COUNTY CLERK AND CITY CLERK

Attendance, via teleconference, of the Mayor and City Council was taken by City Clerk Beth Ball, and the following were present: Mayor Ardis, Council Members Ali, Cyr, Grayeb, Jensen, Kelly, Montelongo, Moore, Riggenbach, Ruckriegel, with Council Member Oyler absent.

Attendance, via teleconference, of the County Board was taken by County Clerk Rachael Parker, and the following members were present: Members Blair, Bryant, Daley, Dillon, Duncan, Fennell, Groves Allison, Pastucha, Rand, Reliford, Reneau, Rieker, Salzer, and Williams, with Members Elsasser, Rosenbohm, Watkins and Windish absent.

DECLARATION OF LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY BY THE CITY OF PEORIA

Council Member Ruckriegel moved to approve the Declaration and Council Member Ali seconded. The Declaration was approved by a roll call vote of 9 ayes and 1 nay, with Council Member Montelongo voting nay.

SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

Mayor Ardis announced that to hold the meeting electronically as allowed by the State of Emergency declared by the Governor, the County Board must suspend its rules. Member Duncan moved to suspend the County Board's rules and Member Bryant seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of 14 ayes.

I. CITIZENS REMARKS

City Clerk Ball and County Clerk Parker read the submitted public comments. See attached for the public comments.

II. RESOLUTION



- A resolution from your Executive Committee recommending approval of a Peoria City-County Commission on Racial Justice and Equity Charter.
(pending committee approval)

Council Member Ali moved to approve the resolution for the City Council and Council Member Riggenbach seconded. Board Member Salzer moved to approve the resolution for the County Board and Board Member Blair seconded. City Manager Patrick Urich displayed a video portraying disparity at no fault of an individual's decisions. He detailed the community partners from government, public and private organizations, and religious groups that helped develop the Commission and its goals, mission, and vision. Mr. Sorrel highlighted the City's and County's responsibilities to the Commission, the membership makeup and requirements, the topical committees, and the application process.

Council Member Ali thanked all involved for building the Commission's model and the Mayor and Chairman for creating the working group. She described local disparities among gender, income, and race, noting that they cannot be ignored. She reported that the training for the commission members will be conducted through grant funding. She highlighted that it is a historic day to address a socio-economic issue in the community.

Council Member Grayeb remarked that the video presentation insinuates that access to private education is better than public education. He contended that public education is the critical piece to social equity for all. Council Member Jensen conveyed that she is interested in participating in the criminal justice system component. She mentioned the issues in the system related to race and her experience. She remarked that she is happy to see a collaborative effort to combat systematic racism in Central Illinois.

Council Member Montelongo and Mr. Urich discussed the racial makeup of the committee will be above 50% minority, that all non-Caucasian groups would qualify as a minority, and that it should be a goal to include all minority groups. Board Member Bryant believed that the creation of the commission will make the community stronger and makes changes for years to come.

Council Member Moore inquired about contact information regarding the commission, and Mr. Sorrel identified that interested parties can contact the County Board office. Council Member Moore asserted that all can be part of the commission if they have a strong conviction about the issue. Council Member Ruckriegel perceived that meeting collaboratively shows that equity is a priority in the community and encouraged the public to be active participants in the commission. Council Member Ruckriegel and Mr. Urich discussed that the commission will be compliant with the Open Meetings Act and an attendance requirement may be decided in its formation.

Council Member Kelly urged the commission to survey the community to measure effectiveness in the future. He conveyed that disparity often exists in income levels and not necessarily due to discrimination. He brought up that minority immigrant groups make more than the average American and that the issues with the poor can't be ignored. Council Member Riggenbach informed that seeing the video shown over



the summer opened his eyes to the head start he has been given and that all should seek equality and justice.

Board Member Pastucha described her commitment to social justice and emphasized the importance of addressing the reasons for segregation in schools and the community. She brought up that there could be some cost savings through addressing issues up front instead of afterward. Mr. Sorrel described the differences in property values by location, noted that the cost in detention in relation to census tracts, and informed about the loss in tax base with lower property values. Board Member Pastucha stressed that the commission is important because it will help the whole community.

