

**Meeting Decorah Human Rights Commission Minutes  
City Hall, 400 Claiborne Drive**

**Tuesday, May 7, 2019**

**Called to order at 5:30 p.m.**

- **Members Present:** Melissa Koch, Lisa Scott, Carol Hemesath, Chad Bird, City Manager
- **Guests Present:** Joann Hagen from Northeast Iowa Peace and Justice Center

**Community Comment:**

Joann Hagen joined the meeting to follow up on the Community Comment Meeting at Luther College on Monday, April 29, 2019. She specifically wanted to follow up about the equity training for Decorah and Winneshiek County government employees and volunteers. Melissa and the executive director of the NEIPJC met after this meeting to discuss ways NEIPJC could support the training.

**Discussions and Plans**

- Lisa will follow up with Melissa after June 1 (Luther's new budget year) about funding for equity training.
- Need to build bridges with all government teams in coordination with work to build welcoming community. Discussed ideas to do so:
  - Social, community-wide events such as a BBQ. No agenda.
  - Mayor and City Manager discussing with government leaders
  - Creating a Community Committee of Luther and Decorah residents to monitor safety and connectivity
  - Stores in Decorah selling Luther gear year round would help with the ongoing feeling of welcome
- Recommendation for ACLU award. Discussed but did not have quorum to vote on a recommendation.
- Plan for MLK, Women's Month and Events, Cinco de Mayo, and Ethnic Arts

- Discussed creating an online mechanism for reporting Hate Crimes and other incidences.
  - Chad to discuss with Sheriff and Chief of Police
  - Lisa sending examples
  - Melissa to talk with John P at Library to help set up once Chad has discussed with Sheriff and Chief of Police.
- Investigating finding a lawyer versed in civil rights who can work with DHRC on discrimination cases. Chad talking with potential local lawyers.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:45 pm