



**Board of Commissioners of Cook County
Minutes of the Human Relations Committee**

Thursday, November 9, 2023

1:00 PM

**Cook County Building, Board Room,
118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois**

ATTENDANCE

Present: Morrison, Trevor, Anaya, Gordon, Miller, Quezada and Stamps (7)

REMOTE PARTICIPATION

A motion was made by Commissioner Anaya, seconded by Commissioner Quezada, to allow remote participation. The motion carried with the following vote:

Ayes: Morrison, Trevor, Anaya, Gordon, Quezada, and Stamps (6)

There will be a meeting of the Human Relations Committee of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County at the date, time and location listed above to consider the following:

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Chairman Morrison asked the Secretary to the Board to call upon the registered public speakers, in accordance with Cook County Code.

Stephanie Skora - Brave Space Alliance

Silas Leslie - Chicago Therapy Collective

[23-5693](#)

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the meeting of 09/12/2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Anaya, seconded by Vice Chairwoman Trevor, that this Committee Minutes be approved. The motion carried.

Ayes: Morrison, Trevor, Anaya, Gordon, Miller, Quezada and Stamps (7)

[23-5026](#)

Presented by: JENNIFER KING, Acting Executive Director, Department of Human Rights and Ethics

REPORT

Department: Department of Human Rights & Ethics

Report Title: Third Quarter FY2023 - Complaints with the Commission on Human Rights Pursuant to Section 42-34(9)

Report Period: June 1, 2023 to August 31, 2023

Summary: This report highlights human rights complaints that were investigated and closed during the third quarter of 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Quezada, seconded by Commissioner Anaya, that this Report be received and filed. The motion carried.

Ayes: Morrison, Trevor, Anaya, Gordon, Miller, Quezada and Stamps (7)

[23-5368](#)

Sponsored by: KEVIN B. MORRISON, MAGGIE TREVOR and FRANK J. AGUILAR, Cook County Board Of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A HEARING IN THE COOK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE ONGOING VIOLENCE AND SYSTEMIC BARRIERS AGAINST COOK COUNTY TRANSGENDER RESIDENTS

WHEREAS, transgender residents in Cook County are vital members of our communities; and

WHEREAS, transgender residents and trans-led organizations in Cook County contribute in numerous ways to enrich the quality of life in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, transgender people in our lives should be embraced and celebrated for the wonderful people they are and talents they bring to our communities; and

WHEREAS, these residents face systemic barriers and epidemic levels of violence leading to lack of access, for some, of basic needs and in the most extreme cases, leading to death; and

WHEREAS, since 2020, more trans people have been killed in Chicago than any other U.S. city, with a majority of the killings of targeting transgender women, particularly those of color; and

WHEREAS, in March 2022 alone, two Black, trans women, Tatiana LaBelle and Elise Malary, were found dead within 24 hours of each other days after being reported missing with LaBelle found beaten to death and put in a garbage bin in East Chatham and Elise Malary pulled out of Lake Michigan; and

WHEREAS, in March 2022, Kathryn Newhouse, a 19-year-old transgender woman formerly a resident of Illinois, was shot and killed by her father; and

WHEREAS, on January 23, 2023, Unique Banks, a 21-year-old Latina trans woman, and her mother, Alexandra Olmo, were killed in during a home invasion in Chicago that seriously wounded three other people - Olmo's boyfriend and two other trans women; and

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2023, the body of Black transgender woman Cashay Henderson, who had recently returned to Chicago, was found in a burning apartment building in Milwaukee-she had been fatally shot before the fire was set; and

WHEREAS, according to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2022 saw at least 40 transgender people fatally shot or killed by other violent means; and

WHEREAS, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation reports at least 19 transgender and gender non-conforming people whose lives have been tragically and inhumanely taken through violent means, including through gun and interpersonal violence so far in 2023; and

WHEREAS, according to an Everytown for Gun Safety report, the number of homicides of transgender people nearly doubled between 2017 and 2021, driven primarily by killings with firearms; and

WHEREAS, according to the report, 73% of tracked homicides between 2017 and 2021 were of Black trans women though they make up only an estimated 13% of the transgender population; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association has publicly described the level of violence against the transgender community as epidemic; and

WHEREAS, most medical experts, law enforcement officials, and community members have stated that data should assume to be incomplete given the misgendering of transgender people; and

WHEREAS, the National Center for Transgender Equality cites that one in five transgender people in the United States has been discriminated when seeking a home, that more than one in ten have been evicted from their homes, because of their gender identity, and that one in five transgender individuals have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, the National Center for Transgender Equality also cites that, due the impact of family

rejection, discrimination, and violence, a large number of transgender and other LGBTQ-identified youth are homeless in the United States - making up an estimated 20-40% of the more than 1.6 million homeless youth; and

WHEREAS, nearly one in six transgender Americans-and one in two black transgender people-has been to prison, with many of those individuals facing discrimination by administrators and threats of sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, countless other barriers exist in the daily lives of transgender individuals including with Cook County government; and

WHEREAS, Cook County stands with our transgender residents and realize there is still more work to do to provide gender-affirming services to transgender residents; and

WHEREAS, this body convened in April of 2022 for a hearing on the protocols and plans of the various Cook County offices to battle this ongoing issue; and

WHEREAS, in light of the continuation of these needless tragedies it is paramount that Cook County continues to update and better adjust our plans to help prevent and mitigate these harms;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Cook County Board of Commissioners request a convening of the Cook County Human Relations Committee to conduct a hearing regarding past, current, and future protocols and/or plans in place which aim at serving the transgender community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the following Cook County offices appear at the hearing to report to the Board regarding this topic:

- Cook County Health
- Cook County Medical Examiners' Office
- Cook County Sheriff's Office
- Cook County Department of Human Resources
- Cook County State's Attorney's Office
- Cook County Justice Advisory Council
- Cook County Department of Human Rights and Ethics

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the reports, updates, and strategies will detail the separately elected officials', or County departments', offices', and/or bureaus' individual and collaborative efforts to address this important and serious issue.

A motion was made by Commissioner Quezada and seconded by Vice Chairwoman Trevor to recommend for receiving and filing

ADJOURNMENT

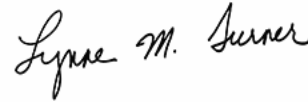
A motion was made by Commissioner Anaya, seconded by Commissioner Quezada, that this be adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Ayes: Morrison, Trevor, Anaya, Gordon, Miller, Quezada and Stamps (7)

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman



Secretary

A complete record of this meeting is available at <https://cook-county.legistar.com>.