Minutes of the Cook County
Commission on Human Rights – Open Session
Thursday, July 9, 2026 at 2:30 pm

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Location: 69 W Washington Street, Chicago, IL 60602
22nd floor, Conference Room F

Attendance:

Present: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Vice Chair Charles Isaacs, Commissioners Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver, Gia Orr[1] (Commission vote to attend virtually for work reason), Jack Block and Shobana Verma and DHRE Staff.

Absent: None.

Open Session

A. Call to Order

- Chair Sohel called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

B. Statements by the General Public

- None.

C. Agenda Approval

- A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Charles Isaacs. The motion was carried by the following vote:
  - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Charles, Isaacs, Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver, Jack Block and Shobana Verma
  - **Nays**: None
  - **Absent**: Commissioner Gia Orr

D. Approval of the May 21, 2026 Regular Meeting Open Minutes

- A motion to approve the May 21, 2026 regular meeting open minutes was made by Commissioner Charles Isaacs and seconded by Commissioner Shobana Verma. The motion was carried by the following vote:
  - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Charles Isaacs, Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver and Shobana Verma
  - **Nays**: None

[1] Commissioner Gia Orr was not present the entire meeting and joined during executive session.

- **Absent:** Commissioner Chair Gia Orr.
- **Abstain:** Commissioner Jack Block

E. Commissioners' Updates

- None.

F. Chair/Vice Chair Elections – Commission Vote

- Chair Candidate(s):
  - Sufyan Sohel
- Vice Chair Candidate(s):
  - Charles Isaacs

- A motion to re-elect Sufyan Sohel as Commission Chair and elect Charles Isaacs was made and carried out by unanimous voice vote.
  - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Vice Chair Charles Isaacs, Commissioners Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver and Shobana Verma
  - **Nays**: None
  - **Absent:** Commissioner Chair Gia Orr.

G. Director's Report

- Director King provided updates for the second quarter of FY26. In the second quarter of FY26 there are 236 cases pending at all stages, 75 new cases filed and 83 cases closed. 7 cases settled with a known settlement amount of $162.
- Policy: Director King provided policy updates which include a complaint portal project where individuals can review the current status of their complaints. Cook County Minimum wage increased on July 1, 2026 to $15,40 for non-tipped workers and $9.25 for tipped workers.
- Outreach: One of the Outreach and Training coordinators provided updates on events and trainings attended to continue departmental efforts to spread awareness of Cook County Human Rights and Ethics ordinances and protections.
- The Outreach team will provide a Where to file training on July 21, 2026.
- The Human Rights newsletter has increased to 2,548 subscribers. The Commission Instagram page has grown by 46 followers since the beginning of this year with a goal to reach 337 by the end of the fiscal year. There are currently 333 followers.

H. Investigation Extension Requests – Commission Review and Vote

- A motion to approve the Investigation Extension Requests for Case Nos. 2024PA006, 2024E015, 2024H0122, 2024PL00250, 2024JHA00254, 2025PL00279,2025PL00282,2025H00284,2025PL00288, 2025ESL00301, 2025PL00330,2025PA00457,2026E00636,2025E00610,2025E00493, 2026E00648,2026PA009,2026PA003,2025PL00417,2025PL00416,2025E00427,2025PA00445,2025PA00456,2025PL00458,2024PA007,2025PL00

470,2025PA00473,2024E00136,2025PL00278,2024E00281,2025H0028,2025H00276,2025E00601,2025H00618,2026PL003,2026PL004,2026PA0002,2026PL0010,2024E00092,2024H0010,2025CS00380,2025PA00476 was made by Vice Chair Charles Isaacs and seconded by Commissioner Pushkar Sharma. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Vice Chair Charles Isaacs, Commissioners Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver and Shobana Verma
- **Nays**: None
- **Absent:** Commissioner Chair Gia Orr.

Closed Session

- A motion to move into the Executive Session for discussions as identified in the agenda was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Michael Lapinski and carried out by unanimous voice vote at 3:00 p.m.

Open Session

- At 3:19 p.m. the Commission reconvened to Open Session.

L. Voting Regarding Executive Session Items, if any

a. May 21, 2026 Regular Meeting Closed Minutes – Commission Vote

- A motion to approve the May 21, 2026 Regular Meeting Closed Minutes was made by Commissioner Michael Lapinski and seconded by Commissioner Pushkar Sharma. The motion was carried by the following vote:
  - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Charles Isaacs, Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver and Shobana Verma, Gia Orr (Commission vote to attend virtually for work reason)
  - **Nays**: None
  - **Abstain:** Commissioner Jack Block

b. Request for Reconsideration Case No. 2026PA0018 – Commission Vote

- A motion to deny the request for reconsideration for Case No. 2026PA0018 was made by Commissioner Jack Block and seconded by Commissioner Pushkar Sharma. The motion was carried by the following roll call vote:
  - **Ayes**: Chair Sufyan Sohel, Commissioners Charles Isaacs, Hedy Ratner (Commission vote to attend virtually for medical reason), Michael Lapinski, Pushkar Sharma, Richard Tolliver and Shobana Verma, Gia Orr (Commission vote to attend virtually for work reason), Jack Block
  - **Nays**: None

M. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Michael Lapinski and seconded by Vice Chair Charles Isaacs and carried by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Commission staff.