



# METROPOLITAN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

**April 12, 2021**  
**4:30 PM**  
**METRO CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**2310 PARNELL AVENUE**  
**FORT WAYNE, IN 46805**  
**Teleconference: 260-427-8590 PIN: 124719**

**Meeting called by:** STATUTORY MONTHLY MEETING  
**Type of meeting:** FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH  
**Note taker:** LESLIE HERNANDEZ, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT IV

**Metro Commissioners:** Lana Keesling, Chair; Aisha Arrington, Vice Chair; Dorian Maples; Larry Wardlaw; Tabitha Ervin; and Dr. David Lombard.

## Agenda

Call to Order  
Roll Call of Commissioners  
Reading of Minutes  
Office Report  
Old Business  
New Business  
Concerns/Comments from the Public  
Adjournment

Call to Order and Roll Call at 4:31 p.m.

Commissioners Keesling, Arrington, Burrus, Ervin and Lombard present.

**Other Persons Present:** Nikki Quintana, Executive Director  
Jenny Gosheff, Staff Attorney  
Leslie Hernandez, Administrative Assistant IV  
Rick Trevino

- Commissioner Keesling presented former Commissioner Rick Trevino with an award. She thanked him for his dedication and years of service on Metro’s Commission. She stated that Trevino tried to remain on the Commission but after further review he had to step down. Trevino stated that he misses being on the Commission and feels that leaving the Metro Commission is the only negative that came with his new position. He also added that he feels good about leaving the Commission in the hands that it’s in now and feels like he couldn’t ask for a better staff, Staff Attorney and Director.
- Commissioner Keesling welcomed new Commissioner Tony Burrus and thanked him for joining.
- March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes were read and approved.

## **OFFICE REPORT**

### **EEOC**

#### **EMPLOYMENT CASE PROCESSING (10/1/20 – 9/30/21)**

- **Intakes (by 9/30/21): 110 (contract number) 41 (current status)**
- **Contract number of case closures by 9/30/21: 265**
  - o 135 No Probable Cause Cases
  - o 12 Settlements(\$55,083.00)
  - o 6 Withdrawals
  - o 2 Lack of Jurisdiction
  - o 0 Right to Sue or Full Credit Transfer to the EEOC

### **HUD**

#### **HOUSING CASE PROCESSING (7/1/20 - 6/30/21):**

##### **35 Cases closed for contract**

- o 3 HUD Settlements (\$1000)
- o 0 Lack of Jurisdiction/withdraw/admin
- o 32 No reasonable
- o 0 Reasonable cause
- o 2 Conciliated Reasonable cause (from previous contract year \$2,400)

##### **19 Pending (Open being investigated)**

#### **ATTENDED EVENTS/OUTREACH:**

March 4 & 5, 2021: Staff Attorney Gosheff and Senior Investigator Sorg conducted Workplace Civility Training for Brooks Construction.

March 8-11, 2021: Staff Attorney Gosheff participated in the National Fair Housing Training Association Litigation Fair Housing Cases virtual training with HUD.

March 9, 2021: Director Quintana attended a meeting with Mayor’s Commission on Police Reform and Racial Justice.

March 10, 2021: Senior Investigator Sorg conducted Fair Housing Training for Upstate Alliance of Realtors.

March 19, 2021: Staff Attorney Gosheff and Director Quintana were interviewed on & Good Company.

March 24, 2021: Director Quintana attended the NLC & Stanford: Eviction Prevention Learning Lab Orientation.

March 29, 2021: Staff Attorney Gosheff and Director Quintana conducted the National Origin Fair Housing Training pre-recording for the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana.

March 31, 2021: Senior Investigator Sorg conducted Diversity and Inclusion Training for the Airport Authority.

March 2021: Throughout the month of March the staff attended virtual United Front trainings.

**PERSONNEL ISSUES:**

- None

**BUDGET/CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

Admin Hernandez reviewed budgets and calendar.

