Prince George's County
Human Rights Commission

Monday October 26, 2026
Zoom Meeting of the
Prince George's County
Human Rights Commission

Attendees:

Commissioners:

Joseph Reed, Chair
Keith Adams, Vice-Chair
Shonda Harmon, Secretary
Traci Birckhead
Turkessa Brown, absent
Caren Gillison
Erica Jenkins
Sylvia Johnson
Erin Kabba
Regina Truesdale
Ademola Oduyebo
Kayon Williams

Staff:

Jose Villegas
Executive Director

Azeem Lyons, Clerk
to the Commission

Guests:

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Secretary Harmon conducted the roll call for the Commission Meeting. The Chair announced that a quorum was present for the meeting.

2. Adopt Agenda – The Chair called for a review of the agenda. The agenda was approved as distributed.

3. Approval of Minutes of September 28, 2026, Commission meeting. The Chair called for a review of the minutes. The minutes were adopted as distributed with one correction.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Reed provided a brief report and reminded commissioners that early voting began on October 22nd and would continue through October 29th. Voting hours are 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Chair Reed encouraged commissioners to share this information with their friends, families, and professional networks to promote voter participation. Chair Reed also advised residents that they could locate early voting sites by searching for Maryland early voting locations online and entering their home address to identify nearby polling locations and voting hours.

Chair Reed acknowledged the Civil Rights Conference held on October 6th. Although he was unable to attend due to an unexpected work commitment, he expressed that the conference is consistently informative and valuable. He invited commissioners who attended to share their experiences and key takeaways. Vice Chair Keith Adams described the conference as informative and enjoyable. He appreciated the opportunity to meet fellow commissioners in person and noted that many attendees represented commissions from Anne Arundel and Baltimore Counties. Commissioner Erin Kabba also described the conference as a positive experience. She appreciated meeting fellow commissioners, including Vice Chair Adams, and expressed interest in attending future conferences. Commissioner Caren Gillison stated that the conference provided valuable insight into how other local human rights commissions operate. She appreciated learning about the different structures, responsibilities, and levels of community involvement among neighboring jurisdictions. She noted that some commissions have primarily administrative responsibilities, while others are more actively engaged in community initiatives and advocacy, including LGBTQ+ issues and programs recognizing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She viewed the conference as an excellent opportunity to gather ideas that could help strengthen the Commission's local engagement and activities. Chair Reed thanked the commissioners for attending and representing Prince George's County. He expressed appreciation for their participation and concluded his report

5. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director Villegas thanked the Chair and Commissioners for their time, volunteer service, and commitment to representing the residents of Prince George's County. Executive Director Villegas reported that the office participated in several community outreach activities during the past month, including the Greenbelt Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration and the American Indian Festival, where staff provided information about the Commission and its services. The office also participated in a Delta Sigma Theta Sorority event at Laurel High School, where staff hosted an informational resource table. He reported that the Youth Leadership Academy began its fall session on October 7th. The four-week program consists of weekly sessions addressing misinformation, human trafficking, social justice, and leadership development. The program also includes an interactive social justice activity and a partnership with a nonprofit organization to facilitate

leadership discussions.

Additional outreach activities included a Lunch and Learn program in partnership with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System and the monthly book group discussion, *Sorority Stories*, held at the Brentwood location. Executive Director Villegas highlighted the Women in Faith virtual event, titled *Diverse Voices in Cultivating Hope*. The event featured four community members representing different faith backgrounds, including former Commissioner Janelle Johnson as a panelist. Approximately 100 people participated in the live event, and the recording received more than 1,000 YouTube views within two days. Executive Director Villegas offered to share the recording link with commissioners.

Executive Director Villegas thanked the commissioners who attended the Maryland Civil Rights Conference and noted that the conference was informative for both commissioners and investigative staff. He discussed the unique structure and authority of the Prince George's County Human Rights Commission compared with other commissions throughout Maryland. He explained that the Commission has quasi-judicial authority, including the ability to conduct public hearings. He contrasted this structure with Howard County, which has several specialized commissions addressing specific human rights issues.

Regarding agency operations, Executive Director Villegas reported that the agency has begun preparing its upcoming fiscal year budget. He and the Deputy Director have started the budget development process and acknowledged the County's projected $157 million budget deficit. He noted that the agency has been asked to accomplish more with fewer resources. Executive Director Villegas also reported that the office is developing written Standard Operating Procedures for the Investigation Division to document and standardize investigative processes and responsibilities. He further advised that the agency is in the process of hiring an additional investigator following the departure of one staff member the previous month. The agency received approval to fill the vacant position, and the hiring process is expected to be completed in the coming month.

6. CASES SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING –

OHR Case No.: OHR24-0806
EEOC Case No.: 531-2024-02348
Heather Curran v. Brentwood Animal Hospital
Investigator Tiffany Isom
Panel Members: Vice Chair Adams as Panel Chair, Commissioner Birckhead, Commissioner Truesdale; Commissioner Kabba as alternate.
The Public Hearing in this matter is scheduled for November 16, November 19, and November 20, 2026.

OHR Case No.: OHR25-0801
Tuan Evans, Sr. v. ZPM Management d/b/a The District at Forestville
Investigator Charles Floyd

Panel Members: Commissioner Jenkins as Panel Chair, Commissioner Kabba, Commissioner Harmon; Commissioner Williams as alternate.
The Public Hearing in this matter is scheduled for December 1, December 2, and December 7, 2026.

7. **ATTENDANCE RECORD** – Attached

8. **NEW BUSINESS** – None

9. **OLD BUSINESS** - None

10. **ANNOUNCEMENTS –** The next commission meeting will be held on November 23, 2026.

11. **CLOSED SESSION-** Motion to move to Closed session by Commissioner Jenkins and seconded by Secretary Vice Chair Adams at 5:45pm

Results of the closed session

As it relates to case OHR charge number OHR26-0207, the Commission voted unanimously uphold the action of the Executive Director, and that the case shall stand dismissed.

12. **ADJOURNMENT-** Motion by Commissioner Birckhead and seconded by Commissioner Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 6:00pm

Shonda W. Harmon, MBA, MPA

Shonda W. Harmon
Commission Secretary