



LEHIGH COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
(LCHRC)
MEETING MINUTES
November 11, 2025

The meeting of the LCHRC was held at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom video conference. A recording of this meeting is available at <https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Community-Economic-Development/Human-Relations-Commission>.

ATTENDING

Angela Baio (AB), Amy Beck (AmB), Liz Bradbury (LB), Tony Branco (TB), Laura Gutierrez (LG), Andrew Gildner (AG), Joyce Moore (JM), Christopher Raad (CR), Julianna Rodrigues (JR), and Carmen Bell (CB) ex-officio non-voting advisor

County Staff: Catherine Roseberry (CMR) Assistant Solicitor, Frank Kane (FK) (absent), Cyndi King (staff) (absent)

Public: Craig Beavers, Allentown Human Relations Commission member

ABSENT – Joanna Armstrong (JA), Michael Blichar Jr. (MB), Luis A. Perez Jr (LP), Pas Simpson (PS).

AGENDA ITEMS

Call to order at 6:04 p.m. by LB.

Roll call by LB.

LB reminded the Commissioners they must turn on their cameras twice during the meeting: once for roll call and again if there is a vote. Quorum is present.

LB called for review and approval of minutes from October 14, 2025 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by JM, seconded by AmB. No opposition; motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Human Relations Ordinance Passages Throughout the Area

With unanimous approval on September 17, 2025, Delaware County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to establish a Human Relations Commission. LCHRC language was used for the resolution and also to write the beginning of their ordinance. LB has been requested to train their commissioners once they have been selected. LB noted that Delco had not begun working on their ordinance until Lehigh County passed ours.

Chester County has also passed a fully inclusive non-discrimination law based on Lehigh County's law. Chester is the first non-home rule county in the state to pass a non-discrimination law ordinance. LB did trainings and presentations with both groups prior to the passages of their laws. Over one million people in two counties are protected from discrimination. LB discussed the meaning of "home rule charter" in terms of county government. LB will focus on meetings with activists in Centre County to have a passage there. LB is in contact with Mary Gonzalez of Bucks County about how they can move ahead.

Training Update

LB attended the 2025 Age-Friendly Lehigh Valley conference on October 20, 2025. CB was in charge of the conference; LB and JM networked at the conference. LB distributed her contact information to continue trainings on the Ordinance and to spread the word about the LCHRC.

On October 22, LB did a 2-hour, in-person training at Northampton Community College Fowler Family Southside Center for the Bethlehem Human Relations Commissioners on investigation procedures. TB and two interns from Keystone Equality were also in attendance. LB asked one of the interns to translate the ordinance into Spanish. LB requested JR, who speaks Portuguese and Spanish, to read the translation and give her opinion on whether it is an appropriate translation of the ordinance. LB reflected that the training went well and that it was tailored to Bethlehem's ordinance which is very old and which presents a problem in the process of investigation. LB made it clear to Bethlehem's commissioners that they need to ask their city council to update Bethlehem's ordinance to LCHRC's language for several reasons. LB provided the example

that it takes 280-days for Bethlehem's Human Relations Commission to resolve a non-jurisdictional complaint regardless of the reason why it is non-jurisdictional. LB gave this example: If an occurrence of discrimination happened longer than 180-days ago, it is immediately obvious the complaint is non-jurisdictional; yet, it still takes 280-days for Bethlehem HRC to find it non-jurisdictional and to notify the complainant. It takes LCHRC 1-day to notify the complainant if it is non-jurisdictional for this reason. The Bethlehem assistant solicitor also attended the training. There were 10 vignettes to the program and each participant took a turn. Staff for the Bethlehem HRC contacted LB to let her know that all their commissioners felt much more comfortable with the process of investigation after participating in the training.

LB met with Mary Gonzalez from Bucks County on October 23 and they discussed how Bucks County could create a real HRC in light of the passage of Chester County's Ordinance.

On October 30, LB met with the PA HRC personnel who set up the state's adjudication hearings. LB found their training very informative especially the portion about how to keep track of the information presented within the complaint. LB explained how the state performs these adjudication hearings.

LB noted that Josh Siegel was elected the new Lehigh County Executive. He told her that the LCHRC was doing a great job and he is absolutely in favor of the Commission.

On November 6, LB conducted an on-line training for Chester County PFLAG (parents, friends, and people supportive of LGBT people.) Nineteen people participated

Logo Update

LB reminded the Commission that the deadline for the RFP on the logo creation is November 19. No submissions have been received. More on this at the next meeting.

Update on Complaints that have been brought forth

Update on Complaint #6: LB, AmB, and AG worked on this together. They reviewed the complaint and found there was only one component specific to the LCHRC jurisdiction. This was sent to the Respondent which is a government agency. That agency's attorney contacted LB and also sent their response to the complaint. LB, AmB, and AG found the agency's answers compelling and these answers were then sent to the Complainant who has 21-days to respond which would then be November 30. Therefore, at the next meeting, there will probably be a vote on whether to dismiss the complaint or not.

Complaint #7 was received on October 21, 2025. LB, AmB, and TB worked on this complaint. It was a rental housing complaint against the manager of the government-run housing organization. The complainant confirmed they had not paid their rent for a significant amount of time. They claimed that the housing manager discriminated against them because of disability and weight by refusing to negotiate a rent payment plan and by moving forward with eviction. The complainant could not offer any material or logical evidence that the reason the manager was not negotiating with them was due to either protected class. There was no *prima facie* circumstance of discrimination. This complaint has been resolved and dismissed.

Discussion on Draft Letter in Support of MOU with City

There has been no movement. LB explained the intent of the MOU with the City for the benefit of the public guest, Craig Beavers.

Rules & Procedures Committee

LB, TB, MB, AmB, JM, and LP comprise this committee. There was no meeting in October. LB stressed the importance of creating a booklet of rules and policies that any PA HRC could use either as a template or in practice.

NEW BUSINESS

LB asked for any volunteers willing to work as part of an outreach committee. LB recognized that especially at this time of year people get busier; however, if any one becomes interested, please contact her.

CLOSING AGENDA ITEMS

Citizens Input (on Non-Agenda items)

Craig Beavers reported that Allentown Human Relations Commission will meet on Thursday, December 4, at 5:30 p.m. at Allentown City Hall. The meeting is open to the public. LB shared insight on 3 reasons why HRCs might not function very well: 1. They don't set up Zoom meetings making in-person attendance for each meeting very difficult. 2. They don't elect enough Commissioners and they don't require the Commissioners to attend the meetings. 3. They don't have a "good" law. They have a law that is so complicated which makes it very complicated for the commissioners. LB strongly suggested Allentown change to an on-line meeting.

LCHRC Announcements

JM noted that the Supreme Court declined to accept CERT on the case of same-sex marriage. Discussion ensued.

Motion to Adjourn

LB called for a motion to adjourn; TB made the motion; JM seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia L. King