**LEGAL UPDATE/MATTERS:**

**Mediations:** The Commission had one conciliation. This conciliation failed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Outreach and Education**
  - April is Fair Housing Month –We will be running digital ads that promote fair housing. These ads state, “Fair housing is everyone’s right!” and also “The COVID-19 crisis is hard enough; don’t let discrimination make it harder.” These ads have our contact information and will also assist in bringing traffic to our Facebook page. We will also be promoting Fair Housing on our Facebook page through organic posts throughout the month.
  - Metro Fair Housing Event normally takes place in April in celebration of Fair Housing Month but due to the pandemic we have made the decision to hold it in October in hopes of being able to do an in-person event with a Keynote and 6 breakout sessions.
  - Outreach Campaign 2021 –  
Director Quintana – Our outreach and marketing plan was approved in January of this year. Part of this plan includes a budget to do an outreach campaign. This year we would like to do something similar to what Metro used to called “Intake on the Road” where we would do intakes at partner organizations facilities. Other agencies have done similar types of campaigns. We will partner with organizations locally to offer our intake services at their location. It allows us to reach individuals who may be needing our services and find it difficult to get to our office. We understand that with the pandemic there have been more barriers for individuals. Those barriers include language, disability and transportation. We also believe that a program like this would build trust within the community. Right now, we have communicated with four different organizations. We’ve gotten the green light from The League of the Blind and Disabled, they’ve said that they want to work with us and absolutely want to do this. They believe there is a need and they know that they have clients that they serve that are very interested in our services. They are going to work on giving us what they think is the best day and time for us to be there and we will be working on that together. We’ve also talked to the downtown Allen County Public Library and they feel their location would be great because it’s a central location when it comes to transportation needs. There’s a bus stop there that would help those individuals who may have transportation barriers. They’re also willing to post it on any of their social media and help with that marketing piece as well. We’re in the works of meeting with Amani Family Services. They’re very interested, we don’t have the green light yet but we’re going to talk to them. They’re currently creating The Family Justice Legal Center and they thought that this could be a good fit. I meet with them later this week so we’re going to see if that’s something that they’ll want to partner with us on. The last group is Workforce Development, I have a meeting with them to talk about

different ways we can collaborate. We will see if they are interested in a program like this. There also may be opportunities to do training for their consumers and their staff.

Commissioner Keesling asked how many organizations we normally partner with.

Director Quintana stated she believed that in the past it has only been the Allen County Public Library and the Urban League. The organizations we chose to work with for this campaign, are organizations who work with marginalized populations who are having trouble with access. We're trying to be intentional of hitting those groups. The League serves individuals with disabilities and Amani Family Services serves immigrants and refugees. It seems like those two groups are having the hardest time during this pandemic. Right now our marketing team is looking for a different name for "Intakes on the Road" so we may have a different name. It will be about twelve weeks throughout the summer months. We're looking at doing 1-2 days a week for 2-3 hours at the partnering agencies. We're hoping that this will help make us more visible and allow people to have access to our services. This type of outreach campaign is a really good education and outreach opportunity for our agency especially after a year where the pandemic has not allowed us to be out physically. It's good to ramp up and really be out there offering our services and providing individuals access.

Commissioner Keesling asked how the partnering agencies will get the word out? Who's advertising it and how?

Director Quintana responded that one way that we're going to advertise it will be through our Facebook page. We'll see a huge influx of people seeing those posts and events. We will also work with the partner agencies to see what the best way is to reach the people they serve. This includes them possibly setting appointments.

Commissioner Keesling stated she was wondering if the partnering organizations would be responsible for doing some of the advertising.

Director Quintana confirmed that partner organizations will be doing advertising and posting it on their websites and social media. We're still having meetings and we will be having our Senior Investigators do training for our staff internally so that they know what it'll look like to go to these agencies. We are still finalizing details.

- **Eviction Taskforce**
  - Metro is working alongside the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services and other organizations to be part of the City Roster in the NLC & Stanford Eviction Lab
- **Commissioner Training** – Director Quintana has already reached out and scheduled a few training sessions for Commissioners Burrus and Lombard.
- **2021 Annual Report** – Our goal is to have it completed and ready for print by the end of May.
- **Current Case Age: 127.59**
- **Personnel Committee** – Commissioner Keesling stated there is a vacancy in the committee that will need to be filled. This will be added to our agenda for next meeting so if you're interested

let Commissioner Keesling know.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

**CONCERNS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

**MEETING ADJOURNED at 5:04 pm**