

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, October 27, 2025 ~ 11:00 A.M.

Great Lakes Center for the Arts, Community Engagement Room
800 Bay Harbor Drive, Petoskey, MI 49770

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.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair David Worthams
Vice Chair Luke Londo
Secretary Gloria Lara
Commissioner Rosann Barker
Commissioner Zenna Elhasan
Commissioner Regina Gasco
Commissioner Portia Roberson
Commissioner Richard R. White, III

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was called to order by Chair Worthams at 11:00 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 Lara, Commissioner Londo, Commissioner Roberson, Commissioner White, Commissioner Worthams. With all Commissioners present, quorum requirements were met.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Chair Worthams brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Approve the Meeting Agenda. Following discussion, on Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Elhasan), the Meeting Agenda was Approved. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

OPENING MATTERS

WELCOME

Chair Worthams 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 OCTOBER

Chair Worthams recognized significant observances for the month of October, including: National Hispanic Heritage Month, National Disability Employment Awareness Month, National Bullying Prevention Month, Global Diversity Awareness Month, LGBTQ+ History Month, October 6, Fannie Lou Hamer's Birthday on October 6th, National Indigenous People's Day on October 13th (second Monday of October, in lieu of Columbus Day), and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17th.

PUBLIC COMMENT PROTOCOL (VIRTUAL)

Attorney Kimberly Woolridge, MDCR 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 Worthams brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Adopt the Consent Agenda as submitted. There was no discussion or amendment. On Motion duly made (Elhasan) and supported (Lara), the Consent Agenda was Adopted. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 23, 2025 MEETING

Chair Worthams brought the following Motion:

MOTION: Move to Approve the July 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes as submitted. There was no discussion or revision. On Motion duly made (Roberson) and supported (White), the Minutes from the July 23, 2025 Commission Meeting were Approved. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Janel Frost, Elmira, MI – Ms. Frost serves as the Director of Michigan Hands and Voices. Ms. Frost brought concerns regarding discrimination against Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in the state of Michigan who are being denied the individual right to choose American Sign Language (ASL) as their language in school. The Michigan Department of Education often times does not understand these issues, there is no resolve, and the students end up falling behind. Ms. Frost is requesting that something be done to address this issue.

Kathy Andres, Lansing, MI – Ms. Andres submitted written public comment via MDCR-INFO@michigan.gov on October 22, 2025 requesting that the Commission review how systemic ADA complaints are handled once a complainant provides written and verbal notices of their systemic nature. Ms. Andres indicated that current practices can cause complainants to suffer retaliation, delays, and financial harm; recommended that more protections are needed.

DIVISION AND OTHER REPORTS

A. Executive Director Report, Attorney 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 July to October 2025, including personnel and budget updates, legislative updates, and department initiatives. Director Johnson was the recipient of IAOHRA's (International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies) 2025 Arthur L. Green Civil and Human Rights Award, presented at the IAOHRA Conference in Anchorage, Alaska. 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 July to October 2025 and provided updates on the comprehensive review of and amendment to internal processes of the department and commission. This report also serves as the Standing Committee on Rules report. No action was taken.

C. Presentation: Development, Innovation and Access (DIA) Division, Alfredo Hernandez Corsen, Division Director (VIRTUAL)

Alfredo Hernandez Corsen serves as Division Director of the Department's Development, Innovation and Access (DIA) Division. Mr. Corsen provided a full written report to the Commission on the activity of the DIA Division, and indicated status updates on the Native American Boarding School Study and Report, an update on the Language Access Plan, and updates on trainings. No action was taken.

D. Attorney General Report, AAG Kimberly K. Pendrick – First Assistant, Civil Rights & Elections Division, Michigan Department of Attorney General

Attorney Pendrick serves as First Assistant for the Civil Rights & Elections Division of the Attorney General's Office. Ms. Pendrick 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 July 23, 2025 Commission meeting. No action was taken.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Chair's Report, David Worthams

Chair Worthams provided the following report:

"Since our last meeting, I was proud to participate in the Michigan Response to Hate (MIR2H) Conference. I also gave a presentation on the history and mission of the Civil Rights Commission and the Department at

a meeting of the Race Matters project at St. Thomas More Catholic parish in Kalamazoo. I also finalized and executed the necessary paperwork for Director Johnson's renewed appointment. On top of all of that, I supported Director Johnson and Legislative Liaison Annie Urasky's efforts to restore proposed cuts to the Department's budget.

Later this week I will attend an ALPACT event in Grand Rapids on Artificial Intelligence.”

B. Committee Updates

Standing Committee on Executive Director Assessment, David Worthams, Committee Chair

Report was waived. No action was taken.

Standing Committee on Rules, Zenna Elhasan, Committee Chair

Report was waived, information covered during Attorney Satchel's General Counsel Report. No action was taken.

Standing Committee on Budget and Policy, Portia Roberson, Committee Chair

Committee Chair Roberson indicated that the Committee continues to monitor MDCR's status regarding the budget, and the significant budget cuts that were proposed were averted. Details were covered in Director Johnson's report. No action was taken.

Commission Priority on DEI with emphasis on AI Discrimination, Luke Londo, Committee Chair

Committee Chair Londo indicated that the Division Presentation given by Alfredo Hernandez Corsen also serves as this Committee's report; Committee Chair Londo recommended that the Commission consider rolling this committee into one of the other standing committees, ideally the Standing Committee on Budget and Policy for DEI-specific recommendations. No action was taken.

