

Racial & Ethnic Equity Commission
Draft Minutes of Meeting
June 15, 2023, 6:00 pm Kenosha County Board Chambers

Committee Members Present: Brian Thomas, Justin Crosby, Brian Gonzales, Xavier Solis, Alayna Arrington, Cortney Marshall, Duane O'Keefe, Andy Berg

Excused: Elizabeth Garcia

Others Present:

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order/Roll Call –Chair Solis called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm with roll call.

6:00 PM

2. Approval of Minutes- May 18, 2023. **Minutes Moved by Supervisor Brian Thomas, Seconded by Commissioner Brian Gonzales. All Aye Motion Carried.**

6:03 PM

3. Citizens Comments – Comments limited to 3 minutes. Comments made by:

Jennie Tunkieicz- spoke on the Systemic Racism being a public health care crisis in Kenosha County.

Laverne Geris- Stress and Isolation have direct effects on Health

Gail Clark Taylor- Thrilled to hear the discussions tonight. Urges the commission to commit to do the work that will improve conditions of Kenosha for everyone.

Torres- Tells the Commission that just because they have not personally experienced Racism, does not mean it does not exist.

Veronica King- If the Commission rejects that Racism is a public health crisis, they Jeopardize federal dollars that the County receives.

Phil Haney- Has never seen Racism more prevalent than in Kenosha.

Donna Langley- What precipitated this action? Was there research/article that precipitated this? She is happy to start an investigation into this as she is an investigator. Her son has experienced mental health issues due to the racism he has personally experienced.

Sarah Kirby- speaks regarding health disparities between African American and white children. Systemic Racism remains a public health care threat.

Lydia Spottswood- Founding executive director Kenosha Community Health Center – Urgency of collaborative efforts in decisions with Health care.

Cameron- Systemic Racism affects the health of the entire community as well as each individual.

Brad Backer- Revisiting the long-settled resolution is sad that the time and efforts are being wasted on this discussion.

Tera Webber- would like to move some meetings west of the I for the entire County to be able to attend

Lori Hawkins- There is racial inequity among us and it is important the County works together to eliminate that as the children grow

Sue Grace Krokosz – Brings up a typo on the website noticing the agenda.

6:31 PM

4. Welcoming New REEC members- round table with name introductions and backgrounds.

6:41 PM

5. Commissioner's Comments: Supervisor Thomas hands out the bylaws. Supervisor Berg announces the upcoming events this weekend for Juneteenth. Commissioner Gonzales makes a comment regarding the term "systematic racism"- The federal government is not the ruler of Kenosha County and the Federal Government should not interfere with Kenosha County.

6:59 PM

6. Subcommittee Reports: Law Enforcement Committee met last week; Supervisor Thomas hands out a packet of information.

Housing- Commissioner Marshall sent an email out to the Health Department and is waiting for a reply.

Health- Supervisor Berg gives an update that he is looking for other members in the community to join the subcommittee of Health. Corporation counsel will give a clarification on bylaws to the Commission. His committee has an extensive number of topics to go through for an accurate report.

7:21 PM

7. Discussion on the Kenosha County Board coming to the conclusion of systemic racism being a public health care crisis in Kenosha County: Supervisor Thomas would like to ask the County Board what documents and data they relied on when this resolution was developed. He stressed this item was not put on the agenda to discredit or disclaim the Resolution as that was not the intent. Supervisor Thomas would like to make a formal request as a Commission to the Executive Committee, County Board and/or County Executive's Office to request the information/data that formed this Resolution. Supervisor Berg would also suggest requesting documents from the Health Department. Chair Solis will put this on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Commissioner Arrington would like to go on record American is a nationality, but race is not something you can change. Racism is a public health crisis.

7:41 PM

8. Jennie Tunkieicz Award for Gender and Racial Equity- Chair Solis wanted to make the Commission aware of this award and have discussions on it. Kelsey presents this award and discusses the intent of this award for the Commission. This will be up for nominations for next month. The email would typically be sent in March from the HR staff for Kenosha County Government Employees. Supervisor Berg is in favor of keeping this open to anyone that has had past or present experience with Kenosha County. Chair Solis suggests the Commission can rename the award and be more specific on who is eligible to receive this award. Clara clarifies concerns regarding this award. Supervisor Berg feels it would be disingenuous to rename this award and he will not be supporting changing the name of this award.

7:54 PM

9. Future Scheduling: Chair Solis brings up the idea to have one meeting at KCAB and alternating to be at KCC Building. Next meeting July 20th at 6:00 PM will be at the Kenosha County administration building. Supervisor Gonzales feels a few meetings should occur at the KCC building. Supervisor Berg agrees that this Commission should alternate to accommodate the County Community. Potentially September's meeting could be at the KCC Building

7:58 PM

10. Adjourn- Supervisor Berg makes a motion to adjourn, Supervisor Thomas seconded. All Aye. Motion Carried.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Peralta**