



One City for All People

Metro Human Relations Commission

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 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

The meeting was called to order at 4:10p.

CBC Rodriguez explained that ED Mel Fowler-Green, Comm. Jeremy Davis, Dave Garrison and Jeff Gibson are unable to attend.

Commissioners introduced themselves to the newest Commission Member, **Chuck Yezbak**.

Commissioners in Attendance: Aisha Lbhalla, Lethia Mann, Oscar Miller, Avi Poster, Kobie Pretorius, Marisa Richmond, Linda Robinson, Janice Rodriguez, Erin Pryor, Davie Tucker, Jr., Irwin Venick, Chuck Yezbak

Commissioners Not in Attendance: Samar Ali, Jeremy Davis, Dave Garrison, Marcela Gomez, Jeff Gibson

Others in Attendance: Alex Dickerson (Metro Legal), Barbara Gunn Lartey, Sarah Imran, Arlene Martin-Vance (Guest), Vanessa Lazon,

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

A quorum was not achieved at meeting's inception.

III. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

February minutes could not be approved because there was no quorum.

CBC Rodriguez distributed a Welcoming American tool from Building a Nation of Neighbors.

Though minutes could not be approved CBC Rodriguez asked if there were any changes.

When a quorum was achieved, CBC Rodriguez asked there was a motion to approve them. Comm. Richmond moved for approval. Comm. Miller seconded. Minutes were approved.

IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** CBC Janice Rodriguez

Commissioners reviewed the financial report included in the packet.

There were no questions or concerns.

V. **OLD NEW BUSINESS**

- Update on Projects, Policies and Initiatives

Ashford Hughes

Small Business Resolution

- Legislation has passed for goal-based metrics for minority-owned businesses. Now there are accountability measures.

Small businesses, as defined by the Small Business Association, reserves contracts under \$500,000. These smaller businesses can only bid on these contracts. Mayor Briley has designed policies to address disparities.

- Comm. Miller: How and when will new legislation go into effect? Ashford: 180 days after passage in July 6, 2019.

Miller inquired about compliance and implementation: How achieve 15% compliance? 15% per year? Ashford—no per project. Compliance Officers will ensure numbers attained per project. Comm. Miller: What are corrective measures? **Hughes:** Penalties, which are appealable, are in Metro Code.

- Comm. Lbhalla: How can people find out about available contracts? Ashford: Efforts for year-advance construction, professional services, etc., projects. Ashford: Michelle Lane working to complete this by July 6, 2019.

First in the South: Historic Executive Order for LGBTQ-Owned Businesses

- Mayor David Briley today signed an historic executive order for LGBT-owned businesses, affirming their inclusion as a recognized category for Metro Procurement

First in the South: Executive Order for Nashville to be the first in the south to certify LGBTQ-owned businesses. Working with procurement to assist with businesses that self-identify as LGBTQ-owned.

Among other objectives, this Resolution will develop a process for certification through National LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce. The Nashville LGBT Chamber of Commerce partner as the local affiliate.

Nashville GRAD Program

- Nashville GRAD Program: Partnership among Nashville State, Chamber of Commerce, Metro Government to support students to complete community colleges. Private sector will assist with Drive 55 students (books, tuition, child-care, etc.) Vital to Workforce Development initiatives in Nashville. HCA is one of first private entities to partner with this initiative.

National Publishing Board / Barnes Foundation

- Comm. Poster asked about the Mayor's interest in the National Publishing Board property: How and why used? Ashford: On Historic Register. One of the last buildings representing Black economic empowerment in Nashville. Property is located on a slave market site and may be used for affordable housing using Barnes Foundation funds. Confirmed that Barnes Foundation funds only accessed if used for affordable housing. Discussions between Mayor's office and Barnes Foundation ongoing.
- Comm. Richmond: How can HCA ("Hospital Corporation of America) monies be used? Scholarships for Nashville State? Book monies? **Hughes will confirm.**
- Comm. Richmond also inquired about follow-up for health benefits exclusionary measures for transgender Metro employees. Decisions was to made by end of February.

Hughes will follow up.

Comm. Tucker: Is Metro only buyer for the National Publishing Board building? Concerned that such a purchase could be a detriment to the Barnes Fund. Opines that using Barnes Fund monies could be perilous to the integrity of the Fund.

