



METROPOLITAN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

March 2, 2020
4:30 PM
METRO CONFERENCE ROOM
2310 PARNELL AVENUE
FORT WAYNE, IN 46805

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; Kody Tinnel, Vice Chair; Jesus Trevino; Dorian Maples; Larry Wardlaw; Aisha Arrington; and Tabitha Ervin.

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 4:35 p.m.

Commissioners Keesling, Tinnel, Trevino, Wardlaw, Ervin and Arrington present.

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

- Commissioner Keesling welcomed our new Commissioner Tabitha Ervin.
- February 3rd meeting minutes were read and approved.

OFFICE REPORT

EEOC

EMPLOYMENT CASE PROCESSING (10/1/19 – 9/30/20):

- **Intakes (by 9/30/20): 110 (contract number) 42(current status)**
- **Case Closures: 138 plus 3 PC (contract 260)**
 - o 132 No Probable Cause
 - o 4 Settlements
 - o 2 Withdrawals
 - o 0 Lack of Jurisdiction
 - o 0 Right to Sue or Full Credit Transfer to the EEOC

HUD

HOUSING CASE PROCESSING (7/1/19 - 6/30/20):

32 Cases closed for contract

- o 5 HUD Settlements
- o 1 Lack of Jurisdiction/withdraw/admin
- o 21 No reasonable
- o 5 Reasonable cause
- o 2 Conciliated Reasonable cause (\$)

26 Pending (Open being investigated)

ATTENDED EVENTS/OUTREACH:

February 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 24, 26, 27, 2020: Senior Investigator Sorg and Director Quintana conducted short version of Workplace Civility training in conjunction with City HR: Handling Conflict in the Workplace training.

Commissioner Keesling asked where the HR trainings are being held. Director Quintana stated that the HR trainings are usually held in each of the departments. Commissioner Keesling will reach out to Nicki Venable to get a training set up for her department.

February 5, 2020: Director Quintana attended NIHRA Diversity Committee meeting.

February 11, 2020: Director Quintana conducted Diversity and Anti-Harassment training per a settlement agreement.

February 18, 2020: Senior Investigators Sorg and Woods conducted Diversity and Anti-Harassment training for the FWFD.

February 20, 2020: Director Quintana attended Leadership Fort Wayne.

February 26, 2020: Senior Investigator Sorg conducted Diversity and Anti-Harassment training for the FWFD. This training is being done for new recruits.

PERSONNEL ISSUES:

- Administrative Assistant III position posted – we have received about 50 applications so far.
- Temporary employee is covering the front desk

BUDGET/CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- Admin Hernandez reviewed the rolling budgets and calendar for March and April.

LEGAL UPDATE/MATTERS:

- **Mediations:** No Mediations in February

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Conference Rooms Renovation and Updates** – The updates for our office will be divided in a few projects. Barry Marquart would like to start with hallway, doors and conference rooms as the first project. Any tech updates will be paid through our budgets. The City's property management budget will pay for any electrical and paint work needed. Director Quintana and Admin Hernandez will be meeting with Jim Haley to find what the best thing to do in regards to tech updates.

Commissioner Keesling stated that other departments usually get tech updates through the City budget and asked why Metro would be different. Director Quintana stated that the City did not have funds allocated to cover Metro tech updates.

Commissioner Ervin asked where the funds would come from in Metro's budget. Director Quintana stated that the total amount would be split evenly between our EEOC and HUD budgets under contracted services.

The total amount for updates would be \$28,120.26, Director Quintana requested \$29,000 to allow for possible unexpected expenses with shipping or availability that may arise.

Motion to approve \$29,000 for phase 1 project – Commissioner Tinnel
2nd – Commissioner Wardlaw

Approved.

- **Promo Items** – We'd like to purchase promotional items. The last time we purchased promotional items was in December of 2018. We'd like to purchase the items below.
 - 500 tote bags – around 300 would be used for our Fair Housing event in April
 - 500 hand sanitizers
 - 500 lip balms
 - 300 water bottles
 - 500 cell phone sleeves
 - 1000 pens – for outreach
 - 500 pens – for trainings and meetings
 - 36 – coffee mugs for our staff and conference room visitors

Total: \$3,418.99

Motion to approve \$3,418.99, divided evenly between HUD and EEOC budgets under contracted services, for the purchase of swag items – Commissioner Tinnel

2nd – Commissioner Arrington

Approved

- **2020 Marketing Plan** – Todd Liechty from Liechty Media has provided a similar marketing plan to last years so that we can continue to do outreach and education. It looks like radio ads have been effective in the past. Last year we did digital ads and we will continue to do those in a different format along with streaming audio ads. We will also be using Facebook. However, since posts cannot be boosted with specific words we're lowering the number of Facebook outreach posts we do this year beyond our normal posts. We have gone from around 100 to 700

likes on our Facebook page. EEOC and HUD funds will be used to pay for this marketing since they want us to use our contract dollars for outreach.