C. 2026 Commission Meeting Schedule and Locations

Chair Worthams provided the following slate of dates for the 2026 Commission Meeting Schedule: January 26, April 27, July 27, October 26. There was no discussion or amendment.

MOTION: Move to Adopt the 2026 Commission Meeting Schedule for the dates of January 26, April 27, July 27, October 26. On Motion duly made (Lara) and supported (Gasco), the 2026 Commission Meeting Schedule was Adopted. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

Chair Worthams opened a discussion on the location of meetings for the 2026 Commission Meeting Schedule. The following locations were determined: January 26th – Detroit; April 27th – Muskegon; October 26th – Mount Pleasant. The July 27th location was not yet determined; the following locations were suggested: Petoskey, Houghton, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Flint.

MOTION: Move to determine the location of the July 27, 2026 Commission Meeting at the January 26, 2026 meeting. On Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Lara), the location of the July 27, 2026 Commission Meeting will be determined at the next Commission meeting. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

D. Nominating Committee for 2026 Election of Officers

Chair Worthams requested volunteers for the Nominating Committee to determine the slate for 2026 Election of Officers. After receiving volunteers and without objection, Chair Worthams made the following appointments:

- Commissioner Elhasan (Chair)
- Commissioner Barker
- Commissioner Roberson

NEW BUSINESS

A. Rule 12 Case – MDCR v. Jeffery Cornock, Cornock Rental Properties

Attorney Satchel provided information on the Rule 12 Case, MDCR v. Jeffery Cornock, Cornock Rental Properties; the Commission must select a Commissioner(s) to draft the final opinion on this matter; the assignment method was determined as volunteer to serve as Lead Commissioner.

Commissioner Barker volunteered and will serve as Lead Commissioner.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank Ettawageshik, Harbor Springs, MI – Mr. Ettawageshik serves as the Executive Director of the United Tribes of Michigan. Mr. Ettawageshik indicated that a new Tribal legislative liaison position has been created and filled, and will address some of the issues mentioned during the meeting regarding lack of information in the appropriations process with regards to the Native American Boarding School Study; also discussed potential accountability issues with AI (Artificial Intelligence) when errors occur.

COMMISSIONER CLOSING COMMENTS

Commissioner Gasco thanked the Commission for convening this meeting in her hometown of Petoskey, homeland of the Odawa Nation.

Chair Worthams provided the following closing comments:

“Several months after we came out of COVID, on a Thursday afternoon, I took a call from my good friend Erin Knott. Despite our different political backgrounds, we were connected by a common sense of compassion for all Michiganders — especially those who are members of the LBGTQ community — hence our work together for Equality Michigan. On that Thursday, she asked me if I would consider serving on the Civil Rights Commission. After letting her know that, if asked, I would seriously consider serving, the Governor’s appointments director called to confirm the crazy idea. In April 2021 I was honored to be sworn in by Commissioner Roberson.

Over the course of these last four years, I was honored to be able to use my connections with various members of the State Legislature to improve the perception they had of the Department and this Commission. Through crafting a response to the Auditor General’s report on our backlog of cases, to the implementation of the Director’s Proposal for Change, to surviving the latest push by some state leaders to make massive cuts that would seriously undermine our work to protect civil rights in the state, I feel proud to have been here during some interesting times.

It’s hard to believe how fast time flies and has brought me to my final regular Commission meeting. I’ve shared this news with some but want to inform all of you that I have decided not to pursue reappointment for another term.

I want to thank Governor Whitmer for her trust in me and for the honor of appointing me to the Commission. I wish to thank Director Johnson and his entire team for all your hard work and, more importantly, for your true dedication to carrying out the mission of the Commission. I especially want to thank General Counsel Lamont Satchel for walking us through several important projects and actions that we’ve needed to undertake to improve our operations. Thank you, Marcelina Trevino, Tony Lewis, Alfredo Hernandez, Kimberly Woolridge, and Abdel Aly for everything you’ve done to keep the Commission informed and given the best information we need to make decisions. I especially want to thank Harold Core, Vicki Livengood, Shawn Sanford, and Annie Urasky who have given me so much support during my time as Chair and making me look and sound so much smarter and capable than I actually am.

Lastly, I want to thank all my fellow Commissioners, both past and present, for your willingness to not just serve but to truly lead the efforts to protect the vital rights of all the people who call Michigan their home.

Part of my message I gave to the folks at St. Thomas More Catholic parish earlier this month, like the message I shared at the MI Response To Hate Conference (MIR2H) was the importance of being a light for others in a challenging world. We

know the arc of history trends towards justice, albeit it's not always a consistent line – but because of your courage to serve, to speak up, to lead, the people on this Commission and those who serve in the Department are those who will overcome any obstacle and will build a community of supporters and allies and will spread light on the pathway that people need to find a way to a future of peace and hope and love for all.

Thank you for the honor of serving as your Chair this year. May God always bless and keep you and may God bless the state of Michigan.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Move to Adjourn the meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. There was no discussion. On Motion duly made (Londo) and supported (Elhasan), the meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was Adjourned. There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Worthams declared the meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

The next meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission is scheduled for Monday, January 26, 2026 in Detroit, and will convene at a time and location to be determined.

MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED AT THE JANUARY 26, 2026 MEETING.