



County of Onondaga
Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Onondaga County/Syracuse Human Rights Commission

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Pending approval pending approval pending approval

ONONDAGA COUNTY/SYRACUSE HR COMMISSION MEETING

AUGUST 20, 2025, ONONDAGA COUNTY/SYRACUSE HRC Meeting

*****Hybrid meeting*****

_Agnes McCray	Adam Leslie
_Lauren Rosenstein	_Roosevelt Baums (resigned Aug. 14, 2025)
_Paul Harvey	_Chairman H. Bernard Alex
_Mary Grace Almandrez	_Duane L. Reese II
_Lyla Hua (appointed June 18, 2025)	

Absent: Commissioners Almandrez, Harvey, McCray.

Present (in person): Chairman Alex, Commissioners Reese, Leslie, Rosenstein, Hua.

County staff present: Montanette Rocker and Anthony Heard, Sr.

Opening: Meeting began 5:40

Welcome and Introduction: Chairman Alex

Community members present: None

Updates from ODI: *Montanette asked Commissioners to submit a professional photo.

*Opportunities for HRC members to join the Great New York State Fair: The NYS Hate & Bias Prevention Unit, a division of the NYS Division of Human Rights, has a booth at the Fair.

*Agnes has offered to contact vendors who can create magnetic name tags for Commissioners.

*Commissioner Roosevelt Baums resigned from the HRC, effective August 14, 2025.

*Two new Commissioners will be joining the HRC: Julianna Sanford and Taylor McFadden.

*Welcomes were extended at tonight's meeting for Commissioners Adam Leslie and Lyla Hua.

Discussion: Commissioners have picked the week they'd like to host a community discussion on 21st Century Policing in Onondaga County and its city, towns and villages. Commissioners will pick one day during the week of Oct. 20 through Oct. 24 and the time of the discussion will be from 6 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Commissioner Reese will ask the principal of Lincoln Middle School in the Syracuse City School District if space is available for the conversation.



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Discussion (cont'd): Chairman Alex will serve as moderator. The meeting will focus on 21st Century Policing: Are relationships between the police and community possible? Are healthy conversations and healthy relationships between the community and police possible? Community members will be required to submit questions beforehand and the panelists will be police law enforcement only. Commissioner Reese said it's important to get the Q&A's in order prior to the meeting/forum and to strive for open and honest dialogue between the community and law enforcement agencies. Commissioners discussed possibly having a structured conversation on immigration with law enforcement. The Commission would like to ask law enforcement agencies how to file complaints online, in person, or by mail. The process to file a complaint should be easy and community members should be given guidance on where to go for redress of issues. There was a discussion about how the Public Safety Department at Syracuse University interacts with SU students and the outside, at-large Syracuse community.

Upcoming HRC events: *Human Rights Commissioners have been invited to join the NYS Division of Human Rights Hate and Bias Prevention Unit at the Great NYS Fair for tabling. Commissioners were told to contact the Hate and Bias Prevention Unit about availability.

*International Human Rights Day is Dec. 10th Commissioners want to do two things: host an event in the Banner Room at the John H. Mulroy Civic Center and also write a Letter to the Editor about International Human Rights day. The commission will celebrate IHRD with a dinner collaboration on Dec. 17, 2025. The event in the Banner Room could include various cultural groups and organizations that offer services and resources to the Onondaga County and Syracuse Community.

Follow up: Chairman Alex gave an update on his conversation with Monu Chhetri. Monu is the CEO of the Deaf New Americans Advocacy Inc. Chairman Alex plans to help Monu receive the police report from a criminal incident that happened in February 2023.

Meeting ended at 6:42 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Montanette Rocker August 26, 2025