



Metropolitan Human Relations Commission

March Commission Meeting

March 3, 2025 | 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:

Tabitha Ervin, Chair; Aisha Arrington, Vice Chair; Lana Keesling; Larry Wardlaw; Tony Burrus; John P. Gardner; and William Zemaitis, Jr.

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:

12:04 P.M.

Commissioners Present:

Ervin (in-person)

Arrington (in-person)

Wardlaw (in-person)

Burrus (in-person)

Keesling (in-person)

Gardner (in-person)

Zemaitis (in-person)

Other Persons Present:

Nikki Quintana, Executive Director

Lakisha Woods, Staff Attorney

Leslie Hernandez, Administrative Assistant

- February 3rd meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Office Report

EEOC

Employment Case Processing (10/1/24 – 9/30/25)

Intakes (by 9/30/25): 120 (contract number) 50 (current status)

Contract number of case closures by 9/30/25: 250

- 80 No Probable Cause Cases
- 9 Settlements (\$29,700)
- 1 Withdrawals
- 2 Lack of Jurisdiction
- 3 Right to Sue or Full Credit Transfer to the EEOC

HUD

Housing Case Processing (7/1/24 - 6/30/25):

39 Cases closed for Contract

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

26 Pending (Open being investigated)

Attended Events/Outreach:

February 5, 2025: Staff Attorney Woods conducted public accommodation training per a settlement agreement.

February 5, 2025: Director Quintana attended the SHRM Gender & Inclusion: Navigating New DEI Executive Orders.

February 6, 2025: Director Quintana attended the Mayor's Commission on Domestic Violence, Rape, and Sexual Harassment monthly meeting.

February 12, 2025: Senior Investigator Sorg and Director Quintana attended the EEOC FEPA Training on Processing Topics.

February 18, 2025: Senior Investigator Sorg and Director Quintana conducted anti-harassment training for the Fort Wayne Fire Department.

February 19, 2025: Investigator Guayamo attended the Latinx Social Services Networking meeting.

February 19, 2025: Staff Attorney Woods and Director Quintana attended the State of the City Address.

February 27, 2025: Director Quintana attended the NIHRA Pay Transparency and Equity Laws webinar.

Commissioner Keesling asked how long we have provided training for the Fort Wayne Fire Department and whether it is conducted for every recruit class. Director Quintana confirmed that it has been ongoing for around six years and is provided to each recruit class.

Commission Chair Ervin asked about the possibility of expanding the training beyond the fire department. Director Quintana shared that she and Staff Attorney Woods met with Mayor Tucker to discuss the agency's role in the community. Mayor Tucker expressed interest in a brief presentation for department heads on common scenarios and agency services, which Director Quintana sees as an opportunity to engage other departments in training.

Commissioner Keesling emphasized the importance of discussing this further, noting that some departments seek third-party training instead of utilizing Metro's services.

Personnel Issues:

We hired two new investigators, Camille Morrow and India Boeck, and today is their first day and we are now fully staffed.

Budget/Calendar of Events:

Admin Hernandez reviewed the current budget and calendar of events.

Admin Hernandez noted that the calendar presented has the incorrect date for the 2025 Fair Housing Summit and will be updating that to the correct date of April 23, 2025.

Legal Update/Matters:

Mediations: There was one mediation conducted in the month of February and that mediation was successful.

New Business:

- **Fair Housing Summit – April 23rd**

Director Quintana requested approval to allocate \$10,000 in HUD funds for the Fair Housing Summit. Director Quintana also explained that we would not be receiving Partnership and SEE funds from HUD as we did in the past. The requested \$10,000 funds would cover marketing, speakers, printing, and other expenses.

Commissioner Keesling inquired about past funding amounts, and Director Quintana stated they previously we received between \$12,000 and \$15,000 in Partnership funds from HUD to assist with the Fair Housing Summit. When asked if \$10,000 would be sufficient, Director Quintana explained she is being conservative with spending. Commission Chair Ervin asked about food costs, and Director Quintana confirmed they are covered by sponsor contributions.

Commissioner Keesling asked if the remaining SEE and Partnership funds could be used, to which Director Quintana responded that those funds were allocated for specific purposes and would require HUD approval for reallocation. Commissioner Wardlaw suggested allocating additional funds if needed, given the summit's importance and Metro's strong reputation for hosting it.

Commissioner Keesling noted past issues with no-shows despite a waitlist and asked if changes were being made. Director Quintana stated they have increased the number of available tickets to ensure all spots are filled. She also reviewed the agenda for the 2025 Fair Housing Summit.

Motion: Commissioner Keesling

Second: Commissioner Wardlaw

Approved unanimously.

- **Onboarding New Commissioners**

Director Quintana announced that she will begin onboarding Commissioners Gardner and Zemaitis and provided an overview of the process.

- **Current Case Age: 167.60**

- **Changes at Metro**

Director Quintana noted that with the new administration, there may be changes affecting Metro's operations. Currently, no changes have occurred on the EEOC side beyond national updates.

She also met with the Region V Director of HUD, who advised that Metro must adhere to three specific executive orders, with Executive Orders 13985 and 14168 directly impacting our work. At this time, Metro's contracts with both EEOC and HUD remain in place, and commissioners will be updated on any changes.

Old Business:

Concerns From the Public:

Meeting Adjourned at 12:34 p.m.