



**Bloomington/Monroe County  
Human Rights Commission**

**November 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes  
Hooker Conference Room, City Hall  
5:00 p.m.**

The Bloomington/Monroe County Human Rights Commission met at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 18, 2024, in the Hooker Conference Room of Showers City Hall.

**Commissioners Attending:** Sharon Baker, Stephen Coover, Autumn Crisovan, Amy Jackson, Ryne Shadday, Emma Williams, Lilliana Young

**Staff Attending:** BMCHRC Director Michael Shermis, BMCHRC Assistant Annabelle Vosmeier

**Public Attending:** None.

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**Call to Order:** Chair Shadday called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Welcomed new commissioner, Sharon Baker, a county appointment.

**Approval of Minutes of October 21, 2024 Meeting**

1. Crisovan moved to approve the minutes from October 21, 2024. Young seconded. Passed unanimously, 6-0-1 (Baker abstaining).

**Report from Staff**

1. **Commission Appointment Update:** The county appointment came through last Friday – Sharon Baker is our new appointment.
2. **Monthly Meeting Holiday Rescheduling:** January and February third Mondays fall on MLK, Jr. Day and Presidents' Day, both of which are City holidays. Commissioners agreed to meet on the Tuesdays following (January 21 and February 18) from 5:30-7 in the Allison Room.
3. **Commissioner Appreciation Event:** The event will take place December 6 at 5:30 pm at the Waldron and will celebrate commissioners with remarks from the mayor.
4. **MEI:** We have received our final scorecard, which remains under embargo until November 21. Results will be announced via a press release, social media, etc.
5. **Complaint against Police Form:** Director Shermis became aware of a form to file a complaint against the BPD following an inquiry. We are unable to investigate due to the conflict of interest, but the form is now available with the Legal department after being lost as part of institutional memory.

**Reports from Commissioners**

1. **Shadday:** After the election, you may see some things that are unbecoming of Bloomington – bring them up with the Commission if you do. During the first Trump administration, the caseload of the BMCHRC went down as people did not feel safe reporting discrimination. It is more important than ever that people know that we exist

and that they are free to file complaints.

2. **Jackson:** Another progressive college community (Columbus, Ohio) recently saw a march by people identifying themselves as Nazis; the images are frightening. Be prepared to see similar things here.
3. **Young:** On Wednesday, November 20, at 7pm, there will be a ceremony at the steps of City Hall recognizing Transgender Day of Remembrance. This is a memorial and vigil to mourn members of the trans and nonbinary community who have been victims of murder, violence, and suicide. The rain location will be inside the atrium.
4. **Coover:** International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day will take place on Saturday, November 23, at Monroe County Public Library, at 10:30 am.
5. **Jackson:** This is the first BMCHRC gathering since the election. Regardless of politics, what President-elect Trump has articulated about his goals and whom he has appointed will put many communities in vulnerable positions. Jackson sees a need for the Commission to be nimble and to support groups within our community, especially the LGBTQ+ community, the immigrant community, and the Muslim and Jewish communities. She hopes that we can be poised to act with words and efforts of support.
  - a. Shadday suspects that we should be ready for people to speak in opposition to the Commission.
  - b. Shermis: Office of the Mayor received a inquiry from a city resident asking what the City of Bloomington is ready to do for the LGBTQ+ community under the new political climate. Shermis replied that the Commission is ready to serve by responding to discrimination and as relevant in the role of advocacy.
6. **Young:** Young became aware of the Gender-Diverse and Queer Clinic, an IU student-led project intended to be a free clinic for those in the queer community who do not have health insurance. Young can invite a representative to a future meeting to learn more about potentially supporting it.
7. **Young:** The trans community is terrified about what the future might hold. Young asks what overt actions the City can take to reassure this community and say “at least in this city, we will do what we can to look out for and protect you.”
  - a. Discussion of community initiatives, symbolic actions, events, potential press coverage. Likely not possible to go further with ordinances. Can Commissioners participate at public events? They can only speak as private individuals unless the Commission votes on an official statement, potentially at a special meeting. The special meeting must also be public.
  - b. Can Bloomington as a city ignore bathroom bans or other discriminatory state laws that may be passed? BPD cannot say firmly or publicly that they will ignore a law. In some cases, they do seem to limit their pursuit of certain issues, such as marijuana possession among students.

### Open Cases

1. Shadday’s case: National origin discrimination in housing. Respondent has denied charges but provided little proof. Follow-up meeting with complainant tomorrow.
2. Jackson’s case: Racial discrimination in employment (termination). Productive interview with complainant. Respondent has received affidavit and has asked for an extension. Response due back by December 13.

**Assignment of New Cases**

1. Racial discrimination in housing case will be signed tomorrow and assigned to Crisovan.
2. Racial discrimination in employment complaint will potentially reach an intake interview soon.

**Unfinished Business**

1. None.

**New Business**

1. None.

**Public Input**

1. None.

**Adjournment:** Chair Shadday adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.