



Human Relations Advisory Council (HRAC)
County of Lehigh

MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 2024

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

Angela Baio (AB), Carmen Bell (CB), Liz Bradbury (LB)(Vice-Chair), Guillermo Lopez Jr. (CHAIR), Luis A. Perez Jr. (LP), Paschall Simpson (PS).

STAFF: Frank Kane (FK), Cyndi King (CK)

Absent: Maryanell Agosto (MA), Tony Branco (TB), Commissioner Zach Cole-Borghi (ZCB), Nagi Latefa (NL),

Public: No one

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 asked for a motion to approve the 3/4/2024 meeting minutes. LB made the motion; motion seconded by LP. Unanimous voice vote approval of minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion on individuals applying to serve on the Human Relations Commission (HRC).

NEW BUSINESS

LB thought perhaps applicants to the newly formed HRC might be applying directly to the County Executive. Discussion and clarification ensued about CB's specific situation wherein she is an officer of the Lehigh County Democratic Party which holding such position precludes

her from serving on the HRC Board except in an advisory role. LB knows of two people who are interested in applying to serve on the HRC; LB strongly suggests HRAC members to encourage other diverse members of the community to apply to serve on the HRC Board, too. The worst outcome would be that no one or not enough people would apply to serve. FK shared some ideas about ways the County will advertise and ask people to apply to serve on the HRC. Discussion ensued about various impressions people might have about the illegality of various types of discrimination today. CHAIR mentioned that the U.S. Census has changed its race question to include Hispanic/Latino and Middle Eastern/North African as race categories for the first time in history. Discussion on race, data collection by the census, and discrimination ensued. FK stated that the County will advertise for HRC applicants on its main page; there will be a media advisory released along with social media posts about the HRC. Instead of an application, the County will ask for a statement of qualifications from prospective applicants for about two-weeks and then choose from that pool of applicants. LB stated that she had been contacted by Montgomery County and Allegheny County commissions to review the Lehigh County ordinance for possible passage in Montgomery County's case and updating the existing ordinance in Allegheny County's case. CHAIR asked FK to remind the County Executive to acknowledge the HRAC volunteers who have worked diligently for the past three years on passage of this ordinance.

CLOSING AGENDA ITEMS

GL thanked everyone for attending and called for any other input (none) and any other announcements (none) and asked for a motion to close the meeting. CB made the motion which was seconded by LB. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. King