

Berea Human Rights Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: July 22, 2026

Location: 3rd Floor Conference Room, Berea City Hall

I. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 6:17 p.m. by Chair, Felecia Ballard.
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II. Roll Call

Present:

- Felecia Ballard
- Mim Pride
- Susie Harris
- Heather Johnson

Absent:

- Doug Martin
- Sharyn Mitchell

Welcome Visitors:

- None
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III. Approval of Agenda

- **July 22, 2026 Agenda** was sent out to the Commission prior to the meeting.
 - Motion: Mim Pride moved to approve agenda. Motion seconded by Susie Harris. Motion Carried.
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IV. Approval of Minutes

- **June 24, 2026 Minutes** were reviewed at the meeting. Felecia Ballard noted corrections needing to be made in two instances of her name needing to be changed to Susie Harris.
 - Motion: Mim Pride moved to approve Minutes after corrections. Motion seconded by Susie Harris. Motion Carried.

V. Treasurer's Report

- Heather Johnson presented the report.
 - Prior fiscal year ended with \$899 balance.
 - Current fiscal year started at \$4,200; \$250 purchase by Susie charged to this year; current balance \$3,939.78.
 - Berea AMP's invoice and W-9 (with name change) submitted to the City before June 30 deadline.
 - Motion: Mim Pride moved to approve the report. Motion seconded by Susie Harris. Motion Carried.
 - Donation issue: Madison County Historical Society check made to "Berea Human Rights Commission" cannot be cashed; future donations must be made payable to "City of Berea" with "Human Rights Commission" in memo. Sharon will return check.
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VI. Unfinished Business

- **2025 Annual Report**
 - Sharyn Mitchell is finalizing.
 - The target submission to Mayor Fraley is end of August 2026
 - A presentation to City Council may be requested afterward.
- **2026 KY Civil Rights Hall of Fame Award**
 - The nomination for Rev Kent Gilbert was submitted by original deadline; however, the deadline was extended to July 2026.
- **John G. Fee Award**
Dr. Janice Blythe Youth Award
 - Announce award recipients in November 2026; make nominations submissions deadline October 20, 2026 to allow October review before November council meetings.
 - The press release package was accepted unanimously, but add BHRC logo.
 - Distribution channels:
 - Primary: schools by second week of September.
 - Additional possibilities: youth organizations (Key Club, Scouts Masters), Berea College CELTS program, Edge online newspaper (broad reach), BHRC's Facebook page.
 - Avoid churches due to separation of church and state.
 - Logistics:
 - Request city (Robin) to make copies; if not feasible, use library for cost-effective quality printing.
 - Schedule a workday to prepare physical mailings; send packets mid-September 2026.

- **Community Awareness Events**

- Event confirmed September 12, in the Pinnacle Room at the Tolle Building Event Center; venue free; capacity up to 80.
- Time block 2:00–6:00 PM for setup/cleanup; event likely 2:00–4:00 PM, final times pending speaker confirmations.
- Speakers:
 - Central Bank confirmed: Christy Napier said to reach out to Jean Haynes.
 - Outreach planned to the police department and Craig Loftis's insurance agency; each speaker ~20 minutes plus 10 minutes Q&A.
 - Three presenters should suffice.
- Promotion:
 - Create flyer; submit to tourism event calendar.
 - Outreach to Senior Center and Housing Authority.
 - Publicity to start week of August 24 (three weeks before event).
- Partners:
 - Current partner is JAG, but we should also reach out to Berea Home Village and Berea Housing Authority.
- Refreshments:
 - Request water from Craig Loftis's insurance company.
 - Sign up for free drinks from Ale 8.
 - Purchase chips or cookies from group budget.
- Notify Juan Pena.

- **Discrimination Review Request**

- Toplessness Ordinance Complaint:
 - Review by Felecia Ballard and Sean Sandlin found no such ordinance.
 - Commission discussed the likeliness of it being a form letter intended to be provocative.
 - Response should be polite, factual, and non-escalatory.
 - Felecia Ballard will send response to complainant.
- Pool-related Discrimination Complaint:
 - Initially went to Zinnia Hensley at Berea Police Department.
 - Parks and Recreation contacted complainant, who it seemed did not want further action.
 - Need to clarify the intended recipient (Human Rights Commission vs. City of Berea) before responding due to unclear communication lines.
- Plan a special meeting with Zinnia, the Mayor or Sean Sandlin, Daniel Brindley, and stakeholders to define:
 - How individuals contact HRC.
 - Where messages are received.
 - How complaints are forwarded (including to Frankfort when appropriate).

- We need to anticipate the possibility of increased complaints with “Festival City” initiatives.
 - “Festival city” concept presented by Sean Sandlin raises concerns about infrastructure, crime, and human trafficking risks.
 - Recognize the need for robust complaint processes.
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VII. New Business

- **Webpage**
 - Daniel Brindley announced the City’s website is going live:
 - Initially provided brief HRC paragraph and old brochures.
 - Desire for clearer, original content; better organization (folders for past meetings and awards) and logo placement.
 - Plan to monitor launch, gather ideas, and work with Daniel on improvements; review other HRC sites (e.g., Richmond) as models.
 - Form a small group to define content and structure post-launch.
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VIII. Announcements

- **Achievers Program Updates and Room Assignment**
 - Program to meet at Berea College, Hutchins Library.
 - Kickoff August 22 at 10:00 AM; provost providing lunch.
 - New initiative: “College Looks Like Me,” spring trip to Obama Library (Chicago), youth-focused “Entrepreneurship and Creative Youth Festival” led by business mindset and art/media/entertainment clusters.
 - Year theme: “Excellence” with focus on durable skills; seniors may now join with modified scholarship amounts.
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IX. Comments

- **Equipment and Materials for Events**
 - Acquired tent with wheels and backdrop, six-foot table, Brother printer; items chosen with input from Sharyn.
 - Plan to label equipment with a label maker; consider secure storage in third-floor closet.
 - Bring a ream of paper; set up and test equipment at next meeting.
- **Community Engagement and Upcoming Events**
 - Continue inviting agencies to attend meetings; consider guest for October meeting.
 - Spoonbread Festival-likely too late to join.

- Explore participating in the Christmas Parade (e.g., trailer or side-by-side with lights).
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IX. Adjournment

- Motion: Susie Harris moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Mim Pride. Motion Carried.
 - Meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.
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Approved by: Felecia J. Ballard
Felecia Ballard, BHRC Chair

Prepared by: Heather Johnson
Heather Johnson, BHRC Secretary/Treasurer