



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

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Montanette Rucker
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Pending approval ONONDAGA COUNTY/SYRACUSE HRC MEETING

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025, ONONDAGA COUNTY/SYRACUSE HRC Meeting

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

_ Chairman - H. Bernard Alex	_ Adam Leslie
_ Mary Grace Almandrez	_ Agnes McCray
_ Duane L. Reese II	_ Paul Harvey
_ Lauren Rosenstein	_ Lyla Hua (appointed June 18, 2025)
_ Julianna Sanford (appt. Aug. 21, 2025)	_ Taylor McFadden (appt. Aug. 21, 2025)

Absent: Commissioners Chairman Alex, Julianna Sanford and Taylor McFadden

Present in person: Commissioners Almandrez, Reese, Leslie, McCray, Harvey, and Hua

Present via Zoom: Commissioner Lauren Rosenstein

County staff present: Chief Diversity Officer Monica Williams and Deputy Chief Diversity Officer Montanette Rucker. Human Rights Specialist Anthony Heard was not present.

Opening: Meeting began at 5:33 p.m. New commissioners were welcomed and introduced.

Community members present: None

Approval of agendas: Commissioner Harvey motioned to approve past and present HRC agendas and Commissioner Reese seconded. Commissioners voted 7-0 (all ayes, no abstentions) to approve the agendas from December 2024, and from January 2025 through June 2025 and August 2025 and September 2025.

Approval of minutes: Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the past and present HRC minutes. Commissioner McCray seconded. Commissioners voted 7-0 (all ayes, no abstentions) to approve the minutes from December 2024 and from January 2025 through June 2025 and the minutes of August 2025.

Report and updates from ODI admin: Office is in the process of updating the HRC website with photos and bios of new commissioners.

Public forum: Commissioners chose Oct. 22, 2025, to host forum.

Vote: Commissioner Harvey motioned to approve Oct. 22nd as the date of the public forum and Commissioner McCray seconded. The vote was 7-0 (all ayes, no abstentions). The venue for the forum will be determined. Venues to contact are St. Lucy's Church, PSLA at Fowler High School, Henninger High School, The Red House Art Center, Southwest Community Center, the Syracuse Dunbar Center, Salt City Market, The Palace Theater, OCPL Central Branch Library.

Upcoming HRC events: October public forum.



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Follow up: Commissioner Harvey gave an update on his visit to the Summer Open House event at Asha Laaya farm. Harvey reported how the HRC can collaborate with Law Enforcement agencies the state and various agencies and people as it relates to people with disabilities, people with limited English proficiency and people who are deaf or people who are blind. Commissioner McCray noted that she has experience setting up trainings with law enforcement agencies, which can be a hard thing to do. "Sometimes law enforcement will think 'Why are you telling us how to do our jobs?'" McCray also mentioned her work on the Emergency Preparedness committee.

Discussion:

Commissioner Harvey gave quick updates on a few items.

*Sage Upstate is seeking donations.

*Commissioner Harvey queried HRC on contacting the Hate and Bias Prevention Unit of the NYS Division of Human Rights about an incident with a business making disparaging comments.

*Harvey mentioned a news item that included an advertisement at the Syracuse airport and wants to know how the HRC can get involved.

Commissioner McCray wants Commissioners to get recognized at upcoming meetings and events. McCray wants the HRC to be included on all lists at special events.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 – Commissioner McCray motioned to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The vote was 7-0 to end the meeting.

Meeting ended at 6:40 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Montanette Rocker