



City of Albuquerque - Office of Civil Rights  
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## City of Albuquerque Human Rights Board Minutes

Date/Time: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 starting at 5:00 pm (MST)  
Location: Zoom  
Contact: Crystal Velarde, 505-768-4544

### **Board Members Present:**

Adrien Lawyer  
Denisha Pierre  
Beckham Rivera  
Leticia Trujillo  
Samia Assed

### **City Staff Present**

Bryan Rowland, Board Attorney  
Torri Jacobus, Managing Assistant City Attorney for Office of Civil Rights  
Michelle Melendez, Director of Office of Equity & Inclusion  
Crystal Velarde, Program Coordinator Office of Civil Rights  
Jordan Vargas, ADA Title II Coordinator

### **Board Members Not Present:**

Sradha Patel  
Joel Trujillo

#### **I. Call to Order**

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chair Lawyer at 5:08 pm.

#### **II. Introductions**

- a. Board members introduced themselves to the public.

#### **III. Approval of Agenda**

- a. Chair Lawyer called for approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved as presented.

#### **IV. Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2021**

- a. Chair Lawyer called for approval of the March 16, 2021 minutes. The minutes were approved as presented.

#### **V. Public Comment**

- a. There was no public comment at this time.

#### **VI. Acknowledgment of Derek Chauvin Verdict**

- a. The Board shared their thoughts and feeling on the guilty verdict for former officer Derek Chauvin. They all shared it is a step in the right direction and send their condolences, love, peace, and prayers to the family of George Floyd.

#### **VII. Director's Report**

- a. **Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI)**

- i. OEI is working with organizations like the Black New Mexico Movement and others. There is a huge outpouring of support for black lives.
  1. There was a White Lives Matter event. One person showed up and was cited for having a rifle.
- ii. OEI has hired Nichole Rogers as the African American Affairs Liaison. She is scheduled to start on Monday, April 26, 2021. There will also be a press release to introduce Ms. Rogers in her new role with the city. Ms. Rogers has already started working with community members to plan the Juneteenth events for this summer.
- iii. Councilor Sena hosted a rally for Anti-Hate against Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. There were over 150 people in attendance. Councilor Sena has also introduced legislation that denounces Anti-Asian and Pacific Islander hate crimes and calls on our city to do more. May is also Asian American Heritage Month.
- iv. The city's Emergency Operations Center will be working with the Department of Health (DOH). The DOH provided a mobile vaccination clinic for COVID vaccines. The Emergency Operations Center will assist in identifying locations to place the mobile clinic. The mobile clinic will be available for people who are unable to access the internet and register for their COVID vaccine. The mobile clinic is available for walk-ups from 12-7 pm. OEI is also assisting in language access and has translated outreach materials into Vietnamese, Swahili, Dari, and Arabic.
- v. OEI is currently looking to fill the Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Coordinator position. Ms. Melendez stated it was urgent to fill this position as the city is getting ready to start receiving asylum seekers from the southern border again. The Biden administration will be making emergency funds available to cities and nonprofits in assisting asylum seekers.
- vi. OEI applied for a \$4 million federal grant for COVID health literacy to fund eight community-based organizations and community clinics to provide health education in multiple languages.

**b. Office of Civil Rights (OCR)**

- i. A report was sent out prior to the meeting for the members to review. It included statistics for the period of March 13, 2021, to April 16, 2021, as well as events planned by the office.
- ii. OCR has handled 29 new matters since our last meeting. The types of discrimination are as follows:
  1. Public accommodation – 8 matters
  2. Employment – 5 matters
  3. Housing – 10 matters
  4. Other – 6 matters
- iii. OCR provided updates on 2 pending complaints and 1 planned complaint.
- iv. Outreach included:

1. 3/23/2021 – Panel discussion hosted by the NM Women’s March on the State of Black Women.
  2. 3/24/2021 – Presentation at UNM-SOL in the Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, and the Law seminar about intersectionality and effective LGBTQ+ civil rights advocacy
  3. 3/29/2021- Women’s History Month Panel (Women of Color: Redefining New Mexico) sponsored by OCR and the NM Black Lawyers Association.
  4. 3/29/2021 – Presentation/discussion with Indivisible Nob Hill
  5. 3/31/2021 – Presentation to West Mesa High School students with P. Haidle.
  6. 4/7/2021 – Lunch Dialogue with OEI on Government Action in Housing Discrimination/Segregation
  7. 4/9/2021 – Served on a panel discussion with OEI for the Hispano Chamber of Commerce.
  8. 4/12/2021 – Fair Housing Training sponsored by OCR and the NM Black Lawyers Association.
- v. Upcoming outreach:
1. TBD – CROWN Act discussion with the NMLGBTQ Bar Association.
- vi. OCR announcements:
1. The Governor signed both the House Bill and the Senate Bill regarding non-discrimination and fair housing.

### **VIII. Administrative Matters**

- a. Discussion regarding HRB staff and budget.
  - i. Members discussed having a staff member and a budget for the Board. Members also discussed providing a survey to the community. The survey would inform the Board on what the public would like them to work on. Once they have the survey results, they can determine if a staff member is needed or if they can accomplish the proposed goals on their own as a Board.
    1. Vice-Chair Rivera moved to approve a sub-committee to create the survey. The motion was seconded by Member Pierre. However, the motion was not voted on.
    2. Chair Lawyer moved to approve Members Assed, Pierre, and Trujillo as the sub-committee members. Vice-Chair Rivera seconded the motion. There was no objection and the motion passed unanimously.
    3. Member Trujillo moved to hold a special meeting on Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm. The motion was seconded by Chair Lawyer. There was no objection and the motion passed unanimously.
- b. Vote on Vice-Chair
  - i. Chair Lawyer moved to appoint Member Rivera as Vice-Chair. Member Pierre seconded the motion. Chair Lawyer called for a roll call vote.

Members Pierre, Assed, Trujillo, and Chair Lawyer all voted in favor. Vice-Chair Rivera abstained. The motion passed with a majority vote.

1. Vice-Chair Rivera was nominated at the previous meeting however, a formal vote was not done at that time.

**IX. Investigation Review & Determination in Matter Numbers 20-008 & 20-009**

- a. Chair Lawyer moved for the Board to enter executive session. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Rivera. There was no objection and the motion passed unanimously. Upon returning from the executive session Chair Lawyer informed the public the matters discussed were matter number 20-008 and matter number 20-009.
  - i. Chair Lawyer moved to hold over the vote on matter 20-008 till the next main (regular) meeting. Member Pierre seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.
  - ii. Chair Lawyer moved to accept the Office of Civil Rights findings of no probable cause on matter 20-009. Member Pierre seconded the motion. Chair Lawyer called for a roll call vote. Members Assed, Trujillo, Pierre, and Chair Lawyer voted in favor, and Vice-Chair Rivera abstained. With a majority vote, the motion was passed.

**X. Adjournment**

- a. Chair Lawyer adjourned the meeting at 6:14 pm.

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Adrien Lawyer, Chair

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Date