



Metro Human Relations Commission

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 4, 2019, from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Metro Office Building

800 Second Avenue South, 2nd Floor, Nashville Room

The mission of the Metro Human Relations Commission is to protect and promote the personal dignity, peace, safety, security, health, and general welfare of all people in Nashville and Davidson County.

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** MHRC Board Chair, Dr. Janice Rodriguez

This meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: *Maryam Abolfazli, Jeremy Davis, Lethia Mann, Oscar Miller, Kobie Pretorius, Erin Pryor, Marisa Richmond, Linda Robinson, Janice Rodriguez, Davie Tucker, Irwin Venick*

Commissioners Not in Attendance: *Samar Ali, Jeff Gibson, Marcela Gomez, Issa Y. Mohamed, Chuck Yezbak, Paula Martinez*

Others in Attendance: *Alex Dickerson, Mel Fowler-Green, Barbara Gunn Lartey, Sarah Imran, Rahim Buford, Dawn Deaner*

II. **CONFIRM QUOROM**

(Share regrets from Commissioners not in attendance; introduce guests and new Commissioner)

A quorum was achieved at the beginning of the meeting.

III. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Miller moved to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Davis seconded. The Minutes were approved and adopted.

IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Executive Director, Mel Fowler-Green

There was no financial report because of Metro's IT Migration process. E.D. Fowler-Green noted that MHRC has no current extraordinary expenses.

- Comm. Venick asked if the ITS issue is system wide. E.D. Fowler-Green responded that it is.
- Parkway Towers under new management. It is unsure if there will be a financial implication.
- E.D. Fowler-Green and Comm. Venick have met to formalize the MHRC sponsorship process.

V. **OLD BUSINESS**

- *Resolution and statement about the use of money bail and Rule 10(B) of the Local Rules for Practice for Bail Bonds*
 - Comm. Tucker reported that there is a collection of advocates who are addressing this issue (e.g., ACLU, Metro Legal, Criminal Court Judges, Choosing Justice, Civil Rights)

Corps).

- Comm. Tucker explained that the cash bail system is inequitable and systemically maligns communities of color and referred to the letter including in the meeting packet. Comm. Tucker made special note of the disproportionate impact the cash bail system has on the immigrant community.
 - Rahim Buford, from the Nashville Community Bail Fund, added that the judicial assault on the Community Bail Fund is punitive towards poor people who do not have access to stable housing, livable wages, cell phones, etc.
 - E.D. Fowler-Green said that if the Commission agrees, she will request that the Criminal Court Judges suspend the rule until further research on whether there is disparate impact on communities of color. She also said that she'd like to engage the community to discuss the issue.
 - Comm. Richmond asked who created this rule. E.D. Fowler-Green replied that the rule was established by the Criminal Court Judges in Davidson County. The draft letter (in the Meeting Packet) can be sent to those Judges or whomever the Commission deems should receive it.
 - Comm. Irwin: Regarding the draft letter, he suggested that we distinguish the disparity between cash bail and bonding companies. He noted that the Administrative Office of the Courts should also receive a copy. E.D. Fowler-Green said she will research any additional appropriate entities that should receive the letter.
 - Comm. Abolfazli asked if there were any current legal mobilization efforts to address the issue. Dawn Deaner said she wasn't sure, but that the advocates are not seeking a litigious redress; they just want the Judges to "do the right thing."
 - Comm. Miller cautioned that the letter should reference proof of the inequities in the bail bond system; not doing so could impugn the efficacy of this statement, enabling it to be summarily discounted.
 - Discussion ensued among the Commissioners regarding the impact of the letter, particularly as it asserts that there are criminal justice inequities that impact poor people, communities of color, and the perception of people in the immigrant community.
 - E.D. Fowler-Green asked if there was a motion regarding this matter. Comm. Miller moved that there should be a revised letter to reflect the insights discussed in this meeting. Comm. Venick seconded. The letter will be revised and resubmitted for review. Once adopted it will be signed and distributed.
- *Nashville Rising* Update and Recommendations for Next Steps
 - E.D. Fowler-Green referenced the op-ed that was published regarding this issue. She will send it to Commissioners.
 - Imran shared her perspective and experiences with this issue.

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

- Revisiting REAL Dialogue data Commission Strategic Planning
 - E.D. Fowler-Green explained the context of this initiative which was sponsored by Mayor Barry's Administration. She specifically referenced the lack of response and transparency to the data that MHRC analyzed and shared with Mayor Barry's team. She also noted that her staff completed a summary of the raw data from these conversations and will send it to Commissioners.

