

Commission on the Status of Black Males Meeting Notes

Meeting: Commission on the Status of Black Males

Date: September 9, 2026

Commissioner Attendees(list out everyone in attendance): Dhakir Abdullah, Vivian Akinwekomi, Tyson Coe, Diana Opata, James Sanders(Zoom), Patrick Smith

City Staff Attendees:

CSBM Liaison, Crystal Ritter

Mayor, Kerry Thomson

Public Attendees:

Notes

1. Call to Order

- a. Commissioner, Patrick Smith, called the meeting to order at 6:01
 - i. Dhakir Abdullah seconded the motion

2. Approval of Agenda and Memoranda/Minutes

- a. Patrick moved to approve the minutes from September 8th, 2026.
Diana seconded. Passed unanimously, 5-0.

3. Reports (if any)

A. Staff Liaison (Crystal)

- a. Updates regarding Winterwonderland and the Black Male Youth Summit

B. Mayor Kerry Thomson

- a. Discussed assumptions and sentiments surrounding gun violence and the Black community, as well as the work she is doing related to creating stricter gun control laws
 - i. Patrick asked to what extent Mayor Thomson is having conversations with IUB & IUPD
 - ii. Mayor Thomson responded that she is having conversations with IUB & IUPD.
 - iii. Tyson asked how we can counter racist sentiment that occurs after gun violence
 - iv. Mayor Thomson responded that we should focus on correcting them and stopping misinformation

C. Public/Public Comment

- a. Kim Paulk attended the last meeting regarding the situation in Lincoln Elementary School in Lawrence County. Crystal connected Paulk and his daughter in law with resources that would help the teachers in Lawrence County. The Commission could not do much since it was out of the commission's range.

4. Old Business

- a. N/A

5. New Business

1. Black Male Summit

- a. We have 44 students registered, give thanks to LaSaundra McCoy for her work & connections!
 - i. State school banning of iphone causing difficulties in getting students signed up.
 - ii. No sign-ups from Jackson Creek Middleschool; reoccurring issue
 - 1. LaSandra made a special trip to Jackson Creek
 - iii. 68 sign-ups last year
- b. Diana brings up how parents use the Parent Square
 - i. Principals from South and North said flyers were posted, Diana says she has not seen it. Crystal is following up with them
- c. Dhakir update surrounding Mr. Nelson at North
 - i. Nelson responded 30-40 students would be going, but did not mention anything about the ambassador program or putting up flyers. Dhakir asked again about both items & received no response
 - ii. Diana suggests we talk to him in-person during the summit about this for next year.
- d. Crystal suggests commissioners could go to high school BSU meetings to talk about the summit. Attend South highschool's Panther Hour. Focusing on more on the ground work.
- e. Diana suggests we begin planning earlier for commission events in general
- f. Crystal will be sending over the M.C notes to Patrick. Crystal brought printed out slides for the event. Everyone has sent her a photo & bio, and she is in communication with the presenters.
- g. Reach out to James for Icebreaker activities. Last years run of show does not have the icebreakers
 - i. Trivia questions with prizes
 - ii. James came up with the trivia questions

- h. Dhakir doing the Q&A with Dr. Ledet, Patrick is introducing them
 - i. Dhakir created questions
 - ii. Questions are to be sent to Dr. Lamar at the end of today
- i. Attempting to shape the trivia towards the theme of the event
- j. Tyson suggested a rap battle, it was recommended that it should occur after lunch
- k. Diana will help out with passing out prizes
- l. Tyson, Diana, and Vivian will help with the lunch
 - i. Marissa, Commission on Status of Women, will help
- m. Lunch at 12, Diana brings up that the kids get rowdy/uncomfortable if it is pushed back too late
- n. Schedules
 - i. Patrick and Dhakir will be there all day
 - ii. Tyson will be able to come at 11:45 am
 - iii. Vivian will come after her class at 11:00 am
- o. Crystal will be explaining parking to the speakers
- p. Crystal created badges that match the theme for the commissioners
- 2. Winter Wonderland
 - a. Thinking about our different Santa options
 - b. Photography
 - i. Some parents did not get photos
 - 1. Using a QR code with a physical sign-up sheet
 - 2. Link was only active for 2 weeks last year
 - ii. Looking at different camera options; polaroid?
 - 1. Crystal is reaching out to Justin Crossley regarding equipment for this year
 - iii. Patrick suggested having a shared google drive
 - 1. Diana points out parents may not want their children's photos to be in the open-access file.
- 3. Diana suggests we do an event for halloween next year.
- 6. Adjournment**
 - a. Dhakir motions to adjourn the meeting at 7:08
 - i. Tyson seconded the motion

Action Items