

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, January 27, 2025 ~ 10:00 A.M.

Detroit Cadillac Place Building, Suite L-150

3054 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit, MI 48202

In compliance with the State of Michigan's Open Meetings Act, "the minutes must show the date, time, place, members present, members absent, any decisions made at a meeting open to the public, and the purpose(s) for which a closed session is held; the minutes must also include all roll call votes taken at the meeting." The minutes are limited to these requirements and do not reflect all subject matter that occurred during the Commission meeting. Meetings are audio recorded and kept on file with the MDCR.

PROPOSED DRAFT MINUTES

PRESENT: Commissioner Rosann Barker
Commissioner Zenna Elhasan
Commissioner Regina Gasco
Commissioner Gloria Lara (REAPPOINTED)
Commissioner Luke Londo
Commissioner Portia Roberson
Commissioner Richard R. White, III (NEWLY APPOINTED)
Commissioner David Worthams

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Worthams at 10:00 A.M.

Roll Call of the Commissioners was taken by Attorney Lamont Satchel, serving as Clerk, to determine a quorum. Commissioner Barker, Commissioner Elhasan, Commissioner Gasco, Commissioner Londo, Commissioner Roberson, Commissioner Worthams. With all Commissioners present, quorum requirements were met. Reappointed commissioner Gloria Lara and newly appointed commissioner Richard R. White, III were also present.

SWEARING-IN OF NEW COMMISSIONER RICHARD R. WHITE, III

Vice Chair Worthams administered the Oath of Office via the Swearing-In of new commissioner Richard R. White, III. Governor Gretchen Whitmer appointed Commissioner White on December 19, 2024 to succeed Richard Corriveau, and representing Democrats, for a term that commenced January 1, 2025 and expires December 31, 2028.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REAPPOINTED COMMISSIONER GLORIA LARA AND FORMER COMMISSIONER RICHARD CORRIVEAU

Vice Chair Worthams acknowledged the reappointment of Gloria Lara, whose previous term expired on December 31, 2024; Commissioner Lara will be serving a second term as Commissioner. Commissioner Worthams acknowledged former commissioner Attorney Richard Corriveau whose term ended December 31, 2024, expressing words of gratitude for his four years of service as commissioner.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR PRO TEM

Vice Chair Worthams indicated that with Commissioner Lara's term expiration at the end of 2024, her position as Chair was vacated. Therefore, Commissioner Worthams is presiding over the meeting. He recommended appointing a Chair Pro Tem for the rest of the meeting until the Election of Officers agenda item toward the end of the meeting. He further suggested that Commissioner Lara serve in that position.

MOTION: Move to appoint Commissioner Lara as Chair Pro Tem until the Election of Officers later in the meeting.

On Motion duly made (Roberson) and supported (Elhasan), Commissioner Lara's appointment as Chair Pro Tem was Approved.

Commissioner Lara assumed the chair.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Chair Pro Tem Lara brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Adopt the Meeting Agenda as submitted. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Worthams), the Meeting Agenda was Approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

OPENING MATTERS

WELCOME

Chair Pro Tem Lara provided welcoming remarks, Attorney Satchel was called upon to provide a brief overview on the role of the Commission and its authority.

RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT OBSERVANCES DATES IN JANUARY

Chair Lara recognized significant observances for the month of January, including:

61st Anniversary of the first meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission (January 3, 1964), International Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27), Birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15, 1929), National Day of Racial Healing (January 21), Celebration of the life of Fred T. Korematsu (January 30).

PUBLIC COMMENT PROTOCOL

Attorney Kimberly Woolridge, Deputy Executive Director, provided instructions to guests who wish to address the Commission during the Public Comment segments of the meeting.

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Pro Tem Lara brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Adopt the Consent Agenda as submitted. There was no discussion or amendment. On Motion duly made (Worthams) and supported (Londo), the Consent Agenda was Adopted. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 21, 2024 MEETING

Chair Lara Pro Tem brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Approve the Meeting Minutes as submitted. There was no discussion or revisions. On Motion duly made (Roberson) and supported (Worthams), the Minutes from the October 21, 2024 Commission Meeting were Approved. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

DIVISION AND OTHER REPORTS

A. Executive Director Report, John E. Johnson, Jr.

Director Johnson submitted a full written report to the Commission on the activity of the Executive Director and the major divisions of the Department from October 2024 to January 2025, as well as personnel and budget updates, and department initiatives. Additionally, Attorney Marcelina Trevino, Director of Enforcement introduced several new employees who have recently joined the Department. No action was taken.

