

**CITY OF LINCOLN, NEBRASKA  
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
MINUTES**

Thursday, November 17, 2022  
555 S 10th Street, 1st Floor  
City County Building, Council Chambers

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The November 17, 2022, meeting of the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights (LCHR) was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Emira Ibrahimpasic, Chair.

**ROLL CALL:**

The roll was called.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Commissioners: Emira Ibrahimpasic (Chair), Sheri Blok (Vice Chair), Haroon Al Hayder, Rose Godinez, John Goldrich, Alyssa Martin, and Davetta Nelson.

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Sara Houston, Marna Munn, Rob Rowan, Chassidy Jackson-Goodwin, Haefaa Hasan, Thuyhong Le and Shanna Eckman.

**APPROVAL OF August 25, 2022, MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Blok and seconded by Goldrich to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimpasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimpasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich and Nelson. Martin abstained. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF November 17, 2022, AGENDA:**

Ibrahimpasic noted that the Successful Conciliation was not ready and needed to be removed from the agenda. A motion was made by Godinez and seconded by Goldrich to approve the meeting agenda.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimpasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimpasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Outreach:**

LCHR got an excellent rating back for the FHIP Grant and are currently working on applying for the 2023 FHIP Grant.

The keynote speaker for CRC2023 will be Ryan Sallans. The preconference will be April 18<sup>th</sup> from 3-7 p.m. and the conference will be all day on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

LCHR continues to have a presence in the local High Schools by attending the Take Charge classes.

MyCity Academy has started; there are 13 participants. It is held at El Centro on Thursdays from 6-9 p.m.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Director Report**

Houston explained there are grants that fund LCHR: FHAP is the grant through HUD that funds the Housing cases, FHIP is the grant through HUD that focuses on Housing outreach and FEPA is the grant through the EEOC that funds the Employment cases.

LCHR will be working to collect data regarding equity.

Regarding Title 11, there has been a request for the city council to take action regarding a petition that was submitted.

Kevin Abourezk and Terry Werner have both resigned, and the Mayor is in the process of choosing replacement commissioners.

**Public Hearing Update:** Director Houston clarified the options the Commission has following a public hearing determination. Regardless of the determination, the Commission has to adopt the recommended decision of the public hearing officer. If it was found that unlawful discrimination occurred, the Commission must accept that determination but has the opportunity to propose different or additional affirmative actions. If it was found that unlawful discrimination did not occur, the commission must accept the determination. The Commission will announce such to make it a public record. There is the option to go into an executive session to discuss the case before announcing anything.

Godinez had questions regarding how the public hearing officers are selected. According to the ordinance, they have to have practiced law for a minimum of 3 years, they have to be a licensed attorney, and have knowledge of discrimination law. Houston noted that the ordinance also allows for the public hearing to be overseen by 3 Commissioners.

Director Houston talked about the LCHR subcommittee option in lieu of the full commission meeting. The bylaws have a statute allowing for a subcommittee of three commissioners to meet to make cause or no cause determinations on cases. Approving the subcommittee would allow the commission the chance to not cancel meetings when quorum cannot be met. Director Houston proposed having a trial subcommittee meeting at some point, then discussing the Rules and Regulations updates to govern the meeting. Suggestions were to either have regularly scheduled subcommittee meetings or to have the option in place if quorum cannot be met for a regular meeting, to have the vote be a unanimous in order to pass, allowing the committee the option to table cases for the full meetings if there were questions.

## **CASE DISPOSITIONS:**

### **LCHR # 21-0716-010-E**

A motion was made by Blok and seconded by Martin to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Martin asked if there wasn't comparator information; Investigator Jackson-Goodwin confirmed that the Respondent did not provide any. Godinez asked what repercussions were had due to the comments that were made; the Investigator clarified that the employee responsible for the comments were removed from the messaging system and ultimately fired, and that the Respondent stated the Complainant's termination was due to conflicts between them and several other employees. It was pointed out that the Complainant held several different positions during their employment and got multiple raises.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Voting "no" was Godinez. Motion carried.

### **LCHR # 21-0929-018-H**

A motion was made by Blok and seconded by Martin to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Martin stated that the Respondent submitted a lot of substantiating evidence. Al Hayder stated that the Complainant was on section 8 assistance and violated the terms by bringing another tenant in with them. Investigator Jackson-Goodwin clarified that the Complainant attempted to get the other tenant approved by LHA and that they were denied. The Complainant denied that the other tenant was living there, however the other tenant told Respondent that they were.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

### **LCHR # 21-0325-003-E-R Soriano, Vanessa v. Kanga Kare Child Development Center**

A motion was made by Godinez and seconded by Martin to enter executive session, for the purposes of discussing potential litigation. Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Godinez and seconded by Martin to end executive session. Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

Several commissioners stated their objection to the hearing officer's determination that there was no reasonable cause.

