



LEHIGH COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
(LCHRC)
MEETING MINUTES
June 10, 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), Angela Baio (AB), Amy Beck (AmB), Michael Blicher Jr. (MB), Liz Bradbury (LB), Tony Branco (TB), Joyce Moore (JM), Luis A. Perez Jr. (LP), Tony Swartz (TS)

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

Public: **None**

ABSENT – Carmen Bell (CB) ex-officio non-voting advisor, Andrew Gildner (AG), Guillermo Lopez Jr. (GL), Christopher Raad (CR), Pas Simpson (PS)

AGENDA ITEMS

Call to order at 6:03 p.m. by LB.

Roll call by LB.

LB reminded the Commissioners they must turn on their cameras when there is a vote. Quorum is present.

LB called for review and approval of minutes from May 13, 2025 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by JM, seconded by TB. Unanimous voice approval of the minutes.

LB noted that there were 461 “hits” and 143 “unique hits” to the LCHRC website page in May.

OLD BUSINESS

Training Update

On June 4, 2025, Allentown City Council voted to update their Allentown Human Relations Commission (AHRC) law with LCHRC language. Also added into their law is a Crown Act which is a section of law that protects people based on hair and hairstyle, natural hair, and hairstyle. LB noted that LCHRC’s ordinance also protects this area in the sections of the ordinance that have to do with gender expression. The entire old AHRC law was discarded and an entire new law (which is LCHRC law) was adopted.

LB noted that the section of Bethlehem located within Lehigh County is also protected by LCHRC law. Bethlehem Human Relations Commission has contacted LB to obtain complaint investigation training.

North Penn Legal Service’s (NPLS) attorneys received training from LB which link was sent to the Board and which is not a public link. NPLS has a YouTube site so the Board is able to view the training using the link sent by LB.

LB went to Collingdale, PA at the request of their city council and did a presentation on the language of their ordinance. There are about 9,000 residents of that borough and they want to pass an ordinance.

LB did a Zoom meeting with Lewisburg, PA at the request of Jordy Comas, borough council member, because they would like to pass an ordinance. There are about 5,000 residents there.

LB will do an hour-long, on-line presentation to Delaware County’s Board of Commissioners on June 11 at 2:00 p.m. because they are interested in passing the language of LCHRC’s ordinance, too, as soon as possible.

Logo Update

No Requests for Proposals (RFP) were received. LB and the Board reviewed it’s choices on ways to proceed. LP offered to reach out to the Allentown School District to gain their participation. AmB liked the idea of contacting personal contacts especially since it is Pride month which might inspire someone to create the logo (gratis) in the spirit of contributing to diversity. Discussion ensued. LB suggested that LP reach out along with anyone else on the Board with a contact who might be interested in creating the logo. School sessions begin in two-months; if there is no interest from anyone during those two-months,

it was decided to again cycle the RFP. The consensus from the board was to go ahead with personal contacts.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Complaints that have been brought forth

Complaint 2 is the active complaint that LCHRC is working on. The complainant revised their complaint and it was sent to the respondent which includes the City of Allentown. At such time as LB and LP were about to begin interviewing witnesses, the attorney for the City of Allentown requested the complaint be dismissed due to lack of jurisdiction. CR and LB discussed this situation and while the LCHRC may not have been in effect, Allentown's ordinance was. Currently, AHRC has enough members to achieve quorum and has begun to regularly meet. LB attended AHRC's June 5 meeting and asked AHRC to take responsibility for arranging for the investigation and adjudication of the complaint. CR agreed that LCHRC could proceed [investigating and adjudicating] this complaint and that it is allowed under LCHRC and AHRC ordinances. LCHRC would later take over the investigation and adjudication at Allentown's request. AHRC voted unanimously to allow this transfer. Then, LB asked the AHRC to transfer this responsibility back to LCHRC. AHRC again voted unanimously to transfer the complaint back to LCHRC. AHRC voted to designate LCHRC to be the investigator and adjudicator of [Complaint 2.] AHRC requested to be kept apprised of the progress of the complaint without breaking confidentiality. If the County of Lehigh has a complaint filed against it, the County has the right to hire or arrange for an entity other than LCHRC to investigate that complaint and so does the City of Allentown and the AHRC. Counsel has discussed this circumstance where a complainant files against the city or the county and each entity has the legal right to ask the other entity to represent them. Therefore, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being created by the City of Allentown with the County of Lehigh wherein instances where complainants file with either Human Relations Commission against either one of these government entities, the other Human Relations Commission will investigate the complaint so there is no appearance of bias or prejudice.

LB requested a motion to have LCHRC accept the authority to investigate and to adjudicate Complaint 2. JM made that motion, seconded by MB. TB asked a question; CR responded. Discussion ensued. JM called the question. AmB asked for the motion to be repeated. LB repeated the motion to have the LCHRC accept authority from the AHRC to fully investigate and adjudicate the complaint which is being referred to as Complaint 2 based upon the parameters of the ARHC Ordinance. Voice vote produced one opposing vote; majority vote allows for the

motion to move forward and be accepted. CR and LB will notify Allentown; LB and LP will begin the investigation.

Juneteenth Event

LB asked whether any members had information on the big event that Allentown is planning? AHRC will have a table at Cedar Beach on the weekend of June 21 and they would like LCHRC to share the table. This is a two-day event. LB can attend one day and asked if any board members might come by or attend for day? LP volunteered for June 21. AHRC Dr. Jennifer Swan will produce flyers which will include LCHRC info so there will be literature to hand out. LB and LP will communicate more information to the group as it becomes available.

CLOSING AGENDA ITEMS

Citizens Input (on Non-Agenda items) - None

LCHRC Announcements

The Tri-state coalition of Human Relations Commissions meeting is June 12 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.. LB encouraged the other Board members to attend the Zoom meeting and to consider taking over for the facilitator since the current facilitator is relocating. LB will email the Zoom invitation to everyone.

LB asked whether there was anything else to share with the group.

LP wished AB congratulations on her recent wedding.

AB noted that there will be a Juneteenth celebration at the Steel Stacks campus on June 14 and wondered whether there was interest in LCHRC setting up a table. LB volunteered her tent. LP might go. LP and AB will email one another to coordinate the details. AB suggested the Board create a schedule of events for LCHRC to attend. LP suggested creating a committee. LB asked AB and LP to work together on this and set it up for the future.

TB asked if there was an update on Congressman Mackenzie's position to Allentown and Sanctuary City status. Discussion ensued. Discussion about the current ICE situation continued. CR weighed in about the County of Lehigh being a sanctuary county, from her understanding, because of the County's refusal to cooperate with ICE at L.C. Jail. CR is giving a presentation on June 11 at the Board of Commissioners (BOC) meeting and again on June 25 at the BOC. More discussion ensued.

Motion to Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia L. King