



One City for All People

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 9, 2022, 4:00pm-5:30pm

Hadley Park Community Center

1037 28th Avenue N., Nashville, TN 37208

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. **CALL TO ORDER:** Board Chair, Maryam Abolfazli
The meeting was called to order at 4:10p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: *Maryam Abolfazli, Pratik Dash, Jorge Salles-Diaz, Ben Tran, Irwin Venick, Chuck Yezbak*

Commissioners Not in Attendance: *Deaconess Garlinda Burton, Paula Martinez, Issa Mohammed, Linda Robinson, Ariel Safdie, Joshua Wood, Nancy Youssef*

Others in Attendance: *Barbara Gunn Lartey (MHRC), Davie Tucker (ED, MHRC), Derrick Smith (Metro Legal), Member of the Public*

2. **CONFIRM QUOROM** (Share regrets from Commissioners not in attendance; introduce guests)
A quorum was not met at the meeting's inception. For this reason, no official business, including approving the Minutes, deliberation, or voting, could be conducted.

3. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
Commissioner Tran noted that paragraph five from the April Minutes needs to be revised; the revision has been made.

The Minutes could not be approved because there was no quorum.

4. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**
Chair Abolfazli reviewed the financial report, noting there was little activity because there was no ED. She also provided an update from MHRC's budget request to the Mayor's Office:

- Full Time Employee to Manage Compliance and Title VI: *Denied*
- Additional Funding for MNPD Mobile Diversity Seminar: *Partial approval for additional seminars*
- Equity pay increase for Staff: *Approved*

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Welcome New Executive Director: Davie Tucker**

Chair Abolfazli welcomed ED Tucker and acknowledged his expertise and experience to affect change regarding equity issues in Nashville.

Davie Tucker offered remarks about how grateful he is to lead MHRC, noting that its mission, to protect and promote the personal dignity, peace, safety, security, health, and general welfare of all people in Nashville and Davidson County, is aligned with his own core values.

ED Tucker reflected on how important it is to do the work of the community in the community – which is the impetus for convening his inaugural meeting at Hadley Park Community Center. ED Tucker encouraged Commissioners to engage their local community centers, organizations, and affiliations for MHRC events, especially meetings.

ED Tucker concluded his remarks by noting that one of the most effective strategies to impact equity for Nashvillians is to increase the Commission and the community's participation in policy initiatives in the City.

Chair Abolfazli endorsed ED Tucker's vision to increase community participation in the work of the Commission.

Commissioner Venick agreed and suggested that the Commission invite Council Members to meetings for their perspective.

- **Preliminary Strategic Planning Discussion**

Chair Abolfazli seeks to empower a Strategic Planning Committee to guide the process of creating a strategic plan. This Committee would determine the priorities for the Commission. She suggests that ED Tucker facilitate this discussion. **Commissioners Salles-Diaz, Tran and Venick** volunteered to serve on the Strategic Planning Commission.

- **Select Nominating Committee for 2022-2023 Executive Board**

Chair Abolfazli requested volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee to select the next Executive Board. Derrick Smith, Metro Legal, affirmed that the Chair can create such a committee pursuant to the Chair's ability to establish *ad hoc* committees. He added that all Commissioners can participate on *ad hoc* committees. **Commissioners Dash, Salles-Diaz and Yezbak** volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee. They will meet before the Board Meeting on June 6, 2022.

- **Title VI/Compliance Issues**

Chair Abolfazli noted that ED Tucker is clarifying MHRC's investigative and enforcement roles regarding Title VI matters.

- **Commissioner Roster and Replacing Inactive, Non-Engaged Commissioner**

Commissioner Venick requested permission to add the following matters to the agenda:

Commission Roster: Commissioner Venick expressed concern that there are several Commissioners whose term expired simultaneously and questioned the accuracy of the Commissioner Roster. Derrick Smith said he will explore.

Commissioner Participation: Commissioner Venick expressed frustration that the Commission does not have the authority to replace inactive, non-engaged, unresponsive Commissioners. Discussion ensued about the statutory ability to replace non-participatory Commissioners, including assessing their attendance record. Derrick Smith advised ED Tucker to confer with the inactive Commissioners (if reachable or responsive). Smith also suggested that Tucker consult with the appointing authority – the Mayor's Office.

Chair Abolfazli concluded that she: (1) wants confirmation of the appointment dates of Commissioners; (2) will assess the attendance of inactive Commissioners and contact them to determine their interest in remaining on the Board; and (3) will work on filling the Commissioner appointments. ED Tucker said that staff will determine Commissioner appointments and submit to her before the next meeting.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- **Interviews for Procurement Board Appointment – Commissioner Dash**

Because there was no quorum, the candidate for the Procurement Board could not be interviewed. Chair Abolfazli said she will accept his stated interest in the Procurement Board as

a Public Comment. Several ideas were discussed regarding how to proceed: (1)the Board could conduct a formal interview at their June meeting; (2) create an *ad hoc* committee and convene an intermittent interview, with a seven day notice, before the June meeting; or, (3) as suggested by Commissioner Dash, create an *ad hoc* committee, meet and assess candidate's application materials (résumé and cover letter), with a seven day notice, make a decision about the candidate's appointment, and provide their recommendation at the June Board meeting. The board chose option three. If there is a full quorum at the June meeting, the Commission will vote on the candidate's appointment.

- **Community Forums Follow-Up**

Chair Abolfazli wants a concise report that reflects the data points, findings, and outcomes of the Public Forums. She envisions one that is consumable and well formatted.

ED Tucker added that he wants to frame both physical and digital versions of this report as re-imagining public safety. For example, in addition to law enforcement, fire, and other first responders, he wants housing and the issues of those navigating the civil repercussions of a criminal offense to be incorporated in the report. Finally, ED Tucker seeks to be very intentional about producing and distributing the final report with strong recommendations to several sectors (*e.g.*, private, public, and non-profit) so that can impact public policy.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Larry Turnley, a candidate for the Procurement Board, offered public comments on his background and interest in the Procurement Board. (He could not be interviewed, as planned, because there was no quorum.) In summary, Mr. Turnley shared that he:

- completed the Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI) Training
- has a background as a Violence Interrupter with Gideon's Army
- is a returning citizen after serving 20 years in federal prison
- is a passionate advocate for economic and social justice
- is a small business owner who seeks to demystify the process of becoming a Metro vendor for entrepreneurs, particularly those with a criminal record

8. **ANOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements

9. **ADJOURN**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:14p.m.

10. **The link for this meeting: https://youtu.be/_1gXo3uT4go**

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 for the entity to provide such needed aid or service.