



City of Albuquerque - Office of Civil Rights  
1 Civic Plaza, Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone- 505-768-4595, TTY 711  
[civilrights@cabq.gov](mailto:civilrights@cabq.gov)

## **City of Albuquerque Human Rights Board Minutes**

Date/Time: Tuesday, March 16, 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

### **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  
Jazmin Irazoqui-Ruiz, Managing Assistant Attorney

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

Sradha Patel  
Samia Assed  
Joel Trujillo

- I. Call to Order**
  - a. The meeting was called to order by Chair Lawyer at approximately 5:01 pm.
- II. Introductions**
  - a. Board members introduced themselves to the public.
- III. Approval of Agenda**
  - a. Chair Lawyer called for any corrections to the agenda. There were no corrections. The agenda was approved as distributed.
- IV. Approval of Minutes from January 19, 2021**
  - a. Chair Lawyer called for any corrections to the January 19, 2021 minutes. There were no corrections. The minutes were approved as distributed.
- V. Public Comment**
  - a. There was no public comment.
- VI. Discussion/Q&A with ADA Coordinator Jordan Vargas**
  - a. Ms. Vargas presented on Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and existing facilities. She provided information on misconceptions of ADA building requirements and what providing access looks like. She also explained Safe Harbor and how it applies to older facilities. Ms. Vargas went on to explained if older

facilities make alterations, those alterations need to be compliant with the 2010 ADA standards.

- b. Ms. Vargas opened for questions where she addressed the difference between Title II and Title III, how often updates have been made to the ADA, the City of Albuquerque's plans to go through City owned buildings for compliance issues, and her discussions with City departments to make sure they are accessible.

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

### **a. 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 time period of January 16, 2021 to March 12, 2021 as well as events planned by the office.
- ii. OCR has handled 54 new matters since our last meeting and 69 different types of discrimination.
- iii. OCR provided updates on 3 pending complaints, 1 planned complaint and 2 completed complaint.
- iv. Outreach included:
  - 1. Presentations on Fair Housing, Racism & Anti-Racism, CROWN Act, and Voter Suppression.
- v. Upcoming Outreach
  - 1. March 23, 2021 -State of Black Women panel discussion hosted by the NM Women's March.
  - 2. March 24, 2021 - Presentation with Member Rivera to UNM-School of Law.
  - 3. March 29, 2021 – Women's History Month event – Panel featuring several local women leaders titled Women of Color: Redefining New Mexico.
  - 4. 4/7/2021 - Lunch Dialogue with OEI on Historical Housing Discrimination
  - 5. April 12, 2021 - Fair Housing webinar. To be free and open to the public.
- vi. OCR announcements:
  - 1. CROWN Act passed the House & Senate floors unanimously! With two bills pending they will need to be reconciled and that should take place this week.
  - 2. OCR and the Legal Department have started an Anti-Racism Book Club. The current book is So You Want to Talk About Race. It is important for the legal team to work through a race equity lens.
  - 3. The Domestic Violence Task Force has submitted recommendations to the Mayor.

### **b. Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI)**

- i. OEI received 38 qualified applicants for the African American Affairs Liaison position and are in the process of interviews.

- ii. OEI received a \$75,000 grant that will assist with a planning process to close the racial wealth gap.
- iii. Training city departments
  - 1. City Council passed a resolution about 6 months ago to allow one employee from each department to be appointed as the equity liaison. OEI will provide these employees with training so they can liaison to assist their departments in reevaluating their programs to make sure they are accessible to all.
  - 2. OEI has trained 1500 people on cultural competency, racial equity, and sensitivity trainings.
- iv. OEI also assisted in translating all City Wi-Fi posters and posters for free fares for students and seniors into five languages.
- v. Ms. Melendez also shared the City has twenty-five million dollars in rental assistance funding. The state has one hundred and sixty million, and the county has six million.

**VIII. Administrative Matters**

- a. Vote on Vice-Chair.
  - i. Nominations were Member Rivera and Member Pierre.
  - ii. Chair Lawyer called for a vote. All members present voted for Member Rivera to be appointment Vice-Chair.
- b. Discuss & Assign Members to Subcommittees
  - i. The members present were asked to brainstorm regarding what subcommittees they were interested in and what kind of work they wanted to do. Members present also discussed providing a survey for the public. Member Pierre and Member L. Trujillo will draft a questionnaire for the public and work with Ms. Jacobus to make it available to the public.
- c. Discussion regarding HRB staff and budget.
  - i. Item was tabled.

**IX. Adjournment**

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

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Adrien Lawyer, Chair

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Date