



# METROPOLITAN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

**November 1, 2021**

**4:30 PM**

**METRO CONFERENCE ROOM**

**2310 PARNELL AVENUE**

**FORT WAYNE, IN 46805**

**Teleconference: 260-427-8590 PIN: 969148**

**Meeting called by:**

STATUTORY MONTHLY MEETING

**Type of meeting:**

FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH

**Note taker:**

Abigail Reyes, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT IV

**Metro  
Commissioners:**

Lana Keesling, Chair; Aisha Arrington, Vice Chair; Dorian Maples; Larry Wardlaw; Tabitha Ervin; 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 and Roll Call at 4:31 p.m.

Commissioners Keesling, Arrington, Wardlaw, Maples, Ervin, and Burrus present.

**Other Persons  
Present:**

Nikki Quintana, Executive Director

Jenny Gosheff, Staff Attorney

Abigail Reyes, Administrative Assistant IV

- October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were approved.

## OFFICE REPORT

### EEOC

#### EMPLOYMENT CASE PROCESSING (10/1/21 – 9/30/22)

- **Intakes (by 9/30/21): 90 (contract number) 5 (current status)**
- **Contract number of case closures by 9/30/21: 265**
  - o 19 No Probable Cause Cases
  - o 2 Settlements (13,938.47)
  - o 0 Withdrawals
  - o 0 Lack of Jurisdiction
  - o 0 Right to Sue or Full Credit Transfer to the EEOC

### HUD

#### HOUSING CASE PROCESSING (7/1/21 - 6/30/22):

##### **8 Cases closed for contract**

- o 2 HUD Settlement
- o 0 Lack of Jurisdiction/withdraw/admin
- o 5 No reasonable cause
- o 0 With draw after Resolution
- o 1 Reasonable cause

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

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

October 7, 2021: Director Quintana conducted Metro Process training at Purdue Fort Wayne.

October 8, 2021: Investigator Nancarrow and Senior Investigator Woods conducted anti-harassment training per a settlement agreement.

October 12, 2021: Director Quintana attended the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion event at Purdue Fort Wayne.

October 13, 2021: Metro held the annual Fair Housing Summit where all staff attended and assisted with the conference.

October 22, 2021: Director Quintana assisted with and attended the 2021 Diversity Awards breakfast.

October 21 and 25, 2021: Senior Investigator Sorg conducted sexual harassment training for the Airport Authority per request.

October 26, 2021: Director Quintana and Senior Investigator Sorg conducted fair housing training for the Apartment Association of Fort Wayne.

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

#### **PERSONNEL ISSUES:**

On October 25 Investigator, Eric Eanes, started in his new position.

We have also hired an Admin Assistant who will be starting this month.

**BUDGET/CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

Admin Reyes will take questions and comments.

**LEGAL UPDATE/MATTERS:**

Mediations: The Commission had two conciliations. Both conciliations were successful.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Metro Study Proposal**

Rachel Blakeman, with Community Research Institute (CRI) at PFW, and Andrew Downs with the Mike Downs Center were invited by Director Quintana to help propose a Metro survey. The survey is to get information on what types of employment and housing discrimination may be happening in the City of Fort Wayne, as well as to understand citizens' knowledge of discrimination. We believe this study will help us gather data and figure out what is happening: the good and the bad. This will help us narrow our outreach and education efforts and learn why people may not be complaining. We know the general reasons: they do not know of the agency, they are afraid, and/or they do not know if it is discrimination. The study will help us to determine what we need to do as an agency moving forward. This is not only something we need to be doing, but it is our responsibility to study the relationships of people from various races, sexes, disabilities, and nationalities. This would be a great starting point and lead to further research in the future. Some general ideas you will see on the proposal is the study will be a random sample for individuals of residents of Fort Wayne ages of 18-64 to understand experiences of discrimination and test knowledge of discriminatory acts in employment and housing. January 2022 we will start the process of creating the survey and hope to wrap up on May 31, 2022. The cost of the survey would be \$15,000.00 to Community Research Institute and \$35,000 to SurveyUSA. Survey USA, a third party, would be surveying for us and that cost would go to them. In the proposal, a total cost not to exceed \$50,000.00.

