



Human Relations Advisory Council (HRAC)  
County of Lehigh

MEETING MINUTES

April 3, 2023

The meeting of the HRAC was held at 12:00 p.m. by Zoom video conference. A recording of this meeting is available at <https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Community-Economic-Development/Human-Relations-Advisory-Council>.

**ATTENDING**

Maryanell Agosto (MA), Angela Baio (AB), Carmen Bell (CB), Liz Bradbury (LB), Commissioner Zach Cole-Borgi (ZCB), Guillermo Lopez Jr. (CHAIR), Luis A. Perez Jr. (LP), and Paschall Simpson (PS).

Staff: Frank D. Kane (FK), Cyndi King (CK)

Absent: Anthony Branco (TB), Yorman De La Rosa (YDLR), Nagi Latefa (NL)

CHAIR called the meeting to order.

Roll call. Quorum obtained. Meeting is being recorded. Public will have access to that recording on the department's website (see opening paragraph above).

CHAIR requested a motion to approve minutes from the March 6, 2023, meeting; LB made the motion and PS seconded. Unanimously approved by all members present.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

Review by HRAC members of the Yearly Report (YR). CHAIR reminded the group that term limits are part of the YR; chair and vice-chair terms are one-year limits which expire in May. CHAIR asked for additions and/or corrections. There being none a motion was made by MA and seconded by LP to accept the YR.

LB met with Attorney Catherine Roseberry (CR) on March 13 to further discuss proposed ordinance's definitions. Afterward, the proposed ordinance was transferred to another person in Law to rework the document into ordinance vernacular and formatting. LB reviewed some of the topics of their discussion. FK and LB further discussed particulars of those topics. LB

asked for phone contact information for CR. FK reviewed a timeline of when would be the best time to present the proposed ordinance to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) if the HRAC is also proposing funding for the HRAC. If the BOC has the proposed ordinance by June 14 meeting, the administration will be in a position to create funding for the HRAC during the October budgeting process.

CHAIR revisited last meeting's question from CB on how the proposed ordinance will affect companies or businesses. LB addressed the question. Discussion ensued between CB and LB with comments from FK and MA.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

CHAIR asked whether any council members are aware of any information or events that HRAC would be interested in for the council's work. CHAIR is looking to have a proactive approach to community concerns.

FK suggested the HRAC create an outlined enumeration of what a properly structured human relations commission might do. FK reminded HRAC that it was created to advise the County government and BOC on how to create a standing body or a Human Relations Commission. FK raised the suggestion that it might be such Commission which enforces the [proposed] ordinance. LB stated that the ordinance outlines the steps that the County will take to form the Commission. Once the Commission is put in place, LB said, the BOC can work on special projects that are significant to the community and take specific steps to let the community know that the Commission is functioning and how to seek assistance. LB brought up advertising and public exposure events along with possible creation of brochures. FK brought up funding. He asked for HRAC thoughts on funding. LB shared her experience being on the Allentown commission concerning which sorts of particular items that will probably require funding. CHAIR suggested various "Know Your Rights" exposures. LP agreed and suggested forums and/or meet-n-greets at the Public Meeting Room in the Government Center. MA agreed.

CHAIR brought up that a law suit against the 911 Call Center was moving forward and wondered if HRAC should remain informed about it. FK offered that the basis of that law suit is improper employment termination and questioned what that had to do with the HRAC; explanation ensued. CHAIR is satisfied.

CHAIR asked about Voter's Rights. FK agreed. FK suggested that Diane Gordian, Deputy Chief Clerk, Lehigh County Board of Elections be invited to an upcoming meeting. He also suggested that HRAC form a relationship with the Election Board.

AB suggested incorporating funding for communications tools into the budgeting. She suggested not only events for people to attend but also ways to release information into the community. She suggested advertising on the backs of buses, billboards, or other items with QR codes where the public can go to a landing page or any other type of informative materials. FK agreed.

## **HRAC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

CHAIR shared that he has been awarded the Star of Bethlehem award from the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce for 2023. He invited the HRAC to attend the award ceremony on May 10. Information will be emailed at a later date.

Motion to adjourn by CB; seconded by AB. Unanimous voice approval. Meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. King