



Metropolitan Human Relations Commission

December Commission Meeting
December 4, 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: 12:01 P.M.
Commissioners Present: Ervin (in-person)
Wardlaw (in-person)
Keesling (in-person)
Maples (in-person)
Arrington (not present)
Lombard (not present)
Burrus (not present)

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

- November 6th meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Office Report

EEOC

Employment Case Processing (10/1/23 – 9/30/24)

Intakes (by 9/30/24): 120 (contract number) 29 (current status)

Contract number of case closures by 9/30/24: 260

- 39 No Probable Cause Cases
- 4 Settlements (\$20,176.23)
- 1 Withdrawals
- 0 Lack of Jurisdiction
- 0 Right to Sue or Full Credit Transfer to the EEOC

HUD

Housing Case Processing (7/1/23 - 6/30/24):

14 Cases closed for Contract

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

23 Pending (Open being investigated)

Attended Events/Outreach:

November 1, 2023: Investigators Eanes and Kelsaw attended the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana's 90 Fair Housing Training: Race, Color, and National Origin.

November 1, 2023: Senior Investigator Barnhart and Director Quintana conducted anti-harassment and discipline training at Ottenweller per request.

November 2, 2023: Director Quintana attended the Mayor's Commission on Domestic Violence, Rape, and Sexual Harassment monthly meeting.

November 7, 2023: Senior Investigator Sorg attended the HUD partnership quarterly meeting.

November 8, 2023: Senior Investigator Sorg and Investigator Eanes conducted fair housing training for several housing providers.

November 8, 2023: Senior Investigator Sorg and Investigator Eanes conducted an anti-discrimination training per a settlement agreement.

November 15, 2023: Senior Investigator Barnhart and Director Quintana conducted diversity training and presented on the Equity for All Study at Ottenweller per request.

November 16, 2023: Senior Investigator Sorg and Director Quintana conducted metro process and anti-harassment training for Allen County supervisors per request.

November 16, 2023: Senior Investigator Sorg and Director Quintana conducted fair housing training for the Apartment Association.

November 21 and 28, 2023: Senior Investigator Sorg and Director Quintana conducted anti-harassment, diversity, and discipline training for Hilton Hotels per request.

November 30, 2023: Staff Attorney Gosheff and Director Quintana conducted ADA and discipline training for Allen County supervisors, per request.

November 30, 2023: Investigator Eanes attended the Fair Housing of Central Indiana's 90 Fair Housing Training: Harassment.

Director Quintana added that as we go into the new year, we are focusing on grass roots outreach and education. We are training investigators so they can start going out and conduct various trainings. Currently a majority of the training is done by Director Quintana, Staff Attorney Gosheff, and Senior Investigators.

Personnel Issues:

We are receiving applications for the investigator position. Our goal is to start hiring in the first quarter of 2024.

Lakisha Woods, our new Staff Attorney, will start on December 6th.

Budget/Calendar of Events:

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

Legal Update/Matters:

Mediations: The Commission did not conduct mediations or conciliations.

New Business:

- **HUD Partnership Grant**

We received \$15,000 in partnership funds. We will be using \$7,500 towards our 2024 Fair Housing Summit Keynote speaker fee. We will use \$1,000 towards our videographer for the 2024 Fair Housing Summit. In the month of April, we will use \$5,000 to put out Fair Housing radio ads for Fair Housing month. The remaining \$1,500 will be used for Metro swag items to use at our booths and our Fair Housing Summit.

- **HUD SEE Grant**

We received \$12,000 in SEE Grant funds.

We will be using these funds to support our litigation costs for our ongoing cases that are in court.

Commissioner Keesling asked if we discussed the litigation costs for these cases before.

Commissioner Wardlaw replied that we had discussed this previously and they were aware that we would have that expenditure.

Director Quintana added that we did talk about it before, and these funds will help cover a portion of the expenses. Director Quintana added that she met Eric Steinecker, HUD's Director of Fair Housing Assistance Program and he informed Director Quintana that we are able to use SEE funds to help cover these litigation costs.

- **FHAP Review Scheduled December 12th**

We will be doing the FHAP review with Beverly Noble from HUD.

- **Indiana Latino Expo 2023 Indiana Latino Civil Rights Leader Award**

Director Quintana informed the commissioners that she was awarded the 2023 Indiana Latino Civil Rights Leader Award in part due to the work done the Equity for All Study.

Commission Vice Chair Ervin asked how we could relay to the public the awards we received for the Equity for All study.

Director Quintana added that we can highlight these on our next annual report.

Commissioner Keesling asked if we had a place on our website to add Metro news.

Director Quintana stated we don't have a news page as of right now but that we are able to add it.

- **Officer Elections for 2024**

Commissioners discussed the current setup and voted to keep the roles as they are with Aisha Arrington as Commission Chair and Tabitha Ervin as Commission Vice Chair. They would revisit elections in January.

Motion: Commissioner Wardlaw

2nd: Commissioner Keesling

Approved unanimously.

- **Current Case Age: 129.22**

- Commissioner Maples added that she just sat through a Determination Hearing with Staff Attorney Gosheff and let her know that she appreciates her teaching and knowledge.

Director Quintana also thanked Staff Attorney Gosheff for all her great work and added that she's a valuable member of the team and will be greatly missed.

Commissioners thanked Staff Attorney Gosheff for all her work and for staying on to help our new Staff Attorney Woods in her transition into the role.

Old Business:

Concerns From the Public:

Meeting Adjourned at 12:19 pm