



LEHIGH COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
(LCHRC)
MEETING MINUTES
September 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

Angela Baio (AB), Amy Beck (AmB), Michael Blicher Jr. (MB), Liz Bradbury (LB), Tony Branco (TB), Andrew Gildner (AG), Joyce Moore (JM), Luis A. Perez Jr. (LP), Christopher Raad (CR), 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: Mary T. Gonzales, Julianna Rodrigues

ABSENT – Joanna Armstrong (JA)

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 twice during the meeting: once for roll call and if there is a vote. Quorum is present.

LB called for review and approval of minutes from August 12, 2025 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by TB, seconded by LP. No opposition; motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Training Update

LB has a group of trainings about the LCHRC scheduled for organizations. September 21 will be an early Sunday morning Zoom on the ordinance for L.V. Active Life (the Senior Center for the Unitarian Universalist Group). October 22 will be a 2-hour in-person training for the Bethlehem Human Relations Commissioners on investigation procedures. This is a public meeting so if you are interested in investigation procedures, you are welcome to attend. Let LB know and she will pass your information along to the Bethlehem Human Relations Commissioners or wait until the next LCHRC meeting and she will have all the particulars for the meeting at that point. November 13 will be a presentation on the ordinance to the Pennsylvania Coalition to Advance Respect with one of its major partner resources being the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. LB explained that one of the protected classes in the LCHRC ordinance is victims of domestic abuse. December 7 is a presentation to the Lehigh Valley Humanists in Allentown.

LB announced Montgomery County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution creating their Human Relations Commission. They've given themselves 180-days to appoint 5-7 commissioners. No human relations ordinance has been created yet. Instead, they will be using the Pennsylvania Civil Rights Act passed in 1955.

Delaware County Board of Commissioners has had its first reading of its non-discrimination law using much of the LCHRC's ordinance language. They will vote on 9/17/25. Delaware County has a population of 550,000 people. To date, only five small towns within Delaware County have had human relations ordinances which means that only a small number of Delaware County's population had nondiscrimination language and nondiscrimination protections. If they pass the ordinance using the protected classes language from LCHRC, LB will email the Board.

Logo Update

LB asked CB whether the United Way might again use the list created this past winter to send out the logo Request for Proposal (RFP). CB does have an intern and is certain that United Way will have someone able to distribute the RFP again. CR will change the deadline date and get the RFP to CB. LB noted that if no responses are received from this emailing of the RFP, the LCHRC will have to take out its drawing pads and crayons and create its own logo. CB will speak with

United Way's marketing team for input and assistance. LB spoke about the possibility of the LCHRC having an intern. Discussion ensued. CB will speak with VISTA Regional Manager, Jen Nicolazzi. LP will discuss the possibility of acquiring a County intern with FK.

Update on Complaints that have been brought forth

LB spoke about one new complaint, Complaint #6. All of the previous complaints brought forth this year have been dismissed. As soon as LB received the complaint from staff, she phoned complainant but the call went to voice mail and the complainant has not yet returned LB's call. LP typically works with LB on complaints. However, LB requested two other commissioners who haven't yet had experience with any complaints take part in this Complaint #6 preliminary investigation. Discussion ensued. AB, AmB and AG volunteered. LB will forward the complaint to these commissioners and they can email LB with any questions or comments. LP reminded everyone that the complaints are confidential and the three commissioners working with LB on Complaint #6 cannot discuss any part of the complaint with the other commissioners who are not investigating.

Discussion on Draft Letter in Support of MOU with City

LB reminded the Board of the proposed purpose of the Memo of Understanding (MOU) between the County of Lehigh's Human Relations Commission and the City of Allentown's Human Relations Commission. LB forwarded her draft of the MOU to the county's Law Department and is waiting for their edits. CR said she did review it and it only had a few edits. It has not been distributed yet.

LCHRC Commissioner's Appointment Terms

LB announced the second reading of the reappointments and nominations will take place at the full Board of Commissioners meeting on 9/10/25. Attendance is not mandatory and it is always a public meeting.

Formation of Rules & Procedures Committee

LB, TB, MB, AmB, JM, and LP comprise this committee. JM will work with the others to determine a meeting date. Discussion with CR ensued. There are no sunshine law concerns with this committee as long as they have accord without having a significant vote on anything and the LCHRC would continue to ultimately decide whether to accept the committee's recommendations or not. CR offered her legal counsel if the committee does meet.

NEW BUSINESS

Phone Call with the State

LB is having a phone meeting on September 17 with the Chairperson of the Pennsylvania State Human Relations Commission whom she believes to be newly appointed. There is no agenda; it is an introductory meeting at which LB does intend to talk about the LCHRC Ordinance and its sturdy Board of Commissioners.

CLOSING AGENDA ITEMS

Citizens Input (on Non-Agenda items) - None

LCHRC Announcements

Public attendee, Mary T. Gonzalez of the Bucks County Human Relations Council explained that she finds the meetings instructive and she is trying to learn more about the workings of the LCHRC so she can promote a similar commission in Bucks County. Ms. Gonzalez commented that it must have taken an extraordinary amount of work and LB told her that it did take 3-1/2 years to write the law with a lot of input from many different places but now it has been written; it is comprehensive; and it is done. LB suggested Ms. Gonzalez look at the ordinance because it explains how to set up the commission and the process of investigation.

Julianna Rodrigues, a nominee for LCHRC Commissioner, spoke about her background and interests.

CB spoke about the Age-Friendly Conference to be held at DeSales University on Monday, October 20, 9-2:30. It is free and open to the public with breakfast and lunch provided. Contact CB or the United Way to register. CB will forward the informational email to staff (CK) to disperse to all past and present LCHRC Commissioners.

PS invited everyone to the Re-Grand Opening of the Mark Goods Warehouse at 907 Tilghman Street, Allentown, on Saturday (9/13) at 11:00 a.m. and Sunday (9/14).

LB invited everyone to Art In The Park held in Allentown's West Park this Saturday, 9/13.

PS notified everyone that Phase 2 of the skate park at Jordan Park in Allentown will open again on Saturday, 9/13. Food, music, and give-aways.

PS announced that the International Cultural Festival at Cedar Beach in Allentown will take place next Saturday, 9/20.

PS announced there will be a food festival at Mountainville on Saturday, 9/27 to help the culinary community. Mountainville is also a non-profit organization and the event will help raise capital for them, too. Plenty of vendors, music, and food will be available.

Motion to Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia L. King