



One City for All People

Executive Board

Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 13, 2020

3:00pm-4:30pm

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 Chair, Dr. Janice Rodriguez

This meeting was called to order at 3:03p.m. A quorum was established at the inception of the meeting.

Members of the Executive Board in Attendance: *Jeremy Davis, Oscar Miller, Marisa Richmond, Janice Rodriguez, David Tucker, Irwin Venick*

Others in Attendance: *John Ferguson, Mel Fowler-Green, Barbara Gunn Lartey, Danielle Vaughan*

II. Approval to Conduct Meeting by Electronic Means (motion)

Commissioner Venick made a motion that the items on the Meeting Agenda constitute essential business of this Commission. Meeting electronically is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Tennesseans considering the COVID-19 outbreak. And any rule that conflicts with the Governor's Executive Order 16 permitting Electronic Meetings be suspended.

Commissioner Miller seconded.

The Motion was adopted.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- **Budget Update**

- Mayor Cooper announced that property tax rate may increase, and departmental budgets may decrease – indefinitely.
- The Music City Iftar, originally scheduled of May 6, has been postponed in light of COVID-19. This gathering is one of our largest events-usually with an attendance of 350+ people.
- Commissioner Rodriguez asked about other events in the fall. E.D. Fowler-Green mentioned Celebrate Nashville typically hosts at least 65k+ attendees
- Commissioner Rodriguez asked about a virtual iftar. Would we want to take on? Fowler-Green responded that she's not sure about the value in sponsoring such an

- event. Our principal goal is to have a civic conversation during month of Ramadan.
- Commissioner Venick: What does budget hold? Fowler-Green said it is difficult to predict the budget in light of current conditions and other considerations from federal funds (CARES Act, HUD, etc.). There is uncertainty as to whether municipalities could use monies for budget shortfalls or restricted to COVID-19 related expenses.
- Commissioner Tucker: Are we being forced to cut budget by a certain amount? Mel said \$15k + any additional savings we can afford.
- Policy Updates: Equity Lens, Money Bail, Language Access
 - **Equity Lens**
 - MHRC released recommendation to Metro Council to adopt equity metrics. Positive response, including Mayor's transportation team, to build equity lens into their initiative-performance measurements system.
 - Community response has been positive, including A Voice for Reduction of Poverty (a collaborative of community initiatives), Open Table, Oasis Center. We will host a Webinar for other cities and have asked Ashford Hughes to join as a trainer.
 - Comm. Richmond asked if equity recommendations cover health coverage for transgender community. Fowler-Green responded that this issue is an ideal opportunity to address through equity performance measurements system and other Metro health-related services.
 - Fowler-Green referenced Tacoma Washington's re race-forward equity disparities re municipalities. Their policies require all departments to set goals and apply lens re budget process.
 - Comm. Miller inquired if we can leverage collaboration with Mayor's transportation initiative for Metro to create a mandate for all departments to comply with equity lens.
 - **Language Access:** The Language Access Report has been completed and contracts are in place. A resource guide will be sent to all departments. Depending on how long we work remotely, E.D. Fowler-Green considering virtual Title VI training.
 - **Money Bail:** Comm. Tucker updated that a preliminary injunction has been granted re money bail. The Rule has been suspended. Metro Legal has been removed as counsel for criminal court clerk and the Attorney General's Office may replace. He will send memo re injunction to Commission.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- Impact of Tornadoes and COVID-19 on vulnerable communities in Nashville
 - To date, other than gender, no demographic metrics have been published. Reporting has not been required because not mandated by CDC.
 - Frustrated that there has not been public dissemination of tornado relief regarding marginalized and underserved communities.
 - Comm. Rodriguez said that the Department of Health has data but is uncertain if it reflects statewide or county-by-county demographics.
- MHRC Priorities during crisis and immediately after
 - Mel Fowler-Green announced Sarah Imran will be leaving MHRC to complete a Ph.D. program in Cincinnati, Ohio. Given policy and research expertise she is concerned about hiring freeze. She is considering requesting an exception given the breadth of her position and the ability for MHRC to effectuate our Metro Code mission.

- Staff are participating in virtual townhalls and other conversations regarding these issues.
- State of Black Nashville: Considering how to conduct focus groups remotely.
- E.D. Fowler-Green asked if Commissioners have thoughts on realigning our priorities. Comm. Venick inquired if we can make an equity recommendation regarding the Mayor's proposal to cut the Metro Schools Budget.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comm. Rodriguez asked attendees to consider taking online Spanish classes during downtime.

V. ADJOURN

Comm. Richmond moved, seconded by Comm. Miller.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:24p.

Notice of Electronic Meeting and Public Access

To protect the public health, safety, and welfare, Metro Human Relations Commission electrically conducted this meeting.

A recording of the proceedings has been posted and can be accessed here:

<https://www.nashville.gov/Government/Boards-and-Committees/Committee-Information/ID/20/Human-Relations-Commission.aspx>

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.