



One City for All People

a

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 6, 4:00-5:30pm

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 First Vice-Chair, Dr. Marisa Richmond

This meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: *Maryam Abolfazli, Samar Ali, Pratik Dash, Jeremy Davis, Jeff Gibson, Lethia Mann, Oscar Miller, Issa Y. Mohamed, Kobie Pretorius, Erin Pryor, Marisa Richmond, Linda Robinson, Janice Rodriguez, Davie Tucker, Irwin Venick, Chuck Yezbak*

Commissioners Not in Attendance: *Paula Martinez, Linda Robinson*

Others in Attendance: *Barbara Gunn-Lartey, Michael Donnell (Metro ITS), Mary Falls (Mayor's Office), Mel-Fowler-Green, Sarah Imran, Justin Marsh (Metro Legal)*

II. CONFIRM QUOROM (Share regrets from Commissioners not in attendance; introduce guests)

A quorum was achieved at the beginning of the meeting.

III. APPROVAL TO CONDUCT MEETING BY ELECTRONIC MEANS (motion)

Comm. Venick moved that the items on the Meeting Agenda constitute essential business of the board and that the meeting shall proceed electronically as necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare of all Tennesseans considering the COVID-19 outbreak and any Rule that conflicts with the Governor's Executive Order 16 not permitting electronic meetings be suspended.

This motion was unanimously adopted by verbal vote of Commissioners.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Comm. Miller. Moved to approve. **Comm. Yezbak** seconded. The June minutes were unanimously approved by Commissioners' verbal vote.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- **ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** (by virtual verbal vote)
 - The following MHRC Commissioners were elected for the 2020 – 2021 Executive Committee:
 - **Marisa Richmond** - Chair
 - **Jeremy Davis** – First Vice Chair
 - **Davie Tucker** – Second Vice Chair
 - **Irwin Venick** – Treasurer
 - **Maryam Abolfazli** – Secretary
 - **Board Chair Janice Rodriguez** continued presiding of this meeting.
- Continued Discussion of COVID-19 response policies on vulnerable communities in Nashville
 - Commissioners inquired about additional research re communities disproportionately affected by COVID, particularly Latino Community. E.D. Fowler-Green and Sarah Imran will further research this issue.
 - Commissioners discussed the options for testing, including assessment centers, public health facilities, and one’s private physician. They also expressed their concerns regarding data gathering, including identifying demographics.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- Hiring of Chief of Police Recommendation
 - E.D. Fowler-Green asked the Commission for ideas to select the new Chief of Police.
 - The Commission made the following recommendations:
 - Conduct literature review; constituent survey, community-at-large perspectives.
 - Ensure that MHRC and the Community Oversight Board (“COB”) review data to make recommendations with the expectation that such recommendations will be incorporated into the hiring process.
 - Forum for candidate questions from constituents
 - *Sarah Imran collaborated with Peter Vielehr, Lead Research Analyst with the COB, to create these recommendations.
 - **Comm. Dash** recommended that diversity be emphasized in recommendations. Sarah Imran will amend them to include this variable. **Comm. Abolfazli** inquired about abolitionist perspectives. Sarah responded that the recommended process, though not necessarily community lead, will be intentionally designed to incorporate community contribution.
 - **Comm. Tucker** advised that the Police Chief should not be involved in hiring process. **Comm. Miller** emphasized clarification regarding the impact Metro can have on Police Chief selection process– not just hiring, but decisions the newly-hired Chief makes.
 - **Comm. Venick** endorsed strengthened recommendations.
 - **Comm. Pretorius** asked whether there are term limits. **Comm. Tucker** responded there is no term limit. E.D. Fowler-Green suggested collaborating with Jill Fitchard (Executive

Director, COB) to review civil service rules and whether there should be an employment contract for Police Chief. **Comm. Abolfazli** suggested an annual evaluation. **Comm. Tucker** enlightened that there is one, but it's just not enforced.

- **Chair Rodriguez** asked about discussing additional New Business items in the interest of time.
 - E.D. Fowler-Green discussed the possibility of a community book reading. She noted that MHRC staff is considering reading *How To Be an Anti-Racist*, by Kendi Ibram X., as an internal book reading project.
 - In response to **Comm. Dash's** question about getting items on the Agenda, E.D. Fowler-Green said that recommendations can be submitted to the Chair or the Executive Director. **Comm. Rodriguez** suggesting revising Rules Committee. E.D. Fowler-Green said this matter will be explored.
- Director's Report
 - E.D. Fowler-Green noted that MHRC has offered and fielded requests for trainings and workshops, including:
 - Center for Nonprofit Management
 - Legal AID Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland
 - Metro Social Services Leadership
 - Stand UP! Nashville
 - YWCA 21-Day Challenge
 - Islamophobic advertisement in the Tennessean – **Comm. Ali** wrote an Op-Ed; Several Commissioners and Staff signed Petition
 - **Comm. Richmond** inquired about changes to the budget. E.D. Fowler-Green responded that budget is status quo and hiring freeze has been lifted.
 - **Comm. Richmond** inquired about recent Supreme Court ruling re VII, specifically regarding pre-emption from the State. E.D. Fowler-Green will explore.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Justin Marsh (Metro Legal) inquired about record of attendance for Minutes. E.D. Fowler-Green responded affirmatively.
- **Chair Rodriguez** announced that TFLC has secured several grants for COVID-19 relief.
- **Comm. Pretorius** acknowledged **Comm. Yezbak** for contributing durable Personal Protective Equipment to volunteers and residents at the Fairgrounds.
- Commissioners thanked **Boar Chair Janice Rodriguez** for her two year service of leadership to the Metro Human Relations Commission.

VIII. ADJOURN

Comm. Venick motioned to adjourn. **Comm. Miller** seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 5:51p.

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.