



MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING **APPROVED**

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, August 18, 2026
TIME: 5:30 p.m.
PLACE: Urbana City Council Chambers
Urbana City Hall
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, Illinois 61801

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ann Panthen, Chair; Shalini Smith, Vice Chair; Peter Resnick; Adam Ruggieri

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Vahagn Chiflikyan; Katrina Kindle

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Unzicker, Human Rights Specialist

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Ann Panthen called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. The Recording Secretary took the roll. A quorum was present.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Panthen asked for any additions to the agenda. There were none.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. June 16, 2026, and July 21, 2026

Ms. Panthen called for a motion to approve the June meeting minutes. Peter Resnick moved to approve minutes from both the June and July meetings. Shalini Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote.

D. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Receipt of Automatic Two-Year EEO Certification**

Shalini Smith announced the names of three companies receiving automatic certification this month:

- IOF, Inc. d/b/a Idaho Ordnance Factory 2 years

- James Carder d/b/a Doug'll Do It 2 years
- JJ Residential Landscaping, LLC 2 years

Mr. Resnick noted that the Idaho Ordnance Factory had put some of their numbers in incorrect columns on one of the tables of their application. While the outcome does not change, it would assist the company to receive a note about the correction ahead of their next application process.

2. Consideration of EEO Workforce Statistics

Ms. Panthen introduced consideration of the applications from companies needing approval by the commissioners for EEO Certification. Ms. Smith moved to certify the following four companies for approval by the commission:

- Cross Construction, Inc. 2 years
- Dewberry Engineers Inc. 2 years
- GFL Everglades, LLC d/b/a GFL Environmental, Inc. 2 years
- LexisNexis Coplogic Solutions Inc. 2 years

Mr. Resnick seconded the motion. Ms. Panthen invited discussion:

- Mr. Resnick made note of Cross Construction utilizing Union Labor
- He mentioned the statistics reported by Dewberry Engineers not being reflective of the Peoria population, but said he understood the sort of skills and training needed for the technical and professional jobs the company fills

Following the discussion, the motion carried on voice vote.

3. Annual Election of Commission Officers

Ms. Panthen announced the election process:

- Mr. Resnick inquired whether the current officers were open to serving again and offered to make some nominations
- Ms. Panthen asked if the election needed to occur at this meeting
- Elections normally occur in July, but the previous agenda overlooked the item. The process can wait
- Ms. Panthen prefers to wait for the attendance of all members

Mr. Resnick moved to defer the election until the September meeting. Adam Ruggieri seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote.

H. OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Panthen shared Carla Boyd's monthly report. Highlights included:

- Status of complaints and referrals made
- HRC member Vahagn Chiflikyan and Carla are currently attending the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies' Annual Conference in New Orleans
- Staff from OHRE attended the Mayor's "State of the City" address on Wednesday, August 12th at Urbana Fire Station #3. The mayor highlighted the many accomplishments from this past year, including the work the OHRE has done this year to provide City documents in multiple languages in addition to English.

Moments in Human Rights History

- August 18, 1920. The 19th Amendment becomes part of the U.S. Constitution, ensuring women the right to vote. Then 24-year-old State Representative, Harry T. Burn, serving his first term in the legislature, casts the decisive vote. Burn credited his switch to a “yes” vote to receiving a letter with advice from his own mother, Febb Burn.
- August 18, 1963. James Meredith becomes the first Black graduate from the University of Mississippi with a degree in Political Science. He withstood tremendous resistance to enrolling, overcoming academic, legal and political challenges, and his enrollment was the subject of protests and rioting in 1962.
- August 18, 1964. The International Olympic Committee bans South Africa from participating in that year’s Summer Olympic Games because of the country’s apartheid policies. South Africa did not participate again until 1992, after finally dismantling apartheid.
- August 18, 1977. South African police arrest anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko at a roadblock under the nation’s Terrorism Act. The Terrorism Act, enacted ten years earlier, categorizes any form of protest against apartheid, even nonviolent demonstration, as “terrorism”. Biko’s death in custody becomes a rallying cry for human rights advocates worldwide and intensifies pressure for democratic reform.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. This commission has three openings.
2. Next HRC meeting: Tuesday, September 15, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Panthen asked whether any of the commissioners had any additional comments. There were none.

There being no further business before the Commission, Ms. Panthen adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Unzicker
Recording Secretary