



Metro Human Relations Commission Full Commission Meeting Minutes

One City for All People

March 2, 2020 -- 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Lentz Health Department

2500 Charlotte Ave, Nashville, TN 37209

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 Vice-Chair, Dr. Marisa Richmond

This meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: *Maryam Abolfazli, Samar Ali, Jeremy Davis, Lethia Mann, Oscar Miller, Issa Y. Mohamed, Erin Pryor, Marisa Richmond, Davie Tucker, Irwin Venick*

Commissioners Not in Attendance: *Jeff Gibson, Paula Martinez, Kobie Pretorius, Linda Robinson, Janice Rodriguez, Chuck Yezbak*

Others in Attendance: *Armando Arzate (Worker's Dignity), Barbara Gunn-Lartey, Mel-Fowler-Green, Sarah Imran, Cecilia Prado (Worker's Dignity), Derrick Smith (Metro Legal), Abram Siegel-Rivers*

II. **CONFIRM QUOROM**

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

A quorum was achieved at 4:38p.

III. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Co-Chair Richmond requested Commissioners to review the minutes.

Commissioner Miller moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Tucker seconded.

Upon review by the Commissioners, Co-Chair Richmond determined the minutes to be approved and adopted.

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

E.D. Fowler-Green reviewed the financial report included in the meeting packet. She said that MHRC is on track regarding expenditures. She also noted that the target savings of \$13,000 will likely be attained.

V. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- Implementing goals expressed in the "Community Covenant" (policy recommendation)
 - E.D. Fowler-Green reviewed the draft included in the meeting packet. She acknowledged Sarah Imran for creating the draft. She also referenced the meeting that she and Sarah had with Diego Eguiarte, Director, Performance Management Team, regarding equity performance metrics.
 - Commissioner Venick inquired about adopting the policy recommendation and sending it to the Mayor's Office. Discussion ensued regarding how to proceed with this document. Commissioner Miller recommended that the document include a reference to personnel. Commissioner Abolfazli added that the document reference data from the Commission's

IncluCivics report. As the Commission approved sending a recommendation to the Mayor's Office at its previous meeting, it was determined that no further action was needed.

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Guests: Worker's Dignity**
E.D. Fowler-Green introduced guests from Worker's Dignity:
 - Cecilia Prado, Co-Director, Worker's Dignity
 - Armando Arzate, Community Activist, Worker's Dignity
 - The presenters discussed dangerous working conditions for construction workers in Nashville emphasizing that Nashville is the most dangerous southern city for construction workers.
 - Conditions include withholding water during the summer, requiring outside work during frigid winter conditions, and wage theft. Employers who tolerate these conditions are referred to as "low road" employers.
 - The presenters noted that most employees are Latino. Sixteen workers died on the work site in 2016-2017.
 - Armando Arzate shared a personal testimony of undignified working conditions he experiences while working several construction properties in Nashville, including at Vanderbilt Divinity School and with Orion Construction. Because of his activism he has been able to recover a portion of the monies owed to him and his co-workers, but not the full amount.
 - E.D. Fowler-Green asked if there were recommendations from the presenters. She acknowledged the value of the advocacy of Workers Dignity and their tenacity to address wage theft and unworkable conditions, including efforts to influence state laws and more transparency regarding the Metro Procurement process.
 - Additional discussion ensued, including framing this issue as labor trafficking and national media coverage (Comm. Ali); worker safety (Comm. Tucker); federal enforcement (Comm. Richmond); and Law School legal clinics (Comm. Venick).
- **Status of grant funded study regarding fines and fees and the impact of reducing reliance on same for revenue (authorized by RS2019-1731)**

- E.D. Fowler-Green said she will send the link as soon as received from Mayor's Office.

