



One City for All People

Metro Human Relations Commission

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 5, 2018, from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Lentz Public Health Center

2500 Charlotte Ave, Nashville, TN 37209

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 at 4:05pm:** MHRC Board Chair, Janice Rodriguez

Commissioners in Attendance: *Janice Rodriguez, Linda Robinson, Avi Poster, Irwin Venick, Kobie Pretorius, Erin Pryor, Marcela Gómez, Marisa Richmond, Lethia Mann, Oscar Miller, Rev. Davie Tucker, Jeremy Davis, Jeff Gibson, Phyllis Hildreth,*

Commissioners Not in Attendance: *Dave Garrison, Samar Ali, Aisha Lbhalla*

Others in Attendance: *Mel Fowler-Green*

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

- Legal counsel, Quan Poole, will transition to planning commission and land use. Alex Dickerson or Justin Marsh will replace him, beginning December board meeting.
- Chair thanked him for his service.

III. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (October)

- One change: question to Mayor Briley about sufficient funding to support MNPS Director Dr. Joseph's budget was asked by Comm. Linda Robinson.

IV. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Executive Director, Mel Fowler-Green

- No changes anticipated. Some cost savings from reduced sponsorship.
- October numbers are not entirely complete; very close.
- Work of Mark Eatherly acknowledged.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

- Chair appointment to the Executive Committee pursuant to Art. VII, Sec. 7(A) of the MHRC Bylaws
 - Pursuant to Art 7, section 7a, Chair Rodriguez appointed Comm. Davie Tucker to Executive Committee. He has finger on the pulse of the community; brings complementary skill set to the Exec. Committee.
 - Position accepted.

- Discuss formal recommendations for community engagement in executive hiring
 - ED Fowler-Green discussed positive example of community engagement of the second selection process for Director of schools. She highlighted the “smart move” to take the board’s top candidates into the community to elicit consensus. Produced more community solidarity than one might have expected. Nashville’s healing and community pride around that process and its outcome
 - Current conversation is to consider replicating “best practices” (per chair) to promote transparency and community engagement; to be proactive and intentional should another high-level vacancy occur
 - Consensus around focusing on executive positions—general assent
 - CM Hildreth volunteered sharing the Commission history of the first and second search for current ED. ED Mel Fowler-Green reaffirmed intent to preserve our process by including it in the consolidated Office Procedures Manual

VI. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director, Mel Fowler-Green (45 minutes)

- Staff member Sarah Imran is recruiting at Peabody internship and career fair. Acknowledged her initiative in formalizing the unpaid internships (satisfying academic credit); slight bias towards students doing data analysis, sociology, or skill we need and do not have. ED asked present faculty to recommend students
- Affordable and fair housing—second educational booklet is published. Public thanks to MHRC Support Fund at the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee as underwriter. NOAH’s public meeting included “shout-out” to MHRC for production of the first report.
- Title VI update (language access; racial equity) and other issues related to public safety
 - Public safety and criminal justice—conversations with Marcus Floyd (Mayor’s advisor on public safety) continue; we await election outcome as signaling policy direction
 - Policing Project research results are scheduled to be announced by Mayor’s office November 19th.
 - Comm. Samar Ali— in the event the referendum does not pass, what are some options [for oversight?] and what are our positions on these options?
 - ED Fowler-Green responds—executive order for oversight; could potentially go back to legislative branch for council action
 - ED is fairly certain, based on ongoing conversations with Floyd, the Commission will be consulted.
 - Comm. Tucker—suggests that the Commission make a formal request to have an official seat at the table as a Commission per our Title IV mandate
 - Motion to make such a formal request made (Comm. Venick; seconded by Comm. Tucker). Passed by voice vote at 4:45pm.
 - Last month, 8 police officers and sergeants and other emergency personnel posted mocking photos of a transgender woman on social media. First reported here: <https://www.scoopnashville.com/2018/10/metro-police-officers-firefighters-took-secret-photos-of-shamed-a-transgender-citizen/>

- ED and Comm. Marisa Richmond had meetings, received assurances, and the mayor's office is looking for our recommendations for specific and general HR training to address issues for LGBTQ community.
- Comm. Richmond—first meeting alone with Mayor's office to convey anger and outrage of the community to be humiliated and shamed by those charged with serving and protecting. Emphasized needs for training, that engages members of the community most directly affected—we live here, work here, pay taxes here. Want to make sure people are welcome.
- LGBTQ liaisons to first responder orgs (DC, NYC are comps). Comm. Richmond was pleased with response from the Mayor's office
- Long conversation regarding the incident and appropriate responses ensued.
- Commissioners expressed deep concerns about the lackluster response across the community and about the wellbeing of LGBTQ employees in those metro departments.
- Next steps:
 - a. ED Fowler-Green and CM Richmond will review method and outcome of these investigations, then will move to a truth and reconciliation
 - b. Motion by Comm. Marcela Gomez—issue a press release addressing the issue once investigation is completed and responses are implemented.
Passed by voice vote 5:35.
- Commissioners also concerned about ensuring that the full commission is informed when things like this happen. After discussion, consensus was reached on a general procedural path:
 - a. ED and Chair (or other Comm. Member with ties to particular community) respond and set meetings with involved individuals and departments;
 - b. ED sends paragraph to each Comm. Member to update on the concern and the response;
 - c. Comm. Members can respond in their own capacity;
 - d. Comm. Members may request emergency called meeting to formulate an official position and public response.
- Comm. Ali—states that it is timely to address gaps in public understanding of the purpose of this Commission , by op-ed or otherwise, to tell what we do, why we do it, and the historical story that inspires
 - o Conversation about Commission history ensued
 - o ED Fowler-Green will share Commission history with Commissioners and will develop a strategy for communicating more broadly with the public

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Comm. Avi Poster raised the issue of activist arrested at Marsha Blackburn campaign event. “I

don't understand this. Asking our ED to clarify for us. ED committed to look into it and advise.