B. MCRC/General Counsel Report, Attorney Lamont Satchel

Mr. Satchel serves as Advisor to the Commission and General Counsel for the Department. Mr. Satchel submitted a full written report to the Commission on the activity of General Counsel from October 2024 to January 2025 and provided updates on request for amendment of ELCRA to allow the Commission to conduct its business virtually, comprehensive review of and amendment to internal processes, and Dynamic Character legislation. No action was taken.

C. Legislative Liaison update presentation, Annie Urasky, Legislative Liaison

Annie Urasky serves as the Legislative Liaison for the Department's Executive Office. Ms. Urasky submitted a full written report to the Commission and provided an update on the activity of the legislature with regards to civil rights legislation. No action was taken.

C-2. Disability Rights and Compliance Division update, Attorney Tyra Khan, Division Director

Attorney Tyra Khan serves as Director of the Disability Rights and Compliance (DRAC) Division for the Department. Attorney Khan submitted a full written report to the Commission and provided an update on the activity of the DRAC Division. No action was taken.

D. Attorney General Report, AAG Tonya Jeter - Civil Rights & Elections Division of the Attorney General's Office

Attorney Jeter serves as Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights & Elections Division of the Attorney General's Office. Ms. Jeter submitted a full written report to the Commission and provided a brief status update on the activity of several cases within the report since the October 21, 2024 Commission meeting. No action was taken.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Chair's Report, Gloria Lara

In lieu of a report, Chair Pro Tem Lara gave a personal statement: "The eight-member Michigan Civil Rights Commission was created by the people of Michigan in our 1963 Michigan Constitution to safeguard constitutional and legal guarantees against discrimination. The Commission is charged with investigating illegal discrimination against any person because of religion, race, color, or national origin, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, source of income, age, marital status, height, weight, arrest record, and physical and mental disability. It is worth reminding us, the residents of the state of Michigan that the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act define, guarantee, and secure civil rights for residents in Michigan. These laws

enjoy almost a half century of respect in application in the protection, enforcement, and exercise of civil rights in Michigan. This Civil Rights Commission and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights have for over a century exercised our respective constitutional and statutory powers to safeguard civil rights within this state and secure the equal protection of those civil rights without discrimination. As we as a nation confront mounting challenges that seemingly threaten to test our fidelity to the first principles of humanity reflected in the civil rights enshrined in state and federal laws, it behooves us to reflect upon the lives and sacrifices of those individuals, communities and organizations who paved the way and laid the foundation for the civil rights we enjoy today. To honor their lives and sacrifice by pledging our dedication to the cause of justice, respect and dignity embodied in the civil rights laws of this country. This much we owe them. This much we deserve. In Michigan, our civil rights remain protected and this Commission's dedication to the preservation is unwavering." No action was taken.

B. 2024 MCRC/MDCR Annual Report

Vicki Levensgood, Director of Communications introduced the 2024 Annual Report and "MDCR By The Numbers" insert, highlighting the graphics, content and Accessibility of the report and indicating that it would be available on the Commission's webpage shortly following the Commission's approval.

MOTION: Move to Approve the 2024 Annual Report as submitted. On Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Worthams), the 2024 Annual Report was Approved. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Commission's 2025 Priorities

Chair Pro Tem Lara requested suggestions and recommendations for the Commission's 2025 priorities. Following discussion, the following Motion was set forth:

MOTION: Move to continue with the priority of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with an emphasis on Artificial Intelligence (AI) discrimination, however, doing so with caution due to the current administration's executive order and restrictions, and with counsel from Attorney Satchel, as noted by Commissioner Elhasan.

On Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Barker), the Motion was Adopted. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Establishment of Commission Standing Committees

Chair Pro Tem requested suggestions and recommendations for establishing standing committees for the Commission. Following discussion, the following Motion was set forth:

MOTION: Move to Adopt establishing the following standing committees: 1) Rules Committee; 2) Budget and Policy Committee; 3) Executive Director Assessment Committee and to have the 2025 Chair make appointments to these committees at their earliest opportunity. On Motion duly made (Worthams) and supported (Roberson), the establishment of standing committees on Rules, Budget and Policy, and Executive Director Assessment are Adopted. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Commission's 2025 Educational Retreat

Chair Pro Tem Lara offered the dates of February 7, 2025 and February 14, 2024 for the Commission's 2025 Educational Retreat. Following discussion and review of calendars, the following Motion was set forth:

MOTION: Move to Approve the date of February 7, 2025 for the Commission's 2025 Educational Retreat. On Motion duly made (Worthams) and supported (Londo), the date of February 7, 2025 for the Commission's 2025 Educational Retreat was Approved. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Assignment of Rule 12 Commission Hearing Officer(s)

Attorney Lamont Satchel provided background regarding assigning a commissioner(s) to draft the decision and order of the commission in the Rule 12 case of MDCR v. Studio 8 Hair Lab LLC. Following discussion, the following actions were taken:

Action determining method for Assignment

MOTION: Move to Adopt the volunteer method for assigning commissioners to draft the opinion and decision in the pending Rule 12 case of MDCR v. Studio 8 Hair Lab, LLC. On Motion duly made (Worthams) and supported (Roberson), the volunteer method for assigning Rule 12 Commissioners to draft the commission's decision and opinion was Adopted. Motion carried unanimously.

