

**Minutes of the Cook County
Commission on Human Rights – Open Session
August 14, 2025 at 2:00 pm**

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Location: 69 W Washington Street, Chicago, IL 60602
22nd floor, Conference Room A

Attendance:

Present: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Hedy Ratner, Michael Lapinski, Charles Isaacs, Shobana Verma, and DHRE Staff.

Absent: Vice Chair Gia Orr, Commissioners Amber Smock, Pushkar Sharma

Open Session

A. Call to Order

- Chair Sohel called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

B. Statements by the General Public

No statements by the general public.

C. Agenda Approval

- A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Hedy Ratner. The motion was carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes:** Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Hedy Ratner, Michael Lapinski, Charles Isaacs, Shobana Verma
 - **Nays:** None
 - **Absent:** Vice Chair Gia Orr, Commissioners Amber Smock, Pushkar Sharma

D. Approval of the July 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Open Minutes

- A motion to approve the July 17, 2025 regular meeting open minutes was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Hedy Ratner. The motion was carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes:** Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Hedy Ratner, Michael Lapinski, Charles Isaacs, Shobana Verma
 - **Nays:** None
 - **Absent:** Vice Chair Gia Orr, **Commissioners** Amber Smock, Pushkar Sharma

E. Commissioners' Updates

- No updates from Commissioners.

F. Director's Report

- Legal Counsel T. Wright provided updates on FY25 Q3 with three fourths of the quarter complete. 196 cases pending at all stages with 63 of those matters being new cases filed noting an increasing trend in the number of cases each quarter this fiscal year. 205 inquiries so far this quarter and 75 closed cases, a significant increase from the number of cases closed for the past quarters. 2 cases resolved after administrative hearing and 6 cases settled with known settlement amounts of \$1,975.
- Policy: Policy Analyst shared that the National Origin Guidance was published on July 30, 2025 thanking the Commission for their feedback on the guidance at the last Commission meeting. The Policy Analyst is working on updating the Commission's decision database to make it more user-friendly and searchable based on feedback from community and advocacy organizations.
- Outreach: One of the Outreach and Training coordinators provided updates on events and trainings attended to continue departmental efforts to spread awareness of Cook County Human Rights and Ethics ordinances and protections, along with recent updates made to the Commission's Website to increase digital accessibility. Human Rights newsletter increased to 2,445 subscribers from the 2,366 reported at the last Commission meeting in July.

G. IAOHRA Resolutions – Commission Review and Vote

- A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Michael Lapinski. The motion was carried by the following roll-call vote:
 - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Hedy Ratner, Michael Lapinski, Charles Isaacs, Shobana Verma
 - **Nays**: None
 - **Absent**: Vice Chair Gia Orr, Commissioners Amber Smock, Pushkar Sharma

H. Investigation Extension Request – Commission Review and Vote

- A motion to approve Investigation Extension Request Nos. 2025CSS00333, 2025PL00331, 2025E00197, 2023JHA010, 2024CS00128, 2024H00122, 2024JHAA00254, 2024H010, 2025H00284, 2025PL00270, 2024H018, 2023H00324, 2025E00177, 2025PL00330, 2025PL00313 with the amendment as discussed was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Michael Lapinski. The motion was carried by the following vote roll-call vote:
 - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Hedy Ratner, Michael Lapinski, Charles Isaacs, Shobana Verma
 - **Nays**: None
 - **Absent**: Vice Chair Gia Orr, Commissioners Amber Smock, Pushkar Sharma

Closed Session

- A motion to move into the Executive Session for discussions as identified in the agenda was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Hedy Ratner and carried out by unanimous voice vote at 2:32 p.m.

Open Session

- At 2:34 p.m. the Commission reconvened to Open Session.

J. Voting Regarding Executive Session Items, if any

a. July 17, 2025 Regular Closed Meeting Minutes – Commission Vote

- A motion to approve the July 17, 2025, Regular Closed Meeting Minutes was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Hedy Ratner. The motion was carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes:** Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Hedy Ratner, Michael Lapinski, Charles Isaacs, Shobana Verma
 - **Nays:** None
 - **Absent:** Vice Chair Gia Orr, Commissioners Amber Smock, Pushkar Sharma

K. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Jack Block, seconded by Commissioner Hedy Ratner and carried by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Commission staff.