Rachel Blakeman says we will be looking at Fort Wayne residents ages 18-64. We are focusing on the working-age population and based on the ages of people who often bring complaints to the agency, this is a random sample. A sample is often thought of as 400-450 individuals, but we are thinking of making it much larger than that.

Andrew Downs speaks on the methodology of who we will talk to and how many. Downs states when looking at survey research, there are a couple of variables to keep in mind. Stating there are three principles: know the population you are studying – which in this case is Fort Wayne; you have a good sample to go along with it – the best sample is truly randomized samples, not biased. Two other things that we like to focus on when talking about what makes a good survey, well-worded questions, nothing that gets a result of one kind or another. Also, SurveyUSA will look at the questions submitted and see if they have asked similar questions elsewhere, do we know what worked well. The last thing we look for is a good analysis, theoretically, that is what Rachel and Andrew can do, as well as the commissioners. One last item about methodology, the gold standard use, which is through a phone survey. Due to screen calls, hang-ups, and people taking their area code to wherever they move, it has made it difficult. What has been done previously and what SurveyUSA has also done previously, is using a mixed methodology: phone and online services to get a big mix. This will help us gather data that we believe is representative of the population in a way we can begin parcel individuals answers on questions in individual demographics variables that would be included on that. Andrew points out there are two things that will drive up the cost of surveys: the number of people you talk to and the

number of questions. Rachel adds, after conversations with Director Quintana, Staff Attorney Gosheff, and Andrew we would like to target a particular audience and population; making sure they have a significant share of people who identify as LGBTQIA which can only be done when talking to a large enough sample. This will be a complex project on our end, but the idea at the end of the day for the commissioners and Metro is to have actionable information. We are asking questions that help fulfill the mission of Metro and also be more informed in our education and outreach. We believe certain complaints have not been heard because people do not identify them as discrimination. Commissioner Burrus commented on the target number and Commissioner Arrington commented on reaching enough people from certain populations. Andrew answers that one of the ways is they look at the demographic profile of the community already, there are plenty of ways to do that, race and geography. We know Fort Wayne is a fairly segregated area as to where people live. One of the ways to make sure we get “s” number of respondents out of a particular zip code. Then we can be relatively sure that we are starting to hear from that part of the population as well if we are looking at the zip code. Lastly, SurveyUSA has high accuracy. They keep up with technology and the ways of how to do the surveys. Commissioner Arrington asks once we have created the data, when will another survey be created? Andrew says this is the baseline collection of data. It does not need to be replicated a year or two later. Instead, if you all say we want to take the following action steps, one, two, and three. Then you can collect the data for those steps. The data collection must be informed by what you are trying to accomplish. This is an excellent starting point. Commissioner Ervin asks what the stop point will be? Andrew states that there is not an exact stop point. But to have all the questions answered and be able to break down the data into the categories of the individuals. Director Quintana proposes to have approval for up to \$50,000 to move forward with the study with CRI, Downs Center, and SurveyUSA. Commissioner Arrington makes a motion to approve. Commissioner Keesling seconds the motion. Commissioners Burrus, Wardlaw, Ervin, and Maples all agree with an “aye”.

- **Fair Housing Event Recap**

The event was a success, we had people from all over the nation. Aaron Carr from New York City, others from Washington D.C., Michigan, and Ohio. We had Commissioners who attended as well. Commissioner Keesling helped with the opening. We will hopefully be holding another conference at the Coliseum conference center again next year, as it was a very nice venue that made it all easy and we got a lot of good feedback.

**Current Case Age: 107.73**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

**CONCERNS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

**MEETING ADJOURNED at 5:12 pm**