Commissioner Arrington asked if Metro will be doing the Faces of Fairness social media campaign again. Director Quintana said we're unsure about doing it again.

Director Quintana clarified that Beth Heironimus does the creative portion of the marketing plan but we still don't have what that would cost for this year's marketing plan so that amount will not be included in what is being presented today. The cost for creative work will come next meeting.

2020 Marketing Plan Total - \$57,346

Motion to approve – Commissioner Tinnel

2nd – Commissioner Ervin

Approved.

- **40 under 40 Award** – Director Quintana was approved and won the award. They offered a package of \$1,000 that includes a table for 10 people, an ad, magazine recognition, swag and logo displayed at the event. Director Quintana negotiated with them and was able to get the table for \$600 and would like to use the ad, swag and logo portion for Metro. The event will be on March 26, 2020 from 5:30pm – 8:30pm.

Total - \$600

Motion to approve – Commissioner Tinnel

2nd – Commissioner Ervin

Commissioner Keesling suggested the ad should be a Metro ad saluting Director Quintana.

Approved.

- **Annual Fair Housing Event – Public Policy Breakfast** – an invitation was provided to every Commissioner. Director Quintana will be sending a link to sign up to attend the breakfast.
- **Case Age: 256.24**

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

CONCERNS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Steve Gerber: You're probably asking yourself, "why is he here again?" Well for the same reason that I've been going through the process with this particular agency since June of last year. Things don't move, things don't happen, I don't hear from Nikki. I don't hear from Ms. Gosheff.

Commissioner Keesling: We can't discuss the case.

Steve Gerber: I understand that. I understand that. The whole premise of this is you would think that common sense and reasonability would come into play at some point in a normal year long process. Equal representation, I understand that you do everything you can do to help prevent discrimination. What about helping the other side, the person that gets caught up in perhaps false allegations or whatever else? This is a two-way street and my understanding, and I'm really looking for consultation, is this agency to represent neutrality or is it to go for one side or the other? Is it all about neutrality, or in general are you supposed to be neutral and maintain a neutral position? Because it doesn't seem that way, it doesn't seem that way. I can, you know, I'm starting a catalog here on paperwork and things of that nature. I have talked to the Mayor's office. I have talked to City Councilmen. I have talked to members of the public. I think you mean well. You have rules and regulations and procedures that are very difficult to follow. It's hard to get, what I've perceived is, cooperation. I personally, am the kind of guy that would love to sit down at a table with any one of you and have five minutes of your time and say "this is why I think this particular generic situation is in need of common sense. We're still going on months later. I sent a little blurb memo to every member of council saying what I was told to put in writing and I did. I've never heard back from anybody on the Commission, nobody. I can make it more formal.

Commissioner Keesling: You got a letter from me.

Steve Gerber: I don't know that I've gotten a letter from you ma'am. What does it say? Can I see it? We've had some problems with the post office lately; I'd love to see your letter.

Commissioner Keesling: It is dated February 10th.

Commissioner Wardlaw: That is on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Keesling: Yes, that is on behalf of the Commission that is correct. Your letter was dated February 3rd and we sent that out on February 10th.

Steve Gerber: I didn't receive this letter. I'm scanning it real quick. I'm not able to speak about any specifics on the case; you see how that handcuffs somebody? You can't even address the issues, the issues we can solve in five minutes can't even be discussed or talked about because we have the process to live with and deal with and push through. What's it going to take, 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, when one week can solve it? Maybe theoretically, in five minutes. That's why I'm here and that's why I'll keep coming. I don't have a \$300 chair to sit in, I don't have a coffee mug to sip out of, a special coffee mug. I get to hear, listen, about all your improvements like you said the coffee cups and things. You're good at spending money, why not be just as good at trying to find neutrality and give people representation? I'm just asking for equal representation for me as an individual taxpayer to come in here and have you fight just as much for me as you would for somebody else. That's why I've come, that's why I'm here. I think your cause is worthy but I think we're really off track here and when we can sit here and fix it like this I don't think it's going to change anybody's mind. I encourage you as a board to come up with a way to resolve, there's got to be similar issues that people have and you get locked up in all the legalese that goes with everything. Let's just use common sense and that's all I need to say. I thank you for your time.

Commissioner Keesling: Thank you,

MEETING ADJOURNED at 5:29 pm