

VILLAGE OF NILES
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Minutes from the Community Relations Commission meeting held on Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at Village Hall, 1000 Civic Center Drive in the 2nd Floor Conference room/EOC.

I. Call to Order:

Chair Jovan Marinac called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. on Wednesday, February 1, 2023. Darren Brown called the roll for attendance.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Jovan Marinac (Chair), Larry Mayer, Kathy Toy, Joe Kuffel, Jeffrey Kash, Tony Dati

Members Absent: Megan Roberts Esterling, Anela Hrnica, Vicky Duka

Village Representatives: Trustee John Jekot, Darren Brown (Family Services)

III. Approval of Meeting Summary

Tony Dati made a motion to accept the November 9, 2022 minutes as presented. Jeff Kash second the motion. 6 were in favor, 0 abstained, 0 opposed. Minutes approved.

IV. Public Comment

David Sutherland commented that today is the first day of Black History Month and this year's theme is "Black Resistance". David referenced minutes of the Community Relations Commission from 2018 where there was a complaint against a Commissioner of the Niles Park District. David felt that since the Community Relations Commission had heard these concerns then, that his complaint of the Niles Library falls in line with mission of the commission. He felt that his complaint of the Niles Police Department and Niles library have not been addressed by the current Commission and there was not a satisfactory result.

Renee Sutherland commented that she was present at the last meeting and had concerns about the process of approving minutes. She asked that the unapproved minutes be shared in advance of the meeting with the public. She asked that the schedule of meetings be published months in advance, so the public can be better notified. Renee referenced Section 2-316 of the Village Ordinances and whether an annual report is ever submitted. She asked why there was not a Community Relations Commission update from any of the Trustees at the regular Village Board meeting and requested that an update be given.

V. Old Business:

- A. **Complaint Procedure/Online Form** – An online complaint form is now on the website as well as a paper form available at Village Hall and Family Services department. A copy was distributed. Darren Brown reported that no complaints have been received as of this meeting. Darren Brown stated that a previous fair housing complaint regarding the Huntington Apartments is currently being handled by Cook County. Larry Mayer asked if it was necessary to have a police report first before a discrimination complaint is filed to the Community

Relations Commission. Darren volunteered to talk to the Police Chief on this matter. It was recommended that a line be added to the form that asks about a police report.

- B. **Goals and Objectives** - Commissioners asked what current events they could participate in to have a table and promote the Community Relations Commission. They also would like to consider local school's open houses. The CRC could also join Niles Family Services table at events. A calendar of events will be on the next meeting agenda. Kathy Toy asked that the Community Relations Commission meeting be posted in advance of the meeting. The CRC members discussed whether or not a draft of the minutes could be made available for the public, we will consult the village attorney on this. Members also talked about ways to promote block parties and develop neighborhoods. The CRC could host friendly competitions and games between neighborhoods to bring people together. Jeff Kash suggested a flyer to promote the Community Relations Commission. Public Works could drop off information to neighborhoods when they bring block party equipment. Other avenues that were discussed to promote the Community Relations Commission: Niles TV (Cable Channel), Focus newsletter and e-newsletter.

VI. Set Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, May 3, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

VII. Adjournment

Tony Dati motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Kathy Toy second the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes Submitted by: Darren Brown and Katie Schneider, Staff Liaisons