

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REQUEST FROM AMES HUMAN RELATION COMMISSION TO REDUCE ITS MEMBERSHIP FROM SEVEN TO FIVE MEMBERS

BACKGROUND:

When the Ames Human Relations Commission was first created in 1974, it was established as a five-member body. However, in 1976, the City Council approved an expansion to seven members. Staff has been unable to identify from any previous reports or from the Council minutes what precipitated the increase in membership.

On Thursday, August 23, 2012, the Ames Human Relations Commission met and discussed a change to the number of Commission members. This discussion was brought about after having several openings on the seven-member Commission in the last two months. Finding new members has been difficult, as has having enough members present to constitute a quorum. The Commission concluded that the size of the body was perhaps larger than necessary, and made a motion to ask the City Council to consider reducing the size of the Commission from seven members to five members.

The City Council referred this request to staff on September 11, 2012, for a revised ordinance that would reduce the membership from seven to five members to assist the Ames Human Relations Commission.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can adopt an ordinance approving reduction of the Ames Human Relations Commission from seven to five members.
3. The City Council can deny adoption of an ordinance approving the reduction of the Ames Human Relation Commission from seven to five members.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Due to the continued difficulties with recruiting new commissioners to participate in the Ames Human Relations Commission, it has been determined by the current members that five commissioners would be sufficient to carry out the duties described in the *City Code*. Staff feels this change would benefit the Commission while still providing them enough membership to work on programs and activities that raise awareness of

discriminatory actions against a person because of his or her race, ethnicity, national origin, color, creed, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender, physical disability, age, familial status, marital status, or developmental disability.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving the Ames Human Relations Commission request to reduce its membership from seven to five.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY REPEALING SECTION 14.3(1) AND ADOPTING A NEW SECTION 14.3(1); THEREOF, FOR THE PURPOSE OF REDUCING THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION FROM SEVEN (7) TO FIVE (5); REPEALING ANY AND ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED, by the City Council for the City of Ames, Iowa, that:

Section One. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by repealing Section 14.3(1); and adopting a new 14.3(1) as follows:

“Sec. 14.3. COMMISSION APPOINTED-STAFF-HEARING OFFICERS.

(1) **Commission Appointed.** The Ames Human Relations Commission shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. Appointments shall take into consideration the various racial, religious, cultural and social groups and geographical areas within the City of Ames in so far as may be practicable. The term of office shall be three (3) years, and shall begin April 1 of the fiscal year of appointment, except that the Mayor may prescribe a shorter term for any appointment or reappointment in order to stagger terms. Four (4) of the members shall serve 3-year terms, and one (1) of the members shall serve a special 1-year term. Vacancies shall be filled for any unexpired term in the same manner as original appointments. Any member or all members of the Commission may be removed from office at any time by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council, for good cause. No member who has served two (2) full consecutive terms is eligible for reappointment. The Commission shall elect one of their members to be chairperson, and develop their own rules of procedure, not inconsistent with this chapter.”

Section Two. All ordinances, or parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, if any.

Section Three. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Passed this _____ day of _____, _____.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

Ann H. Campbell, Mayor