



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

## Meeting Minutes

### EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION

**TONY SNELL RODRIGUEZ, CHAIR**  
**NATHAN GUEQUIERRE, VICE-CHAIR**  
*Jacqueline Cook, William Crowley, Jessica Boling, Paul  
Smith, Elle Halo and Alexandria Staubach*

**Staffing: Omar Barberena**

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Wednesday, November 19, 2025

4:00 PM

City Hall - Room 301-A

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#### 1. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order at 4:03pm*

#### 2. Roll Call

**Present** 10 - VACANCY, VACANCY, Snell Rodriguez, Guequierre, Crowley, Boling, Cook, Smith, Halo and Staubach

#### 3. Approval of October Meeting Minutes

*The minutes from the October 2024 meeting were approved without objection*

#### 4. Welcome Remarks from Chair

*Chair Tony Snell Rodriguez opened the hearing, recognizing Native American and Alaska Native Heritage Month, Transgender Awareness Week, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the upcoming Transgender Day of Remembrance. He framed the conversation around the city's commitment to inclusion, equity, and safety for the transgender community*

#### 5. Communication from Richie T Martin Jr. - Exec. Dir., LGBTQ Community Center

*Richie T. Martin, Jr., Executive Director, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center*

- *Provided context on a July 28, 2024, assault of a 17-year-old transgender student on MCTS Route 18.*
- *Honored the six Black and Brown transgender women killed in Milwaukee in the last four years: Brazil Johnson, Diedrick "Toy" Davis, Regina "Maya" Allen, Cachet Henderson, Chanell Law, and Amari Dior.*
- *Cited systemic issues: harassment in public spaces, gaps in victim support, and inconsistent inter-agency follow-up.*
- *Proposed Action Items:*
  1. *Immediate Coordination: A single, published point of contact for victims with a*

24-hour callback standard.

2. *Visible Safety: Deploy roving security or ambassadors on high-risk transit routes like Route 18.*

3. *Fast Evidence Transfer: Mandate a 24-hour clock for transferring bus video and logs from MCTS to MPD.*

4. *Temporary Transportation: Provide short-term transportation alternatives for victims during active investigations.*

5. *Data Transparency: Create a public dashboard for youth-involved incidents and hold quarterly safety huddles.*

• *Long-Term Recommendation: Formally establish a City of Milwaukee LGBTQIA+ Public Safety and Equity Task Force to review ordinances, policies, and create a coordinated response protocol.*

## 6. Public Comments

### 1) Families of Victims

#### 2) Micah Oge

#### 3) Diane Gregory

#### 4) Michail Takach

#### 5) Yante Turner

*Gina Dandro, Parent of Assaulted Youth*

- *Shared her family's experience navigating systems after the July 28th assault.*
- *Reported difficulties in communication with MPD and MCTS, including unreturned voicemails and a lack of a single point of contact.*
- *Expressed fear for her son's safety as he is required to use the same bus route to get to school.*
- *Stated that requests for transportation assistance or a supplemental police report have gone unfulfilled.*
- *Appealed for systemic change, including safer transportation options for students.*

*Micah OJ, Community Leader & Former Corporate Executive*

- *Stressed the need for accountability across government and business sectors.*
- *Highlighted systemic barriers to stability for LGBTQ+ individuals, including homelessness, housing insecurity, and underrepresentation in leadership.*
- *Urged the Commission to prioritize collaboration over "politics, credit-seeking, or performative gestures."*
- *Called for investment in people and solutions that protect the most vulnerable.*

*Yanté Turner, Youth Programs Director & Community Organizer*

- *Submitted 22 written testimonies from the community.*
- *Demanded accountability from MPD regarding the unsolved murders of Brazil Johnson and Diedrick Cross.*
- *Critiqued the over-reliance on carceral systems and advocated for investment in non-police crisis response, restorative justice, and community-based resources like social workers and therapists in schools.*
- *Called for a fully funded, trans-led task force and targeted support in workforce development and housing.*

*Brad Schlaikowski, Executive Director & Co-Founder, Courage MKE*

- *Spoke from the perspective of operating Wisconsin's only licensed group home for LGBTQ+ youth.*
- *Stated that up to 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+, often due to family rejection.*
- *Highlighted failures in the foster care system and within Milwaukee Public Schools to protect and affirm transgender youth.*

- *Advocated for stronger protections, investment in trauma-informed care, and better data collection on the queer population.*
  - *Announced: Courage MKE has not called police in over four years, using its own crisis stabilization team instead, saving the city an estimated \$300,000.*
- Nasir Malave, 17-year-old Student, South Division High School*
- *Provided a youth perspective on the pervasive issues of violence, segregation, and lack of safety in the city.*
  - *Emphasized community responsibility and the need for collective action.*
  - *Urged leaders to help youth "stick together" and break cycles of violence.*

**7. Commissioners' Comments**

*Mary Reed, Office of Equity & Inclusion: Committed to internal coordination and meetings to address the issues raised, focusing on collaboration between existing city services.*

*MPD Chief of Staff:*

- o *Acknowledged communication failures and a lack of consistent victim outreach.*
- o *Announced the creation of two new Victim Specialist positions to serve as points of contact.*
- o *Noted the department has 6 LGBTQ Liaisons and is posting to recruit more, aiming for trans representation.*
- o *Committed to following up on the specific cases of Brazil Johnson, Diedrick Cross, and Amari Dior, and to providing Gina Dandro with the supplemental police report.*
- o *Agreed to facilitate a meeting between Commissioner Halo and the Homicide Division regarding the Amari Dior case.*

*Chair's Action & Next Steps*

- o *Chari Tony Snell Rodriguez, with no objection from the Commission, authorized the creation of an ad hoc LGBTQ Committee. The committee's charter will be drafted by the end of the year, with the goal of forming a broader advisory body to develop policy recommendations and implementation strategies. Commissioner Halo will provide guidance in its formation.*

**8. Omar Barberena - Equal Rights Specialist**

- **International Human Rights Day Planning Committee Updates**
- **Volunteer Request for Event**
- **Complaints Calls and Walk-ins**

**Ramona Ramos - Equal Rights Complaints Liaison**

- **Online Complaint System Update**
- **Events**

*Omar Barberena: Announced the upcoming International Human Rights Day event on December 6, 2024. Noted that discrimination complaint forms are now available online.*  
*Ramona Ramos: Reported that a new case management system is in the pilot phase with the city's IT department to process complaints more efficiently.*

**9. Communication from Committees**

- **Governance Committee**
  - a. **New Recruitment Update**
  - b. **Resignation and Recognition of Commissioner Rae Johnson**

*No current updates at this time*

**10. Community Announcements**

*Commissioner Paul Smith (Remote): Announced upcoming events for Native American Heritage Month*

**11. Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM*