



**DURHAM HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MARCH 2026 MONTHLY MEETING
GOLDEN BELT – 807 EAST MAIN ST. SUITE 2-300
DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026
TIME: 6:30 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

*Members of DHRC: Commissioners Alex Gwynn, DHRC Chair, Tosh Adams, DHRC Vice Chair, Christina Crosby, Dewayne Hinnant, Lottie Barnes, Harvey McMurray, Jack Holtzman, Michael Cornwell, Scott Brummel, Bailey Igoe, Lucy Lu, Kirsten Barrett, Peiyao Guo
City Council Liaison: Council Member Shanetta Burris*

Call to Order

Commissioner Alex Gwynn, DHRC Chair, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call:

A quorum was not present when the meeting was called to order. However, a quorum was reached shortly after the meeting began.

Commissioners Present: (8) Alex Gwynn, Tosh Adams, Lottie Barnes, Peiyao Guo, Harvey McMurray, Michael Cornwell, Scott Brummel, Kirsten Barrett

Commissioner Absent: (5) Christina Crosby, Dewayne Hinnant, Jack Holtzman, Bailey Igoe, Lucy Lu

Current Membership: (13)

Total Member Seats: (17) Four (4) Seats Vacant

City Council Liaison Present: None

HNS Dept. Staff Present: Alexis John, Assistant Director

Meeting Guests: Abigail Holloway, Thomas McMaster, Assistant Chief, Walter Tate, Deputy Chief, Joseph Piatt, Assistant Chief, Raul Garcia, Assistant Chief, Other leadership team members not present: Mark Clancy, Deputy Chief, Jermaine Jackson, Deputy Chief, Ronelle Campbell, Assistant Chief.

Orders of the Day

1. Ceremonial Items

- Commissioner Alex Gwynn, DHRC Chair, congratulated Durham Police Chief Patrice Andrews on her retirement, effective May 1, 2026.
- Commissioner Alex Gwynn, DHRC Chair, also recognized Juanita English for her retirement, effective March 1, 2026. Commissioner Gwynn thanked her for supporting the Human Relations Commission for 19.5 years.

2. Public Comments

- Abigail Holloway, Assistant Public Defender from the Durham Office of the Public Defender shared information about the [Durham County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council](#). Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday at 4:00pm. This is a hybrid meeting via Zoom or in-person at the Criminal Justice Resource Center 3rd Floor- Conference Room A- 326 East Main Street Durham, NC 27701.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Commissioner Harvey McMurray made a motion to approve Meeting Minutes for the DHRC February 2026 Meeting held on Tuesday, February 10, 2026. Commissioner Lottie Barnes seconded the motion; the motion was approved with eight (8) votes “For” the motion, zero (0) votes “Against” the motion.
- **Note:** Commissioner Harvey McMurry left the meeting following this vote and the meeting no longer had a quorum to conduct business. The remainder of the meeting was informal and for informational purposes only. No decisions were made beyond this point.

4. Presentations

Patrice Andrews, Police Chief, City of Durham Police Department

- Chief Andrews outlined the department’s ongoing focus on crime reduction, including regular strategy meetings and collaborating with cities that have successfully reduced crime, such as Baltimore.
- The department is working with a research partner, the [Center for the Study of the Practice of Crime Reduction](#) (led by Dr. Thomas App), which conducted a community engagement session at the library in November 2025.
- Continued coordination is taking place with municipalities, universities, juvenile justice organizations, and through virtual community meetings.
- Community feedback and crime data analysis are being used to better understand the root causes of violent crime.
- A summit focused on “boots on the ground” strategies is planned for June/July.
- The department is prioritizing reducing violent crime and overall harm while developing a long-term strategy. Although crime trends are decreasing, community impact remains a concern (e.g., motor vehicle incidents, firearms in vehicles). Crime data tracking methods, including a 10-year historical

analysis, were shared ([available on the City's website](#) as of February 19). Current performance is at approximately 76%.

Police Chief Hiring Process

- The City plans to conduct a nationwide search for a new Police Chief, with internal candidates also eligible to apply.
- Community engagement and input will be key components of the hiring process.
- The Chief encouraged the HRC to participate in the hiring process.

Discussion: Commission Collaboration with DPD

- The Commission discussed ways to strengthen collaboration with the Durham Police Department (DPD), including aligning on messaging around current reports and community events such as National Night Out.
- Members emphasized the importance of connecting community resources and improving coordination during events such as protests.
- Suggestions included increasing visibility and engagement by attending police activities (e.g., recruit meet-and-greets, graduations) and working to break down barriers between the community and DPD.
- The Chief noted the importance of supporting the police department during challenging times and identifying areas where assistance can be provided.

PAC (Partners Against Crime) Meetings

- Concerns were raised about low community participation in PAC meetings outside of police personnel.
- Discussion included strategies to increase attendance and engagement.
- PAC meetings were described as previously serving as a “one-stop shop” for residents; members discussed whether they should play a larger role in violence reduction efforts.
- Consideration was given to restructuring or relocating PAC meetings to improve accessibility and community involvement.
- Future visioning for PAC meetings was suggested as a next step.

Additional Topics

- A Commissioner mentioned Dr. Joy DeGruy’s concept of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, highlighting the long-term systemic impacts of slavery.
- The Chief noted she would follow up with additional responses to outstanding questions.

Announcements & Engagement Opportunities

- [National Night Out](#): Held on the first Tuesday in October; Ms. Vancy (DPD) will coordinate outreach to the Commission, including an invitation to DPD headquarters and opportunities to host a table at the event.
- March 26: DPD Graduation (noted as the largest class); an opportunity may be available for brief remarks following the ceremony.

Department Updates & Initiatives

- James Davis, Jr. provided updates on service areas, including Participatory Budgeting (PB), Youth Services, Community Engagement, Access and Compliance, and Business Services (budget).

Human Relations Commission (HRC) Role & Equity Work

- Commissioner Gwynn inquired about the City's Race and Ethnic Relations efforts.
- James shared that CE&P staff are reviewing 73 Human Resources policies through an equity lens, prioritizing those with the greatest impact on employees.
- A Budget Impact Tool is being utilized to assess initiatives across three categories: adverse impact, neutral impact, and positive impact.

Community Initiatives & Engagement

- Commissioner Alex Gwynn highlighted an educational workshop focused on housing concerns, designed to support productive, facilitated conversations, including discussions on Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) and setting expectations.
- James shared about the Health and Housing Summit that was held to examine systems-level issues with housing, with the goal of developing recommendations.
- Coordination with Sam was noted for additional support and resources.

Cross-Departmental & Community Collaboration

- Commissioner Gwynn mentioned the following ideas:
 - Cultural Arts Committee initiatives
 - Planning Department work on the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
 - Environmental Affairs Board sustainability tools and outcomes
 - Revitalization efforts such as Preserving Durham
 - Police Chief hiring process engagement
 - Juvenile Crime Council involvement
 - Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs)
 - Social determinants of health work in partnership with the County Health Department, including the Community Health Assessment, with a focus on bridging city and county efforts
- James shared events and support provided by previous Human Relations Commissions, including Recommendations, Resolutions and reports submitted to Council to assist with decision making.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Gwynn at 8:54 PM.