Council Member Cyr left the meeting.

Board Chairman Rand summarized legislation passed to address inequality and stressed that there has been little progress. He expressed that the charter for the commission asks to address topics and change outcomes. He detailed available data that establishes inequality and hoped for unanimous support.

Mayor Ardis emphasized that the project is important and asked for divergent opinions to be part of the process. He recognized Chairman Rand and Council Member Ali for their work in seeing the project through to this stage.

The resolution was approved by the County Board on a unanimous roll call vote of 14 ayes and by the City Council on a unanimous roll call vote of 9 ayes.

III. MISCELLANEOUS

There were no miscellaneous items discussed.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Salzer moved for County Board adjournment, seconded by Board Member Dillon. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of 14 ayes. Council Member Riegenbach moved for City Council adjournment, Council Member Moore seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of 9 ayes. Mayor Ardis announced the joint meeting adjourned.



The following public comment was submitted. Redaction
has been made for compliance with the Freedom of
Information Act.

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [CountyClerk Office](#); [Matthew Smith](#); [Mike Deluhery](#); [Gabe McLeod](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Online Form Submittal: Contact County Clerk
Date: Monday, October 26, 2020 1:14:55 PM

Contact County Clerk

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| First Name | Karl |
| Last Name | Kleimenhagen |
| Email Address | [REDACTED] |
| Phone Number | [REDACTED] |
| Question / Comment | <p>A local news channel says the Council is soliciting comments on the creation of a commission for "racial justice and equity," and the comments are to be addressed to the Clerk.</p> <p>I feel such a commission would be a waste of resources.</p> <p>"Justice" traditionally and correctly refers to application of the law, and the races have been equal under the law for generations now.</p> <p>The word "equity" is new-speak for wealth and employment redistribution, apparently to be based solely on racial criteria. The very concept is a violation of "justice."</p> <p>How the races succeed is a function of the choices made in charting their way through life. This has been studied and found to be mostly neutral. Many blacks, sadly, make poor choices.</p> <p>Efforts such as this ill named commission seem likely to only stoke racial animus, in both directions. I recommend instead the council consider it's proper place: Be sure its laws are indeed applied blind to race.</p> |
| Attachment | <i>Field not completed.</i> |

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Comment from
Dr. Francesca Armmer
Member of the Peoria City/County Board of Health
regarding
Charter to establish the
Peoria City-County Commission on Racial Justice and Equality
October 28, 2020

I am writing to support the chartering of the Peoria City-County Commission on Racial Justice and Equality. With the establishment of this Commission, a clear acknowledgement of challenges facing our community and an intent to address these challenges through a multifaceted approach is planned.

Through the creation of a strategic plan and focus work groups the potential to move from talking about the problems assessed to reducing and potentially eliminating selected problems becomes a realistic outcome. Additionally, the identified accountability factors of annual and periodic progress reports reflect an intent to be answerable to all of us in the Peoria area.

As a member of our Peoria City/County Board of Health, I can envision components of our strategic plan blending or at least offering insights to aspects of this Commission regarding health and human services, environment and climate, and housing. While these insights would be within the boundaries of our role as a Board of Health, there would still be value to be gained from these insights.

Reducing inequality and fostering equality is the essence of the Commission on Racial Justice and Equality. This Commission is needed our community. I support the chartering of this commission.

From: [Bradley Wright-Hulett](#)
To: [CountyClerk Office](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity
Date: Thursday, October 29, 2020 10:58:12 AM

To the Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity:

The Peoria Area Bahá'í Community is very encouraged at the possibility of a Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity. Among the fundamental teachings of the Bahá'í Faith are the essential oneness of mankind, the nobility of every person, and the importance of justice. We hope that this Commission will be able to enact real change for the improvement of conditions for all populations in the Peoria area and the region. If this commission is effective, it could be used as a model for change throughout the country.

With this in mind, we offer these suggestions and questions.

Offer of Assistance

"The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions." (Baha'i Writings)

It is critical to the process of enacting real change that the authentic experiences of the entire spectrum of people from all sides of the issues be heard and heeded. The Bahá'ís have used a specific form of consultation for over a hundred years that enables differing opinions to lead to effective solutions. We offer to the commission to use this consultation method.

