



One City for All People

## Full Commission Meeting Minutes

**Monday, January 3, 2022, 4:00-5:30pm**

**Howard Office Building**

**Sonny West Auditorium**

**700 2nd Ave S, Nashville, TN 37210**

*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.*

1. **1.CALL TO ORDER:** MHRC Chair, Davie Tucker

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

**Commissioners in Attendance:** *Maryam Abolfazli, Deaconess Garlinda Burton, Pratik Dash, Lethia Mann, Marisa Richmond, Linda Robinson, Ariel Safdie, Dr. Ben Tran, Davie Tucker, Irwin Venick, Chuck Yezbak*

**Commissioners Not in Attendance:** *Jorge Diaz, Barbara Gunn-Lartey, Joshua Wood, Nancy Youssef, Paula Martinez, Issa Mohammed,*

**Others in Attendance:** *Derrick Smith (Metro Legal)*

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

A quorum was obtained at meeting's inception.

Board Chair Tucker announced that this would be the last meeting for Executive Director Mel Fowler-Green. He and the Commissioners expressed their gratitude for her leadership, vision, and allyship to address social justice issues in Nashville. Fowler-Green noted that her tenure with MHRC has been rewarding and fulfilling. She thanked the Commissioners and her staff.

3. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes from two previous meetings were reviewed and approved.

- **October 4, 2021**

- Commissioner Richmond moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Dash seconded. All Commissioners adopted the minutes.

- **November 1, 2021**

- Commissioner Richmond moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Dash seconded. All Commissioners adopted the minutes.

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

- **Plans for January 12, 2022, Public Hearing (Budget Equity)**

Mel Fowler-Green confirmed this hearing for next week. It will be in the Sonny West Conference Center, 4:00p.m.– 6:00p.m. Anticipated attendees include Councilwoman Zulfat Suara,

representatives from The Black Nashville Assembly, The People's Budget, and the San Antonio Office of Equity, and the Mayor's Office.

- **Procurement Standards Board Nomination Process**

Mel Fowler-Green said the Full Commission is statutorily authorized to hire the Executive Director. She noted that the MHRC Executive Board (Maryam Abolfazli, Pratik Dash, Marisa Richmond, Ben Tran, Davie Tucker, Irwin Venick) which also serves as the Hiring Committee, met to discuss how the search would be conducted, the job description, and scoring rubric. The Hiring Committee will collaborate with Human Resources to select her successor.

There will be no Interim Director until further notice. Commissioner Safdie requested clarification on how the work will continue after Fowler-Green leaves. Chair Tucker said that Barbara Gunn Lartey (Director of Community Engagement) and Mark Eatherly (Director of Operations and Special Projects) will be managing MHRC. Commissioner Abolfazli said that the Commission is open to ideas for an Interim Director. Chair Tucker said selecting a new Executive Director could take up to a year – although he hopes for a four-six-month timeframe.

Chair Tucker noted that he takes this process of selecting the next Executive Director very seriously. Commissioner Dash added that Commissioners interested in this process are welcomed to participate. Commissioner Yezbak cautioned that interview questions/comments for the candidates must be legal as well as respectful. He suggested a list of terms or “cheat sheet.”

Commissioner Robinson inquired about how Commissioners could have been informed about the Hiring Committee meetings. Chair Tucker emphasized that the process has been and will continue to be transparent, including sending emails. Mel Fowler-Green said that she's uncertain that emails were sent to the entire Commission for both meetings.

There was a motion for the Board to adopt the process of selecting the next Executive Director. The motion was seconded and adopted.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

- Budget modifications - Chair Tucker will work with Mark Eatherly
- Staffing needs - No additional discussion

6. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Tucker acknowledged the passing of Yusef Harris, founder and owner of Alkebu-Lan Images - the only African American Bookstore in Middle Tennessee.

Chair Tucker asked Commissioner Richmond to remain engaged in advocacy for inclusive benefits legislation. He found repulsive the Benefits' Board discussion and decision to deny inclusive benefits. Fowler-Green acknowledged continued interest and support by the Mayor's Office and Metro Council.

Though there was no Director's Report, Fowler-Green noted the following:

- Encouraged participation of a community representative for the Procurement Board. She also suggested that a commissioner remain engaged in this process. Commissioner Dash will take the lead on this.
- Center for Nonprofit Management has received a grant to continue *Just Conversations*

7. **ADJOURN** – the meeting was adjourned at 5:04p.m.

8. **The link for this recording:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7vXdTNpxVM&t=5s>

**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 615-880-3374 or [MHRC@nashville.gov](mailto:MHRC@nashville.gov). Requests should be made as soon as possible but at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting for the entity to provide such needed aid or service.