A motion was made by Martin and seconded by Blok to accept the recommended determination.

Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting "aye" were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Martin and Nelson. Voting "no" were Al Hayder, Godinez, and Goldrich. Motion carried.

**LCHR # 21-0930-019-H**

A motion was made by Martin and seconded by Godinez to recommend a finding of **reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Several commissioners agreed that this was clearly reasonable cause and there was no reason for discussion.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

**LCHR # 22-0127-003-H**

A motion was made by Al Hayder and seconded by Blok to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Ibrahimasic noted that while they didn’t agree with the dramatic raise in rent, the new owner raised the rent for all tenants and did not single out any one specific tenant. Complainant didn’t sign the new lease with the Respondent.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

**LCHR # 22-0128-004-H**

A motion was made by Ibrahimasic and seconded by Goldrich to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Ibrahimasic noted that there was another disabled tenant using the ramp that the Respondent had put in place, so it seemed unreasonable as to why Complainant was unable to use it as well. Ibrahimasic expressed concern that the Complainant would call the police with noise complaints involving children.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

**LCHR # 22-0309-002-E**

A motion was made by Godinez and seconded by Nelson to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Ibrahimasic noted that the log provided by the Respondent showed excessive late clock ins and absences and that seemed to be the reason for the termination.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

#### **LCHR # 22-0603-016-H**

A motion was made by Blok and seconded by Martin to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

There were questions as to whether a person could legally have more than three dogs; Munn noted that if a person wanted more than 3 support dogs they would have to make a reasonable accommodation request to the City of Lincoln.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

#### **LCHR # 22-0617-017-H**

A motion was made by Godinez and seconded by Blok to recommend a finding of **reasonable cause** on all allegations.

There were questions as to if the Respondent receive the doctor’s note or not; Investigator Rowan explained that initially the Respondent told the Complainant they didn’t recognize the law regarding assistance animals so the Complainant didn’t submit the note, however during the course of the investigation the Respondent requested the doctor’s note from the Complainant. Al Hayder questioned why the Complainant didn’t report the discrimination right away; Investigator Rowan explained that a lot of community members don’t report right away or know that they can report discrimination.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, Martin, and Nelson. Motion carried.

Commissioner Martin left the meeting.

#### **LCHR # 22-0727-019-H**

A motion was made by Blok and seconded by Nelson to recommend a finding of **no reasonable cause** on all allegations.

Ibrahimasic asked for clarification regarding the comparator information; Investigator Rowan noted that there were 8 white and 1 Native American residents who were a part of the federally funded program, however that in order to qualify to be housed in the building and be a part of the HUD program, an individual had to exhibit chronic homelessness. Complainant didn’t qualify for this program. Though Complainant was not a part of this particular HUD program and did not exhibit chronic homelessness, Respondent housed them there regardless. Blok noted that the Complainant was a part of another program and through that program the Respondent was attempting to find them housing.

Hearing no further discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, and Nelson. Motion carried.

It should be noted that after the motion was carried, Complainant of this case interrupted in attempts to state his opposition to the motion carried.

**CHARGE TO PUBLIC HEARING:**

**LCHR # 22-0228-007-H**

A motion was made by Blok and seconded by Goldrich to accept the charge to public hearing.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, and Nelson. Motion carried.

**PRE-DETERMINATION SETTLEMENT:**

**LCHR # 22-0217-006-H**

A motion was made by Godinez and seconded by Al Hayder to **accept** the pre-determination settlement.

Hearing no discussion, Ibrahimasic asked for the roll call. Voting “aye” were Ibrahimasic, Blok, Al Hayder, Godinez, Goldrich, and Nelson. Motion carried.

Commissioner Nelson left the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

As is standard for every meeting, a general announcement was made regarding the public comment session, including time limits and a prohibition against discussing any case-specific information. Eddie Brown made comments regarding his case, the commissioners, and the office of LCHR. He was repeatedly reminded that Public Comment that could not address any LCHR case, Commissioner or staff member on any item or question before the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

**Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, November 30th, at 5:00 p.m.  
555 S. 10th Street, Room 303