- Comm. Poster wants to calendar for future meetings:
 - follow up on the diversity report and
 - discussion on the language of hate.
- Comm. Irwin Venick—Prosperity Now conference for individuals and financial security (December 3-5, 2018)
- Comm. Richmond –Thursday Nov. 15. Transgender Day of Remembrance (hate crime victims) Scarritt-Benett 7pm
- Comm. Richmond and ED Fowler-Green will co-author op-ed to address the Transgender Day of Remembrance

IX. **ADJOURN at 5:45**

MHRC Priorities

Racial/Social Inequity

Affordable and Fair Housing

Law Enforcement/Policing

Title VI

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.

November 2018 -- MHRC Director's report

Ongoing Projects and Programs

<i>Project</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>
Affordable housing educational series	<p>Second in the series is complete and has been released. Supported by MHRC Fund of the Community Foundation of Middle TN.</p> <p>Please take some to share!</p>	
Public Safety and Criminal Justice	<p>I have continued open conversations with Marcus Floyd in the Mayor's Office. We are all awaiting the results of the election to see policy direction. In any case, recommendations from the Policing Project will be announced Nov 19.</p> <p>Last month, media reported that a number of police officers and firefighters (and others) allegedly posted unauthorized pictures of a transgender resident on social media and mocked her. Vice Chair Marisa Richmond and I are working with the Mayor's Office, the departments, and human resources on a remedy. I have talked to both Chief Anderson and Chief Swann. We will review the internal departmental investigations (both the methods and the outcomes) once completed. We will be working directly with the departments to implement training recommendations, if any – including other Metro employees, generally, not just MNP and NFD. We are committed to including representatives from the transgender community in forming any recommendations and trainings, just as we do for the Police Academy during the Mobile Diversity Seminar we lead.</p>	November 19
Nashville Hearts.Me platform	<p>Effort to create a nearly evergreen resource to help constituents and service providers find needed services.</p> <p>Beta testing now; intend to launch once there are more service providers signed up.</p>	
PolicyLink – All-In Cities Anti-Displacement Initiative	<p>Team representing Nashville in the All-In Cities initiative by Policy Link addressing policies to avoid or mitigate displacement due to gentrification</p>	

	<p>Anyone can follow the PolicyLink process and the work of our team, and provide feedback. www.nashvilleallin.com</p> <p>I will be in Austin Nov 13-14 for a convening of all the cities in the initiative.</p>	
Escalera Career Panel	Last week, Sarah spoke on a panel to a group of 1 st generation high school students on college and career prospects after high school graduation.	Last week
Peabody Internship and Career Fair	This evening, Sarah will be representing MHRC at the Peabody College and Career fair. We are in the process of recruiting interns for the spring.	Today
Poverty Report	Initially requested by council member Vercher. Addressing the state of poverty and economic opportunity for African Americans in Nashville 50 years after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Completed and awaiting recommendations from CM Vercher on the release.	ASAP
Youth Violence Evaluation	Collaboration with Gideon's Army. They are implementing a school-based intervention to combat youth violence. This program is being piloted at Pearl Cohn high school. We are helping implement and evaluate this program. The past month, Sarah and Rasheedat worked on designing a pre-survey to measure previous involvement in, exposure to and current attitudes about violence. This survey will be implemented this week.	1-2 year project
Partnership with Vanderbilt University and Columbia University	Both these universities offer Program Evaluation classes that form partnerships between students and organizations to work together on evaluating programs. Sarah has been participating in classes this semester and work with students at both these universities to design a program evaluation for Gideon's Army.	This semester
Title VI	<p>Still working on a Metro-wide Language Access Plan and Resource Guide; met in June with the Mayor's office, HR, and General Services.</p> <p>Restructuring Title VI reporting and training in collaboration with HR. Should be accomplished by next Spring.</p>	<p>Meeting: to be rescheduled with Mayor's Office</p> <p>Website update and Video anticipated</p>

	In the next few months we will also update our website and make a simple training video for new employees for use by department Title VI Coordinators.	release: February
Center for Nonprofit Management Training	Workshop to address issues re systemic inequity and building a Nashville-centric equity lens for nonprofits to use Mel Fowler-Green, MHRC Barbara Gunn Lartey, MHRC Sarah Imran, MHRC Sarah Bounse, MNHD	Two next year: April 25, 2019 Oct 22, 2019
37208 Incarceration Project	Advising researchers at Meharry formulating a project around the findings of the Brookings Report -- the 37208 neighborhood the highest in the nation at 14% incarceration rate.	
Public Relations	Project introducing each Commissioner on website, in social media and newsletters.	Ongoing
Chamber Report Card Committee	I am serving my third and final year on the Report Card Committee of the Chamber of Commerce. This year we are focusing on Social Emotional Learning.	Report out in December

Complaints

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Title VI complaint against MDHA LEP resident lost Section 8 voucher after having missed hearing on alleged back payment due. Notifications were all in English.	After conciliation by MHRC, complainant was given new hearing and her voucher was restored. This also provided an opportunity to talk to MDHA leadership about Title VI practices and language access.

Events

<i>Event</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>
Human Rights Day Celebration	Sponsorship	Dec 11, 2018
Spring Poverty Summit	Sponsorship	Spring 2019