Action determining the Rule 12 Commissioners

MOTION: Move to Approve the appointment of Commissioner Elhasan and Commissioner Londo to draft the Commission's decision and opinion on the Studio 8 case.

On Motion duly made (Worthams) and supported (Roberson), Commissioner Elhasan and Commissioner Londo as drafters of the Commission's decision and opinion in the Studio 8 case is Approved. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

2025 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee chaired by Commissioner Elhasan and including Commissioner Roberson and Commissioner Worthams provided a brief report and announced the slate for the election of officers:

Office of Commission Chair: Commissioner Worthams
Office of Commission Vice Chair: Commissioner Londo
Office of Commission Secretary: Commissioner Lara

MOTION: Move to allow Chair Pro Tem to conduct the Election of Officers. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (Roberson) and supported (Worthams), the Motion was Approved. Motion carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: Move to close Nominations. On Motion duly made (Worthams) and supported (Roberson), Nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

Office of Commission Chair – the floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were received.

MOTION: Move to elect Commissioner Worthams to the Office of Commission Chair by acclamation. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Barker), Commissioner Worthams was elected to the Office of Commission Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

Office of Commission Vice Chair – the floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were received.

MOTION: Move to elect Commissioner Londo to the Office of Commission Vice Chair by acclamation. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (Elhasan) and supported (Roberson),

Commissioner Londo was elected to the Office of Commission Vice Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

Office of Commission Secretary – the floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were received.

MOTION: Move to elect Commissioner Lara to the Office of Commission Secretary. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (White) and supported (Elhasan), Commissioner Lara was elected to the Office of Commission Secretary by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Worthams assumed the chair.

COMMISSIONER CLOSING COMMENTS

Closing comments were provided by Chair Worthams: “Thank you Madam Chair, now Madam Secretary, and congratulations to my fellow officers. And congratulations once again to you Commissioner White for joining the Commission as well. Let me also say thank you not just to you Gloria, but to all the chairs who have preceded me. Having watched you serve in this position in the past, I am well aware of the responsibility that comes with this gavel. For those who don’t know me, I am a big fan of Marvel films and a common theme in those films is that ‘with great power comes great responsibility’. And while the power in that gavel is mainly to grab your attention, the real power which is shared with all of us not just on this Commission but with everybody in this room, is to give us the opportunity to serve the people throughout the state of Michigan, all the people throughout the state of Michigan. And so, in the spirit of something that Saint Paul has taught, he preached to all people, to Jews and Gentiles, to slaves, to free, to men, to women, to children, to everybody because we are all one body. And so, to that end, I see this term as an opportunity to mesh my experiences and my relationships that I have with the members of the legislature with the work that we do here. For years, frankly, in my opinion, both parties, Republicans and Democrats have struggled to empower this Commission and this Department to really live out its mission and the goals that are laid out for us in the Constitution. I hope that my time as Chair will be used to build a foundation that will allow future commissions, future chairs, future personnel of the Department and future directors to really fully engage successfully with our efforts to live out that mission and to make sure that the laws of the state of Michigan apply to all people who wish to call Michigan their home. And so, to not draw this out because I’ve been in those church sessions where the homily goes on for hours, no offense. But let me once again turn to Saint Paul who in the book of Galatians said if we live by the spirit, let us also walk by the spirit. Let us bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the laws of Christ and let us not grow weary in well-doing for in due season, we shall reap if we don’t lose heart. And as challenging as these times of 2025 may be, let us not lose heart for we know at least the eight people on this Commission ,and maybe even more who are in this room, we will bear our burdens together. With that, thank you for your faith

in me, thank you for your election and for your votes, and I look forward to serving you and serving with you. Thank you very much.”

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Worthams brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Adjourn. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (Lara) and supported (Roberson), there being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Worthams declared the meeting adjourned at 12:06 P.M. Motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission is scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2025 in Flint, and will convene at a time and location to be determined.

PROPOSED MINUTES TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE APRIL 28, 2025 MEETING.