

**Minutes of the Cook County
Commission on Human Rights – Open Session
April 25, 2024, at 10:00 am**

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

Attendance:

Present: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Amber Smock, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Michael Lapinski, Jack Block (Quorum of Commissioners physically present voted to allow to attend virtually due to medical exception), DHRE Staff

Absent: Vice Chair Gia Orr

Open Session

A. Call to Order

- Chair Sohel called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

B. Motion to allow Commissioner Jack Block to attend virtually due to medical exception of the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

- **Ayes:** Chair Sohel, Commissioners Amber Smock, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Michael Lapinski
- **Nays:** None.

C. Statements by the General Public

- No statements by the general public.

D. Agenda Approval

- A motion to approve the agenda was made and carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes:** Chair Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Amber Smock, Michael Lapinski, Rev. Richard Tolliver
 - **Nays:** None
 - **Absent:** Vice Chair Orr

E. Approval of the March 14, 2024, Regular Meeting Open Minutes

- A motion to approve the March 14, 2024, Regular Meeting Open Minutes was made and carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes:** Chair Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Amber Smock, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Michael Lapinski
 - **Nays:** None
 - **Absent:** Vice Chair Orr

F. Commissioners' Updates

- Commissioner Smock shared information about the Access Living Open House on Thursday, May 2, 2024.
- New member appointed to the Human Rights Commission and will be introduced at the next Commission meeting.

G. Director's Report

- Data being reported is for a portion of the second quarter as we are still in the second quarter.
- Number of intakes slight decreased, possibly due to the paid leave training materials and sessions the Commission has shared and hosted.
- The number of active cases has increased in the last quarter.
- 15 new cases filed so far in the second quarter.
- 3 cases closed from March 1, 2024 to April 15, 2024.
- Settlement amounts not disclosed to the Commission.
- 2 cases closed following conclusion of investigation.
- Policy: Cook County Board of Commissioners passed the Cook County Paid Leave Ordinance Procedural Rules on March 14, 2024. Item #24-1181. Amendment passed to the Cook County Paid Leave ordinance which temporarily exempts school and park districts from the Ordinance until January 1, 2024. Item #24-1233. Substantive and Procedural Rules governing the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance discussion on circumstances which a Respondent would not be served when a complaint is dismissed for procedural defects. This change is responsive to inquiries regarding potential worker retaliation for filing employment-related complaints. The State of Illinois is currently considering SB 3680 and HB5314 which would make it unallowable to have crime free and nuisance free ordinances at the municipal level. The Cook County Commission on Human Rights has submitted a statement in support of this sentiment. The state of Illinois is also considering HB5345 which would amend the state's minimum wage law to remove the tips minimum rate. This would have direct implications for the Commission's Minimum Wage Ordinance.
- Outreach: Update on events and trainings attended to continue departmental efforts to spread awareness of Cook County Human Rights and Ethics ordinances and protections. Specifically training on the Cook County Paid Leave Ordinance, Fair Housing and the Just Housing Amendment. The Human Rights Newsletter continues to grow in the number of subscribers, created new Paid Leave Ordinance materials which includes a paid leave employer checklist and informational palm card. Shared calendar of upcoming outreach events happening throughout the County.

H. Investigation Extension Request

- A motion to approve 4 Investigation Extension Requests was made and carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes**: Chair Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Amber Smock, Michael Lapinski, Rev. Richard Tolliver.

- **Nays:** None
- **Absent:** Vice Chair Orr

Closed Session

- A motion to move into Executive Session for discussions as identified in the agenda was made and carried by unanimous voice vote at 10:44 am.

Open Session

- At 10:50 am the Board reconvened to Open Session.

K. Voting Regarding Executive Session Items, if any

I. Approval of the March 14, 2024, Regular Meeting Closed Minutes

- A motion to approve the March 14, 2024, Regular Meeting Closed Minutes was made and carried by the following vote:
 - **Ayes:** Chair Sohel, Commissioners Jack Block, Amber Smock, Rev. Richard Tolliver, Michael Lapinski
 - **Nays:** None
 - **Absent:** Vice Chair Orr

L. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made and carried by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 am.

Minutes submitted by Board staff.