

Berea Human Rights Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Location: Berea City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room

Date: Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Time: 6:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Mim Pride, Susie Harris, Doug Martin, Heather Johnson, Felecia Ballard, Sharyn Mitchell

Absent: Janel Lakes Davenport

Introduction of new Commissioner, Doug Martin

III. Welcome to Guest: Ali Blair from First Friday

IV. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mim Pride and seconded by Felecia Ballard. The motion passed.

V. Treasurer's Report

The report was submitted by Treasurer Janel Lakes Davenport via email to the Commission before the meeting. A motion was made by Mim Pride and seconded by Susie Harris to approve. The motion passed.

VI. New Business

The Commission agreed to change the agenda order for one item of New Business and proceed with discussing Juneteenth due to guest Ali Blair not needing to stay for the entire meeting.

Juneteenth:

Discussion of the 2025 event: First Christian Church wrote a check to the BHRC (Berea Human Rights Commission) that was never cashed and was subsequently voided. Need to research the rules that govern BHRC accepting funds. Overall, the Commission was pleased with the event and would like to replicate some aspects, including having many organizations set up info tables.

Ali Blair presented:

If First Friday (now legally called Amp Berea) were to facilitate, it would be folded into their summer concert series.

Venue/Dates: The Pavilion is not the optimal choice due to the concrete, parking, and noise. Discussion ensued, and venues/dates were ranked in order of preference:

1. Lawn in front of Berea Community School - ample parking, grassy areas, accessible, highly visible. Applications for use are made through the School Board
2. Berea Skate Park - infrastructure is there, parking, accessibility, not very visible
3. Pavilion - will suffice if preferred choices are unavailable
4. Dates: prefer 06/14, with 06/13 as backup due to the City of Richmond's Juneteenth events on 06/19 and 06/20.

Ali Blair suggested making Amp Berea the producer of the event. They would facilitate securing bands and venues, and all funds would flow through them. This would include any additional, outside grants to pay for expenses, if needed.

Ali Blair then mentioned some acts she thought would be a great fit for the event, and Felecia mentioned some local acts as well.

Motion was made by Mim Pride to have Amp Berea produce the Juneteenth 2026 event. Motion was seconded by Felecia Ballard. Motion carried.

VII. Unfinished Business

Abolish Slavery Resolution:

Heather Johnson wrote a draft resolution that was submitted to the Commission via email before the meeting. The Commission discussed whether the Resolution was necessary in light of HB 112, currently moving through the Kentucky State Assembly, which essentially strikes the slavery exception clause from the Kentucky State Constitution. Mim Pride stated she is not very confident the bill will pass. After further discussion, the Commission decided to proceed with Berea's own Resolution, and Commissioners will forward any edits to Heather Johnson.

Conference Room & File Storage:

Commissioners discussed that files need to be moved from their various locations to the new storage area off the 3rd Floor Conference Room. Files will be secured by locked cabinets. Doug Martin mentioned Madison Southern always has students needing volunteer hours if we require assistance. Will schedule work sessions.

Website:

Sharyn Mitchell discussed how the City is redoing the whole site. We just need to ensure our reports and minutes are open to the public and easily accessible. Further, the Commission discussed the possibility of a new logo for the BHRC.

VIII: New Business (Continued)

Correspondence:

Sharyn Mitchell has the letters from Mayor Bruce Fraley appointing Heather Johnson and Doug Martin to the Commission. She will forward them to the Secretary, Heather Johnson, to file. We need to order a name badge for Doug Martin.

2026 Budget:

Commissioners discussed if/when we had to file an annual budget report. Mim Pride said our funding comes from the Mayor's Discretionary Funds.

Calendar for 2026:

Juneteenth: Already addressed

BHRC Meeting Schedule Adjustments: The Commission decided to keep the existing meeting schedule - the 4th Wednesday of every month, 6 pm, in the 3rd Floor Conference Room. Sharyn Mitchell informed everyone that Shawn Sandlin stated City of Berea meetings could not be conducted remotely. Sharyn Mitchell researched, and KRS states that we can. She is waiting to hear back from the City.

KHRC Workshops: Tabled

Election of Officers:

Motion made by Mim Pride to elect Felecia Ballard as Chair. Motion is seconded by Susie Harris. Motion carries.

Motion made by Mim Pride to elect Heather Johnson as Secretary and Janel Lakes Davenport as Treasurer. Motion is seconded by Felecia Ballard. Motion carries.

Motion made by Felecia Ballard to elect Susie Harris as Vice Chair. Motion is seconded by Mim Pride. Motion carries.

Berea Human Rights Commission Officers for 2026:

Chair: Felecia Ballard

Vice Chair: Susie Harris

Treasurer: Janel Lakes Davenport

Secretary: Heather Johnson

Announcements:

There were no announcements.

Commissioner Comments:

Mim Pride explained that since COVID, all telephone calls regarding human rights issues/complaints are routed through Zinnia Hensley, City of Berea Community Resource Coordinator, who is housed at the Berea Police Dept. We should explore if that is the best practice, or does it deter people from contacting the BHRC.

Sharyn Mitchell further stated the Commission needs to work on the 2025 Annual Report and urged us to think about what we want to accomplish as a body.

The Commissioners then discussed possibilities. Mim Pride will contact Katie Heckman, Director of Berea Home Village, to collaborate on a Proclamation for Older Americans Month, which is May. Felecia Ballard proposed conducting an Identity Theft workshop/symposium, possibly in April. The Commission also discussed working more closely with Berea College as well as addressing infrastructure issues.

Felecia Ballard requested that Sharyn Mitchell continue her work on the website updates, and for Mim Pride to continue her very helpful work with liaising with the City on BHRC's behalf.

IX. Adjournment

Felecia Ballard made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Mim Pride. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Prepared by Heather Johnson - Secretary, Berea Human Rights Commission

Felecia J. Ballard, Chair