**Civil Rights Forum Monthly Meeting Notes – August 14, 2023**

**Progressive Action for the Common Good**

*Present:* Allison Ambrose, Alta Price, Margie Mejia-Caraballo, Loxi Hopkins, Susan Leuthauser, Isaac Carr, Becky Wiese, Mariam Namilingu

Introductions: Becky introduced herself and gave us a bit of a personal background, which includes her career at Community Health and giving immigrant physicals there.

July minutes were presented and approved

Action Item Updates:

***ACTION ITEMS from 7/10 Civil Rights Forum Meeting:***

**Allison:**

* Work with Loxi to meet with Davenport Aldermen—We met with Ben Jobgen, our 6th ward Alderman. He told us that it is the city’s responsibility to help people find new places to to live when their buildings are condemned. The city is also responsible for inspecting rental properties, on a rotational basis. We agreed that the policies in place appear to be reasonable, IF they are followed. We will probably know more about what was followed or not regarding 324 Main in the near future.
* Reach out to groups who could be potential partners for our “Love In”—Allison communicated with Tyler Mitchell of the Project about our idea. He was enthused and was going to share the idea with other LGBT groups. (As of 10/09, I have not heard anything back from him, but I know he was very busy with other events at The Project). At this time, I don’t see our group having the manpower/energy to arrange such an event. But, it is a good idea for the future!

**Anyone:**

* Call people interested in our forum and personally invite them to join—Not Done. (Note: Allison invited people that expressed interest at an Affordable Housing talk she attended)

***Coalition Partners Update:***

* **MLK Interpretive Center:** No one present to report; it looks like construction of the park is making progress.
* **NAACP:** No one present to report
* **LULAC:** Loxi reported on the scholarship that LULAC awarded this year. She also informed us of a few festivals occurring in the near future. Loxi was encouraged to enter these into the PAU
* **QCAIR:** Isaac reported on the success of the multicultural event that QCAIR helped with. They hope to be involved in a similar event next year and hope to see it expand. He also informed us that the immigrant coalition had a meeting and that the 2nd one is coming up. **Isaac needs to communicate with Allison when these meetings are happening!**

Note: (we work in coalition with the above groups and that we like to hear reports during out meetings so that we can be informed about what these groups are doing to potentially identify ways that we can support their efforts)

**Gender Equity Forum Update:** The forum is helping the ACLU get 2000 signatures on a state-wide petition dealing with abortion rights. The hope is that through the ACLU we can build up a community where there is a core of people who can have an impact. Other things the forum has discussed is having an event, and thinking of ways to hold our legislators accountable. Also, they continue to have their monthly “Hands-Off” Happy Hour.

Isaac brought up that there are a group of Liberian ladies in the QCs who are interested in sex education for their children. Maybe Carolyn Martin, from gender equity forum, could help. **Alta will ask Carolyn about this.**

**BLM Responses and Actions:**

The “I Am the Future” event at the Putnam on 10/22 at 2:00 pm is fully planned and it going to be great! **EVERYONE: Get people to come to this family friendly event!**

We will also have an “I Am the Future” event at the Figge on 1/11.

The equity now rally continues to be held every Saturday at from noon to 12:30 pm at John Deere Rd and 16th St. in Moline. ALL ARE WELCOME!

**Immigration**

Miller-Meeks supports the Afghan Adjustment Act. **Should we write her a Thank You?** Grassely is still a hold out. We are not sure where Ernst stands. **Should we go to these offices?**

Margie shared a story about an undocumented man who had trouble getting a humanitarian VISA and the confusion that was apparent in trying to secure this. The story highlighted further the complications surrounding immigrant issues and the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

(From May minutes: We discussed organizing some kind of statewide initiative to lobby Grassley for his support Another thought was to visit Ernst’s office and ask her to approach Grassley.)

(From July minutes: Allison mentioned to also keep in mind: other ideas regarding immigration advocacy that came out of the Immigration Summit could be handled by the QCAir coalition being formed. We want to keep our eyes open for other legislation (ie: comprehensive immigration reform; year-end omnibus bill) for lobbying potential.)

**Quad City Sanctuary Coalition**—This group has not been meeting

**Juvenile Justice Coalition**: (Form July minutes:It appears that this group no longer exists. We discussed whether we, as a civil rights forum should be doing anything in this area. One thing mentioned was finding out about the Youth Assessment going on in Davenport from the sheriff. A past idea of potentially arranging for Scott County judges to meet with Polk County judges as there is clearly a racial discrepancy with prosecutions along racial lines in terms of black youth being tried in adult court was shared. Scott County is the worst county. Perhaps there is something to learn from other counties. Both of these ideas are worth considering.)

**Monday, Sepember 11, 5:00 via ZOOM is the next meeting (meeting was cancelled)**

*Notes taken by Allison Ambrose*

***ACTION ITEMS from 8/14 Civil Rights Forum Meeting:***

**Allison:**

* Consider a thank you note to Miller-Meeks
* Consider visit to Grassley and/or Ernst regarding Afghan Adjustment Act.

**Isaac**

* Isaac needs to communicate with Allison when the Immigrant Coalition meetings are happening!

**Alta:**

* Talk to Carolyn Martin about sex education for the Liberian women

**Anyone:**

* Call people interested in our forum and personally invite them to join.
* Keep the idea of the “Love-in” on the table (see July minutes)
* Publicize our event at the Putnam on 10/22. Get people to come!!