



LEHIGH COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
(LCHRC)
MEETING MINUTES
December 9, 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

Joanna Armstrong (JA), Amy Beck (AmB), Michael Blichar Jr. (MB), Liz Bradbury (LB), Tony Branco (TB), Laura Gutierrez (LG), Andrew Gildner (AG), Joyce Moore (JM), Luis A. Perez Jr (LP), Christopher Raad (CR), Julianna Rodrigues (JR), Pas Simpson (PS), 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: Wendy Wright, Intern for Keystone Equality

ABSENT – Angela Baio (AB)

AGENDA ITEMS

Call to order at 6:02 p.m. by LB.

Roll call by LB.

LB reminded the Commissioners they must turn on their cameras because they are going to be asked to vote later in the meeting. Quorum is present.

LB called for review and approval of minutes from November 11, 2025 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by JM, seconded by PS. No opposition;

motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Human Relations Ordinance Passages Throughout the Area

Delaware County has passed its county-wide Human Relations Ordinance using LCHRC's language. There are 584,000 people in Delaware County. LB has requested a copy of their written legislation but has not received that to date. This is the fifth passage of a Human Relations Ordinance using LCHRC language in the last two-years, from 2024-2025, and 1,669,000 plus people are now [protected from discrimination] based on protected classes that were not previously covered [prior to 2024.]

Training Update

LB attended the first meeting of the Allentown Human Relations Commission (AHRC) which meets the first Thursday of each month. Craig Beavers is the Chair. He and LB discussed the idea of an MOU and he seemed [receptive.] There are 7 appointed commissioners to the AHRC; they are not using virtual meetings; and they are using LCHRC language for their Ordinance. LB will provide training to the new commissioners in January or February 2026.

Logo Update

No submissions have been received. LB requested ideas from the Commissioners. PS suggested using artificial intelligence. LB asked PS to come up with a few [creations] and present them to the Board. CB offered to ask the United Way graphics team. JA suggested using Canva. MB offered to ask some student graphic designers that he knows if they would be interested in doing the logo to 'beef-up' their portfolios. PS has a relationship with The Baum School of Art. LB was most enthusiastic about MB's direction of asking students to design the logo. LB would like to get this logo in place [ASAP.]

Update on Complaints that have been brought forth

LB acknowledged that other commissioners have worked with her on complaints and that they have been very supportive and positive; she is very grateful. Two complaints have come in, have been investigated, and are going to be discussed at tonight's meeting: Complaint 2025-#8 is the most recent complaint received and it has been resolved. TB, AmB, JR, and LB worked this complaint. LB shared that she wrote to the complainant after the investigation and read that letter; she also shared that complainant did not provide confirmation that the

experiences enumerated within the complaint were supported by any evidence. LB discussed what discrimination based on genetic information encompasses and also the parameters of retaliation. This complaint was non-jurisdictional and no vote was required. LB asked for questions or concerns; there were none.

Complaint 2025-#6 requires LCHRC discussion so the Board will enter into Executive Session.

MOU with Allentown on HRC

Discussions with AHRC continue. More on that in 2026.

Rules & Procedures Committee

LB, TB, MB, AmB, JM, and LP comprise this committee. They will resume work in 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

LB presented the 2026 meeting dates for the LCHRC: January 13, February 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10, and December 8. AmB made the motion to accept the 2026 proposed meeting dates and JM seconded; no opposition; and motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

TB made a motion to go into Executive Session and AG seconded. Non-voting members of the LCHRC and the public were asked to sign out of the Zoom meeting. Discussion on exactly how to stop recording the meeting ensued. The problem was resolved by AG setting up a separate Zoom meeting and putting that link into the chat so everyone could click into it and participate in the Executive Session. CMR injected that everyone must return to the regular meeting after leaving Executive Session for the LCHRC to conduct voting on the two outstanding items being discussed in the Executive Session (Complaint 2025-#6 and the Motion to Recognize a Deemed Resignation of a Member of the Lehigh County Human Relations Commission.)

TB made a motion to come out of Executive Session; seconded by LP. Unanimous agreement. LCHRC is no longer in Executive Session.

LB asked for a motion to dismiss Complaint 2025-#6 because based upon the investigation and the preponderance of the evidence, there [was no discrimination based upon marital status] and the complaint is non-jurisdictional. JM made that motion which was seconded by MB; no opposition and the motion carried.

LB moved to deem that Commissioner Armstrong has resigned as a commissioner from the LCHRC based on her four absences in the 12-month

period. TB made the motion and asked for a roll call vote. PS seconded that motion. Roll call vote as follows: JoAnna Armstrong abstained; AmB voted in favor; MB voted in favor; LB voted in favor; TB voted against; AG voted against; LG voted against; JM voted against; LP voted in favor; CR voted against; JR voted against; and PS voted against. 4 in favor and 7 against the motion to deem Commissioner Armstrong as resigned from the LCHRC. Motion does not pass.

TB made a motion that LCHRC revisit Section 704E of the Ordinance to arrive at a more compassionate solution than is currently set for absenteeism and attendance but which will meet all the requirements of the ordinance but be more in line with the Mission Statement and to submit those changes in the form of a resolution to the County Commissioners and ask for it's passage; PS seconded that motion. LB presented the sole opposition to that motion; motion carried.

PS asked if there is a policy on the procedure to notify the LCHRC if a Commissioner is not able to attend a meeting. LB agreed that it is a good idea to set a policy of procedure if the intent is to create an exception to the law to allow [a commissioner] to be able to demonstrate an emergency situation which prevents them from attending a meeting. TB asked CMR for guidance with the proposed changes. CMR offered her counsel. PS asked CMR for guidance. Discussion ensued on the topic of meeting absences and what may or may not be a "good" reason for missing a meeting.

JM suggested that the Policy and Procedures Committee meet in the first week of January 2026 to discuss this topic further. JM will send out emails to determine which time works best for everyone. Group agreement ensued and discussions restarted. JM stated her understanding of the committee's work flow to have LCHRC policies and procedures changed and reviewed beginning with the committee working on policies and procedures and agreeing to the [additions and changes], sending them to CMR for legal review, next, agreeing with new policy or procedure among the LCHRC and then sending those to the Lehigh County Board of Commissioners. CMR offered to work with the Policy and Procedures Committee [in order to free up valuable time at the Board meetings.]

CLOSING AGENDA ITEMS

Citizens Input (on Non-Agenda items) - None

LCHRC Announcements

PS invited everyone to the City of Allentown's New Year's Eve celebration since he is the one curating it for 2025. He said it will be a different kind of party this year and that it will be fun.

JR announced that the LVCIL Community Inclusion for Young Children program has resumed. LB followed-up with JR about her review of the Spanish-language translation of the Ordinance; JR will send LB an email this week.

Motion to Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia L. King