How do you ensure that all voices of all groups are included in decisions?

Questions

Organization

What role will the City's Diversity Officer have in this commission? i.e. Advisory or action oriented?

What role, if any, will students/faculty/staff of local colleges and universities play in the Commission?

How are faith communities to be involved in the commission?

How can the Commission embrace the whole metro community, including those not yet officially participating in the creation of the Commission, particularly in Tazewell County across the river?

How will the city and county carry out an evaluation of trainers for the Commission that is transparent, and open to citizen input?

How will the city and county, and later on the Commission itself, set priorities so that the Commission can perform its duties effectively and make measurable progress?

How will the Commission be engaging with local community based groups and efforts already underway, particularly with the youth?

Communication

How will the commission communicate to the public?

Opinions

The charter includes the phrase "to advance its adoption throughout the region". How will

neighboring counties be included in discussions, plans and decisions?

Funding

What type of funding will be needed for the Commission?" and "Will funds come from government funds and/or private sources/volunteers?"

Implementation

How will the work of the commission make real change in Peoria and the surrounding area?

How will success be measured? Increase in graduation rates? Decrease in incarceration rates?

Increase in median income for all demographic groups? Increase in home ownership rates? Decrease in crime rate? A better ranking in the Wallst24/7 report?

Technical

How are citizens without reliable internet to be included in discussion and decision?

What are the best ways to collect and share stories and data from community members that show the realities of difference caused by structural racism, and suggest ways to start making effective changes?

How can the Commission best use the Internet to maintain transparency and inclusion of honest views and reactions?

How can the Commission protect people's safety and privacy through anonymity, while avoiding the problems of trolling and cyber-bullying so common on social media these days?

How will or is the Commission prepared to engage with the Community to plan sustainable reviews of the collaborative efforts in order to reflexively evaluate adjustments to approaches at varying temporal and spatial scales?

In service to the community,

The Peoria Area Bahá'í Community

Bradley Wright-Hulett, contact

PeoriaBahaiMedia@outlook.com

Mike Deluhery

From: Beth Ball <bball@peoriagov.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 3:23 PM
To: Mike Deluhery
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Notice of a Joint Virtual Meeting

From: Russ Kirkpatrick [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:25 AM
To: Beth Ball <bball@peoriagov.org>
Subject: Re: Notice of a Joint Virtual Meeting

Ma'am,

I am opposed to forming a Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity. Statistically the most prevalent factor in the success of any child, regardless of race, is having a 2 parent household. We can't "social justice warrior" our way out of a cultural problem. Wasting tax dollars in another unwinnable war is not the answer.

If you want links to the statistics please reference the links in this article.

<https://www.louderwithcrowder.com/obamas-wrong-top-5-reasons-we-need-more-dads-not-more-government>

A concerned citizen,
Russell Kirkpatrick

On Wed, Oct 28, 2020 at 5:27 PM Stacy Peterson <speterson@peoriagov.org> wrote:

Good evening neighborhood leaders,

The Peoria City Council and Peoria County Board will vote on forming a Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity at a special virtual joint meeting of both bodies on Thursday, October 29, at 6 p.m. The agenda may be found [HERE](#). Please feel free to share this information with your neighbors.

The public is invited and encouraged to watch the proceedings online or through public access. The meeting will be live-streamed on the city of Peoria's YouTube [page](#) and broadcast through local Channel 22. In addition, Peoria County will endeavor to share this stream on its Facebook [page](#).

Members of the public wishing to submit comments are encouraged to do so by submitting their written statement to the Peoria City Clerk by email or fax by 2 p.m. on October 29.

- Email: bball@peoriagov.org
- Fax: (309) 494-8574

*Please note, this meeting was originally noticed as being held at Manual High School. Due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases and in consideration of the recommendations of social distancing, this meeting has been changed to a virtual format.

Have a good evening.

Stacy Peterson

For information on COVID-19, including updates, closures, and links to resources, please visit the website www.pcchd.org. For information regarding the City of Peoria, please visit www.peoriagov.org We thank you for your patience.

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