Communal Reading: *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Dr. Ibram Kendi – Comm. Venick

- Comm. Venick referred Commissioners to a summary of the communal reading project he has been working on with organizers of the 2020 Christian Scholars Conference at Lipscomb University. The organizers have arranged for Dr. Kendi to attend a special lunch/discussion session on his book, *How to Be an Anti-Racist* on June 3, 2020. Comm. Venick is coordinating the formation of reading groups. To attend the lunch, reading group participants will register for the Conference at a reduced rate. The Conference's plenary speakers are Dr. Kendi and a nationally recognized climate scientist. The Conference will focus on Christian perspectives on social justice, civil rights and climate scientists. Individuals or organizations interested in forming reading groups should contact Comm. Venick.
- **The Rent Game**
 - Comm. Richmond, in her capacity at Board Co-Chair, suggested that this item be tabled until the next meeting. E.D. Fowler-Green agreed.

VII. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- E.D. Fowler-Green referred Commissioners to the report included in the meeting packet.

VIII. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Abram Siegel-Rivers reiterated his enthusiasm for collaborating with MHRC.

IX. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Comm. Venick: Announced that Comm. Richmond, has been nominated for an Athena Awards

Comm. Tucker: A lawsuit has been filed regarding fees that will be assessed against the Community Bail Fund.

X. **ADJOURN**

Comm. Tucker moved to adjourn. Comm. Miller seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 5:37p.

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.

Ongoing Projects and Programs

<i>Project</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>
Calendar Year 2019 Annual Report	<p>An annual report summarizing the issues, trainings, events, and projects from the 2019 calendar year is in draft form. We expect to release it in two to three weeks.</p> <p>While a bit late into the new year, this is a new publication and will serve as a model for the future, allowing us to release it more promptly.</p>	In Process
Sharepoint Site	<p>We will soon launch our Sharepoint site for the Commission. This will allow us to maintain a shared calendar and to share documents with you. Delay has been experienced due to being short staffed.</p>	In Process
Nashville Rising	<p>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.</p>	On-going
Maddox Diversity Equity & Inclusion Taskforce	<p>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.</p>	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: Spring 2020</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>Work on the 5-year update to the original IncluCivics report has begun. We have a draft and expect the report to be published in about five weeks.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 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 soon
Inclusive Health Insurance Policy for Metro	Comm. Marisa Richmond and M. Fowler-Green are working with the Mayor's Office and Metro Human Resources on policy recommendations for improvements to the health insurance plan. The goal is to ensure that the plan is inclusive of all health needs of transgender employees and family members.	Ongoing

Events / Trainings

<i>Event</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>
Mobile Diversity Seminar	Sponsor / Facilitator	January 29, 2020
Stand Against Racism: A History of Structural Racism in Nashville*	Lead Co-Sponsor	February 6, 2020
Budget Discussion with Mayor	In Mayor's Media Room	February 11, 2020 – 8:00am
Housing Discrimination History Presentation to the Barnes Fund Board	Facilitator	February 25, 2020
Metro Social Services Training	Facilitator	February 26, 2020
Equity and Inclusion Training at Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee	Facilitator	February 27, 2020

Stand Against Racism: Music to Mobilization*	Lead Co-Sponsor	February 27, 2020 (3:00p – 4:30p)
HIV Awareness: Black Resilience	Facilitator	February 29, 2020
Stand Against Racism: Disenfranchisement, Voter Restoration, and a Path Towards Racial Justice*	Lead Co-Sponsor	March 26, 2020 (11:30a – 1:00p)
Stand Against Racism: Women in the Movement – Multiple Generations of Women Speak on the Nashville Civil Rights Movement & a Path Towards Racial Justice**	Lead Co-Sponsor	April 14, 202 (6:00p)
Stand Against Racism: Community Rally & Advocacy Fair***	Lead Co-Sponsor	April 22, 2020 (11:30a – 1:00p)
Music City Iftar	Co-Lead Sponsor	May 6, 2020

NEXT MEETING: April 6, 2020 at Lentz

*Event will be held at the YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee

Event will be held as a part of **A Walk in Love at the Martha O'Bryan Center

***Event will be held at Public Square Park