



MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING **APPROVED**

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, April 21, 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, Vahagn Chiflikyan; Adam Ruggieri

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Carla Boyd, Human Rights and Equity Officer;
Tom Unzicker, Human Rights Specialist

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

Ann Panthen called the meeting to order at 5:35 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. March 17, 2026

Ms. Panthen called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Shalini Smith moved for approval of the minutes. Peter Resnick 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

Ms. Smith announced the name of two companies receiving automatic approval this month:

- POLIHIRE Strategy Corp
- R&R Services of Illinois, Inc.

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 seven companies for specific terms of approval by the commission:

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|---|---------|
| • Applied Research Associates, Inc. – Transportation Division | 2 years |
| • CORE Construction | 1 year |
| • FireCatt | 2 years |
| • Gibbs Technology Company d/b/a GFI Digital, Inc. | 2 years |
| • Seiler Instrument & Mfg. Co., Inc. | 1 year |
| • Stryker Sales, LLC (Medical Division) | 2 years |
| • The Petry-Kuhne Company d/b/a Petry-Kuhne Company
as well as Central Illinois Erectors | 1 year |

Vahagn Chiflikyan seconded the motion. Ms. Panthen invited discussion.

Mr. Resnick asked for additional information about the recommendation for Petry-Kuhne to receive a one-year renewal. Carla Boyd explained the company had provided demographics broken down by various locations. Certain locations showed turnover in less diverse areas than the company as a whole.

Ms. Panthen mentioned Petry-Kuhne highlighted certain statistics in their Good Faith Efforts update, which did not sway her. She thought the recommendation for a one-year Provisional Certification appropriate under the circumstances. Adam Ruggieri concurred due to the company's location in Champaign, which could potentially provide a company a more diverse staff

Mr. Resnick stated that the company's reliance on union labor for its skilled employees impacts in ways that the commission seeks to address. He suggested adding a question to the EEO Certification application to specifically determine the number of union and non-union employees on a staff.

Following the discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

H. OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Boyd shared her monthly report. Highlights included:

- Status of complaints and referrals made
- She attended a reception in these chambers for students from Thionville, France, one of the three sister cities of Urbana
- Chair Panthen joined her, and they presented a statement to City Council concerning the Surveillance Technology Ordinance. Questions and answers followed. A member of the Civilian Police Review Board also attended to provide a statement on the same ordinance.
- She participated in the U of I focus group session on April 7th. The process to develop goals began with the arrival of a new Chancellor at the University.
- She attended the Champaign County Community Coalition monthly meeting. She encouraged HRC members to consider attending it for the information exchange, as well as an opportunity to make connections.
- She attended the 2026 Central Illinois Immigration Advocates Symposium, and all-day event on April 11th about the challenges confronting immigration these days

Moments in Human Rights History

- April 21, 1649. The Maryland Toleration Act passed in the American colony allowing freedom of worship. It guaranteed freedom of religion for Christian who believed in the Trinity, but it excluded others and included penalties from fines to execution. Four prisoners received death sentences, and dozens died due to conflicts in the 43 years the Act was on and off the books. Despite obvious flaws, it was the precursor to the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights.
- April 21, 1892. Black Longshoremen strike for higher wages and better working conditions in St Louis. The strike lays the foundation for future labor organizing among African Americans and highlights the intersection of racial justice and workers' rights.
- April 21, 1989. Over one hundred thousand students in China begin crowding in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, beginning a six-weeks long protest demanding greater political freedom. The vigil ended when tanks entered the Square on June 4th. Some believe the Massacre may have resulted in the deaths of over 10,00 of the peaceful protesters.
- April 21, 2019. Teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg, of Sweden, helps rally thousands at an Extinction Rebellion protest in London. The weeklong protest results in hundreds of arrests.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. With the departure of Jerry Frye and Charles Davidson, this commission has four openings. One application was received.
2. Please review the Outreach calendar from your email and consider signing up to assist.
3. Next HRC meeting: Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

J. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Ms. Panthen adjourned the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Unzicker
Recording Secretary