- E.D. Fowler-Green said that she fielded disappointment and anger from community members who feel a lack of trust and respect.
- E.D. Fowler-Green added that as a matter of integrity to this work, we need to incorporate the REAL Dialogue summary into the State of Black Nashville initiative.
- Commissioners requested to review both the MHRC and the Barry Administration reports.

VII. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

E.D. Fowler-Green reviewed the report that was included in the meeting packet.

VIII. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comments were expressed throughout the meeting by guests Rahim Buford and Dawn Deaner.

IX. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Comm. Richmond: November 20, Transgender Day of Remembrance, 7:00p, Scarritt Bennett Center
- Comm. Tucker: December 7: American Baptist College, 10am-12 noon, E.D. Fowler-Green will facilitate a discussion on affordable housing
- Comm. Venick: December 3-5, Anti-Racism Training at Scarritt Bennet Center
- Comm. Richmond referenced final training re trans harassment by MNPd. Every MNPd employee who participated in that shaming has been trained.

X. **ADJOURN**


Comm. Venick moved to adjourn. Comm. Davis seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25pm.

MHRC Priorities

Racial/Social Inequity	Affordable and Fair Housing	Law Enforcement/Policing	Title VI
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Appeal of Decisions From the Metro Human Relations Commission

If you are not satisfied with a decision of the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission, you may appeal the decision by petitioning for a writ of certiorari with the Davidson County Chancery or Circuit Court. Your appeal must be filed within 60 days of the date of the entry of the Human Relations Commission's decision. We advise that you seek your own independent legal advice to ensure that your appeal is filed in a timely manner and that all procedural requirements have been met.

 If any accommodations are needed for individuals with disabilities who wish to be present at the meeting, please contact MHRC at 615-880-3370 or MHRC@nashville.gov. Requests should be made as soon as possible but at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting in order for the entity to provide such needed aid or service.

Budget Update

The budget migration is still evolving. We have not had any significant expenditures in the last month,

Ongoing Projects and Programs

<i>Project</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>
Sharepoint Site	We will launch our Sharepoint site for the Commission this month. This will allow us to maintain a shared calendar and to share documents with you.	In Process
Nashville Rising	The Nashville Rising Coalition was successful in getting the "Community Covenant" passed unanimously in Metro Council. Now we will continue to work with our partners in operationalizing the commitments in the covenant. Of greatest interest is the adoption if an equity lens for city budgeting, particularly the capital improvement plan.	On-going
Maddox Diversity Equity & Inclusion Taskforce	Sarah is serving on the Dan and Margaret Maddox Foundation's Equity taskforce, to participate in developing a strategy for the organization to implement DEI practices.	Yearlong project
Title VI	<p>Still working on a Metro-wide Language Access Plan and Resource Guide. Need to meet with the Mayor's Office post-transition.</p> <p>Restructuring Title VI reporting and training in collaboration with HR.</p> <p>In the next few months we will also update our website and make a simple training video for new employees for use by department Title VI Coordinators.</p>	<p>Meeting: to be rescheduled with Mayor's Office</p> <p>Website update and Video anticipated release: December</p>

IncluCivics	<p>The IncluCivics platform is up and running again. Our partners at Code for Nashville have recommitted to the project and are working to update it now. You can visit the page at: www.codefornashville.org/inclucivics.</p> <p>The 5-year update to the original IncluCivics report is currently being contemplated for 2020 release.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Spring 2020</p>
State of Black Nashville	Collaborative initiative with various community stakeholders to address the well-being and quality of life for the Black community in Nashville.	Ongoing
Commissioner Spotlight	Marketing project introducing each Commissioner on website, in social media and newsletters.	Ongoing
Consumer Protection Initiative	Funded by a grant managed through the Mayor's Office. We will provide support by evaluating complaints and initiating requests for conciliation with parties.	Anticipate announcement this week

Events

<i>Event</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>	
Affordable Housing Workshop/Presentation	Facilitated by M. Fowler-Green; at American Baptist College	December 7	
Human Rights Day Celebration	Co-Lead Sponsor; First Amendment Center	December 10, 2019 – 6:00pm	
World AIDS Day Annual Edward Sandards Luncheon	Co-Sponsor; Remarks by B. Gunn-Lartey; Fisk Jubilee Hall	December 5, 2019 – 12noon	
Election 2020 Think Tank	Facilitation by B. Gunn-Lartey	December 16, 2019 – 9:00am	
Citywide Kwanzaa Celebration	Co-Lead Sponsor	December 26, 2019 – January 1, 2020	
MLK Day 2020	Co-Sponsor	January 20, 2020	Joy Reid, <i>Keynote</i>

