



Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 7, 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:** Maryam Abolfazli, MHRC Board Chair

The meeting was called to order at 4:05p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: *Maryam Abolfazli, Deaconess Garlinda Burton, Pratik Dash, Lethia Mann, Issa Mohammed, Marisa Richmond, Linda Robinson, Irwin Venick, Chuck Yezbak, Nancy Youssef*

Commissioners Not in Attendance: *Jorge Diaz, Paula Martinez, Ariel Safdie, Dr. Ben Tran, Joshua Wood*

Others in Attendance: *Barbara Gunn Lartey (MHRC), Derrick Smith (Metro Legal), Sierra Allen (TSU Student/Member of the Public)*

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

A quorum was obtained at meeting's inception.

3. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes from the February meeting were reviewed and approved with the caveat that they be revised to reflect that Commissioner Lethia Mann attended the February meeting and Commissioner Deaconess Burton Garlinda did not.

Commissioner Dash moved to approve; Commissioner Yezbak seconded. The Minutes were approved and adopted.

4. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

- Commissioner Abolfazli reviewed the budget included in the meeting packet
 - \$19,409 leave pay cashed out by Mel Fowler-Green
 - Community Foundation has not funded *Just Conversations* as agreed
 - Chair Abolfazli and Mark Eatherly will be attending budget hearing on March 8, 2022
 - Chair Abolfazli noted the following:
 1. Requesting FTE (Full Time Employee) to address Title VI and compliance matters
 2. Equity salary adjustment for staff
 3. Additional funding for MNPD Mobile Diversity Seminar – which include training both cadets and lateral hires

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

• **Update on Executive Director Selection**

- Friday, March 4, 2022: The Executive Committee and Wanda Hadley (Metro Human Resources) conducted 20-minute screening interviews with 15 candidates.

On the same day, the Executive Committee and Wanda Hadley narrowed the ED candidate pool from 15 people to three finalists.

- Thursday, March 17, 2022: In-person interviews for the final three candidates will be held:
 - o Metro Southeast – 1417 Murfreesboro Pike
 - o Time to be determined
 - o Barbara Gunn Lartey will publicly notice the candidate interviews announcement
- Commissioner Robinson inquired about the process of determining the top three candidates and asked who they are.
- Commissioner Abolfazli noted that the decisions were unanimous after several hours of deliberation. She said that for privacy reasons the names will not be released until the date of the in-person interviews.

Commissioners Robinson and Yezbak asked for clarification regarding the privacy issue – particularly since the candidates have applied for a public position. In addition, their identities will be known on March 17 during the interviews. Several Commissioners, including Commissioners Dash, Burton, and Richmond, shared the importance of protecting the identity of the candidates until they have had a chance to communicate their candidacy to their employers; the concern is retaliation or other adverse responses from the employers.

- Commissioner Dash requested that even if there is a quorum, but not the Full Commission, to discuss the final decision, a separate meeting should be held so that all Commissioners could participate in the ED selection. All Commissioners agreed.
- Commissioner Burton requested a copy of the finalists' résumés to prepare for the final interviews. Commissioner Abolfazli said she will confer with Wanda Hadley.
- **Update on Community Forum Reports**
 - Commissioner Abolfazli requested feedback from Commissioners for the last Forum on Budget Equity
- **Status of Appointee to the Procurement Standards Board**
 - Commissioner Dash reported there three strong candidates and suggests waiting until after the Executive Director is hired before proceeding with interviewing with them

5. NEW BUSINESS

- New Recommended Practices for Commission Organizational Management
 - Commissioner Abolfazli seeks to cultivate a robust, healthy organizational culture
 - Several ideas were discussed, including a 360^o Review for Commissioners and MHRC Staff to evaluate the ED and a mechanism for Commissioners and Staff to communicate
 - Commissioner Youssef suggested quarterly discussion between the Commission and staff
 - Commissioner Venick suggested a presentation to the Commission from Human Resources
 - Commissioner Burton recommends a culturally sensitive staff review of ED
 - Commissioner Yezbak doesn't think staff should evaluate the ED, but supports the Chair communicating with staff periodically
 - Derrick Smith (Metro Legal) recommends following Metro Human Resources the policies that are already in place
 - Commissioner Abolfazli reiterated her request that the Board consider innovative, best practices to ensure a healthy, productive work environment

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner Dash acknowledged Commissioner Abolfazli for her effective, visionary leadership while assuming the role of Board Chair on such short notice.
- Commissioner Venick announced that the Jewish Federation and Foundation will host its annual [Social Justice Seder](#) on Thursday, March 31, 2022, at 6:30p.m. [Register here](#) for more information.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dash moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Richmond seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:57pm.

8. **The link for this recording:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1F9j9Ff-SA>

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. 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.