

City of Tampa
Human Rights Board
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021

The City of Tampa Human Rights Board held their first meeting of the year on January 13, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. at Lemon Street Municipal Office Building, 4900 W. Lemon Street, 1st floor, HCD Conference Room C, Tampa, Florida 33609.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Anthony Carswell Brian Frey Tomika Cole
John Perry Ashley Roberts

CITY OF TAMPA REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

Betina Baron Carl Brody Chris Calder
Naomi Candelaria Maurice Foster Kayon Henderson
Mindi Rainey

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

A. Carswell, the Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. Roll Call was conducted, with all board members in attendance.

INTRODUCTIONS

A. Roberts introduced Tony Skolarus, TPD Detective. Det. Skolarus will be in attendance in a security capacity for the duration of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman invited the Board members who were present to review the minutes from the December 9, 2020 board meeting. J. Perry made a **motion** to accept the meeting minutes, with one administrative correction on his first initial. The motion was **seconded**, and the **motion passed** unanimously.

REGULAR REPORTS

Supervisor's Report

Maurice Foster, Human Rights Investigator Supervisor, began by giving praise to Mindi Rainey and Betina Baron for their dedication and hard work this past year as the office has had staffing challenges due to the resignation of the Human Rights Supervisor and two investigators. Based on the commitment of these staff, practices, and performance of the Agency, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity,

recommends continued certification of the City Tampa Office of Human Rights as a substantially equivalent agency under the Fair Housing Act. HUD completed its Performance Assessment Review, with only one corrective action to take: lag time from confirming cause on cases, to taking the next action. M. Foster also stated that HUD desires the Human Rights Board to have representation from the disabled population. HUD is changing the way investigations are drafted, and M. Foster is drafting an SOP for the TOHR.

Additionally, M. Foster stated he would utilize this fiscal year administrative cost funds from HUD to make TOHR pandemic and disaster-ready. M. Foster indicated his priorities for this year are securing a case tracking system that interfaces with the Agency's website for citizens to file their inquiries/complaints online. M. Foster continued by stating he anticipated more complaints being filed once the eviction moratorium expires. M. Foster concluded by saying that the City Ordinance is ready for management review and comment. Upon full consideration and approval by the Board, we will take the necessary steps in obtaining City Council's approval in March.

A. Carswell asked if the board members could receive an advance copy to review. C. Brody advised the members that they are prohibited from discussing it amongst themselves before meeting if they receive an advance copy. M. Foster also asked that HUD receive an advance copy.

B. Frey made a **motion** for the board to receive an advance copy of the ordinance. The **motion** was seconded and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. A. Carswell thanked TPD for their assistance at the meeting and was satisfied with the security at LMOB.
2. A. Carswell asked about the legality of iPads being issued to board members to help discharge their duties. C. Brody replied that the Human Rights Board is considered a charitable organization. Therefore, the IRS has no problem with the board members being "gifted" iPads or tablets. However, the City of Tampa must approve, with the nature of the gifts explained, and approval by City Council. M. Foster mentioned the tablets or iPads connection to the City's server for internet purposes will have to be revisited once received.

NEW BUSINESS

1. B. Frey asked about the subpoena status regarding the *Toston* case heard in September. C. Brody stated that there are questions regarding the board's subpoena powers, and the City Attorney's office is investigating. B. Frey expressed concern with the timeliness of this issue. After discussion, A. Roberts motioned to review the *Toston* case again, without the subpoena records. **The motion** was seconded and passed unanimously. A. Carswell charged secretary C. Calder to circulate the case to the members before the next meeting.

2. M. Foster reiterated that there are currently two applicants for board membership, and the background investigations are still pending. M. Foster stressed the commitment needed to the applicants when he spoke with them.
3. A. Carswell asked the board if the by-laws should be amended to allow for more board members. C. Brody suggested that they get the Ordinance approved by City Council before moving on to board composition.
4. T. Cole asked about the status of the Title VII training. C. Calder was tasked with sending out an email with the training from EEO.

NEXT MEETING

The next board meeting will be on Wednesday, February 10, with the time and place **To Be Determined**.

ADJOURNMENT

B. Frey made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting and **seconded, passed** unanimously. The meeting ended at 10:10 a.m.