



Metropolitan Human Relations Commission

August Commission Meeting
August 7, 2023 | 12:00 PM
Metro Conference Room
2310 Parnell Avenue Fort Wayne, IN 46805

Meeting called by: Statutory Monthly Meeting
Type of meeting: Commission Meeting on the first Monday of each month.
Note taker: Nikki Quintana, Executive Director

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

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/Roll Call: 12:00 P.M.
Commissioners Present: Arrington (in-person)
Dr. Lombard (in-person)
Keesling (in-person)
Burrus (in-person)
Wardlaw (in-person)
Maples (in-person)

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

- July 10th meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Office Report

EEOC

Employment Case Processing (10/1/22 – 9/30/23)

Intakes (by 9/30/23): 130 (contract number) 93 (current status)

Contract number of case closures by 9/30/23: 230

- 147 No Probable Cause Cases
- 30 Settlements (\$111,374.12)
- 7 Withdrawals
- 1 Lack of Jurisdiction
- 6 Right to Sue or Full Credit Transfer to the EEOC

HUD

Housing Case Processing (7/1/22 - 6/30/23):

73 Cases closed for Contract

- 8 HUD Settlement
- 7 Lack of Jurisdiction/Withdraw/Admin
- 55 No Reasonable Cause
- 0 Withdraw after Resolution
- 1 Reasonable Cause
- 2 Judicial Closures

15 Pending (Open being investigated)

Attended Events/Outreach:

July 11, 2023: Senior Investigator Barnhart attended the Fair Housing Accessibility First: Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications training.

July 12, 2023: All staff attended the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's training on the new Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act.

Director Quintana explained that Metro won't be able to investigate these complaints as it is not in our ordinance, but we are able to take the charges and transfer them to EEOC.

Commissioner Keesling asked if the ordinance can be changed to include the Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act.

Director Quintana replied that it is something we would like to do.

July 14, 2023: Director Quintana attended the Women's Fund Non-Profit Employers Roundtable.

July 14, 2023: Director Quintana attended the YMCA Community Needs Focus Group.

July 17, 2023: Director Quintana attended the Gateways for Growth Committee meeting.

July 24-27, 2023: Investigator Kinchen, Senior Investigator Barnhart, and Director Quintana attended the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's National FEPA Conference.

July 27, 2023: Investigator Eanes attended the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana's Tenant Screening training.

Personnel Issues:

We currently have an open investigator position and are currently receiving applications. Director Quintana stated that she will be calling applicants to schedule interviews soon but the position will remain open until filled.

Budget/Calendar of Events:

Admin Hernandez reviewed current budget status and went over calendar of events.

Legal Update/Matters:

Mediations: The Commission conducted one conciliation this month. This conciliation was successful.

New Business:

- **International Association of Human Rights Agencies- Equity for All Study presentation**

Director Quintana was asked to present the Equity for All Study at the IAOHRA Conference.

- **Welcoming Week and Gateways for Growth**

Metro will assist in promoting the Welcoming Fort Wayne awards and other events during Welcoming Week which is September 8th through 15th. During this week the results from the Gateways for Growth research will also be unveiled. Gateways for Growth is a new project that is happening through a partnership with Amani Family Services, Downtown Fort Wayne, , and Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. Gateways for Growth Initiative allows for funding and technical assistance to research both the barriers and opportunities for immigrants and refugees throughout the City. Amani reached out to Metro and other community stakeholders who work with the immigrant and refugee population to be part of this process. The study will demonstrate the cultural, social, and economic importance of the immigrant and refugee community in Fort Wayne.

Commissioner Maples asked if there would be a recruitment for immigrants and refugees to get employment opportunities in the medical field.

Director Quintana replied that she's unsure but that she believes that this need could be something that comes up from the research. Part of the initiative's efforts would be to assist in making Fort Wayne a certified welcoming city. We are currently not a certified welcoming city.

Commissioner Dr. Lombard asked how the city benefits from having the certification.

Director Quintana believes the designation would highlight local efforts and promote economic development and growth.

- **2024 Budget**

The full 2024 budget spreadsheet was sent to Commissioners a few days before the meeting to give them time to review. Director Quintana reviewed the changes in the budget.

Motion to approve: Commissioner Dr. Lombard

2nd: Commissioner Keesling

Approved unanimously.

- **Current Case Age: 123.26**

Old Business:

Concerns From the Public:

Meeting Adjourned at 12:27 pm