Comm. Venick: For clarification: If Barnes Fund Commission Board does not agree, this option would be taken off the table? ***Hughes will follow up.***

Commission Queries

- Comm. Poster: Has Metro made any improvements regarding IncluCivics? Does Metro pay fair wages? Have we increased hiring from diverse communities, including the ADA, women, people of color, etc.? ***Hughes:*** We are not where we want to be. Referenced Employee Satisfaction survey. 700-800 employees (~40%) responded. Retention for women, women of color identified as priorities. Using GARE as a tool. With Shannon Hall looking at Boards that need the most attention.
- Comm. Tucker: Requested follow-up regarding Policing Project report. Not satisfied with Mayor Briley or Chief Anderson's response. Communities most affected by over-policing need a succinct acknowledgement on the impact of this reality. ***Hughes:*** Where does Mayor need to express his concurrence with this view? Tribune? Tennessean?
- Comm. Pretorius: Is there a position on Nathan Bedford Forrest? ***Hughes:*** Mayor Briley may say that's an issue for State Representatives to address. Consider a historical black luminary next to it?

Comm. Rodriguez: Could be within our purview to make a statement if Commission feels strongly about it. ***Hughes:*** If no statue removal, can MHRC strategize with State to offer cultural competency education?

Comm. Tucker: Instead of taking down, provide context, e.g., narrative of colored troops.

Comm. Venick agrees with context option. Comm. Pryor thinks MHRC can participate in strategies / measures for honest race conversations.

Comm. Venick moved to put this issue on agenda for next meeting. Mann seconded.

- ***Hughes:*** Does MHRC submit bullet points to Mayor's Office to be addressed? How can we cultivate a stronger relationship? Vanessa Lazón: Mel meets with Marcus Floyd, but not on a scheduled basis. Comm. Poster suggested quarterly meetings with E.D. Mel Fowler-Green. Comm. Rodriguez—could produce a quarterly summary that can become part of formal record.

- Comm. Venick moved to table training follow up. Comm. Richmond seconded.

- **Report on MNPS Discipline Policy Change:** Comm. Robinson

- Officially passed by MNPS School Board. Task Force currently working on language for MNPS Handbook.

Tony Majors will present to School Board to seek funding for resources to support proposal which includes Care Centers for highest need MNPS elementary schools. reduced suspensions.

Comm. Rodriguez: What can we do?

Comm. Venick: Can MHRC issue a statement of support congratulating new measure and support of resources?

Comm. Robinson: Likes the idea of a statement of support that policy has been passed.

Comm. Rodriguez: Shall we ask ED Fowler-Green to draft?

Comm. Yezbak moved to create a Task Force to draft a statement that will be submitted to E.D. Fowler-Green to revise. Comm. Pryor seconded. Commissioners Robinson, Poster, and Venick volunteered to serve on the Task Force. Barbara Gunn Lartey will coordinate.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORT

- Bylaws Committee – report from February 28, 2019: Comm. Miller
 - Discussed term limits
 - Language distinguishing between committees and subcommittees.
 - Open Meetings Clarification: Commissioners and community members can meet without violating Open Meeting law. Interns may also participate. This can expedite getting work done.
 - Annual Report—requests for trainings, documentation, providing fuller scope of what MHRC does. Comm. Venick: Could the MHRC issue a State of Human Relations as a Metro report? Evaluative tool of how Metro needs to improve.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Alex Dickerson on behalf of Mel Fowler-Green

COB Bill: Senate Bill 1407: Effect on MHRC?

(g) Language of the Bill could impact the MHRC's subpoena power or ability to call witnesses.

E.D. Fowler-Green may appear before the Legislature to speak against the Bill. COB will be releasing statement

Comm. Tucker: The Legislative Committee Chair is restricting public comment. He will speak before the Committee tomorrow as public citizen, not as a representative for the COB. Suggests MHRC discuss strategy re the impact of this Bill on the Commission. Discussion ensued regarding strategy.

Comm. Venick: Suggests Fowler-Green take the position she feels most prudent and advantageous for the Commission regarding police oversight.

Unanimously agreed by MHRC.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Comm. Pretorius attended an immigration panel moderated by E.D. Fowler-Green at West End Synagogue. Very well done.
- Sarah Imran:

[Nashville Rising: Work, Wages & the Future of Nashville: An Open Forum](#)

Saturday, April 6, 2019

9:00am – 11:30a

TSU Avon Williams Campus (330 10th Avenue, North)

Imran described initiative goal to address decency of work, livable wages

- Comm. Poster:
 - Strongly encouraged Commissioners to attend Wage Forum
 - Community Relations Seder: *Stronger Than Hate*
March 28, Gordon Jewish Community Center
- Barbara Gunn Lartey— Update on Mobile Diversity Seminar and Stand Against Racism

X. **ADJOURN**

Comm. Richmond moved to adjourn. Comm. Mann seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 6:01p.

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.