



Human Services Department

Housing Options, Solutions, and Supports Division

Human Rights Section

115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 427 • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-357-7800 • FAX 954-357-7817 • TTY 954-357-6181

### Meeting Record

<b>Human Rights Board Meeting</b>	<b>Date:</b> August 11, 2025
	<b>Call to Order:</b> 4:08 p.m.

#### Attendees

Gloria Battle	Palmer Kelner	Catherine Rincon
Michael Berger	Susan Kung	Mickey Pope
Miya Burt-Stewart, Chair	Angela Mumford Lucas	Elizabeth Wiegard
Saima Farooqui	Michael Rajner, Vice Chair	
Thomas Good	Monica Ribeiro	
Patrice Paldino, Director, HOSS-D	Adam Katzman, Deputy County Attorney	Maxine Martin, Board Coordinator
Rhonda Wiltshire, Equal Opportunity Officer		

#### Members Absent

Gregory Gayle	Ellen Feiler
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#### Key Decisions

Action Items			
#	Description	Resource	Status
1.	Memo to County Administration	Chair Dr. Burt-Stewart	Matter is approved by Administration
2.	Letter to HRB members reminding them of their attendance responsibilities	Maxine Martin	To be Mailed

#### • CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by Chair Dr. Miya Burt-Stewart. Pledge of Allegiance led by Chair. Roll Call was completed by Maxine Martin, Board Coordinator, and a quorum was confirmed.

A discussion regarding HRB members' failure to promptly respond to meeting reminders to establish quorum resulted in the following:

**MOTION** by Vice Chair Michael Rajner asking that Ms. Martin prepare and send, via the United States Postal Service, a letter to each member,

reminding them of their responsibilities and obligations as it relates to attendance. Seconded by Monica Ribeiro.

- **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** to adopt the August 11, 2025, meeting agenda by Michael Rajner after the correction of item 5 to read 4B, and the removal of item 6, which was previously resolved. Seconded by Susan Kung. *Adopted unanimously.*

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 9, 2025**

**MOTION** to adopt the June 9, 2025, meeting minutes by Michael Rajner after the correction of scrivener errors. Seconded by Susan Kung. *Adopted unanimously.*

- **PRESENTATION**

*Immigration*

Dr. Burt-Stewart introduced Joshua Kaufman, organizer with the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida (“ACLU of Florida”), to present a brief overview of the work being done regarding immigration. Dr. Burt-Stewart informed the HRB that Mr. Kaufman will give a full presentation at the October 20, 2025, HRB meeting.

Mr. Kaufman described the immigration issues going on throughout the country as “demonizing” and stated that these actions are violations of constitutionally protected rights.

Mr. Kaufman explained that the goal of the ACLU is educating people, letting them know of their rights. Mr. Kaufman stated that the ACLU has a team of lawyers who work in the courtroom to “push back” against the attacks on civil rights that are being seen in various issues, including immigration. Mr. Kaufman further explained that, along with its legal work, the ACLU strongly promotes educating communities and letting people know about their rights as immigrants. Mr. Kaufman encouraged HRB members to get involved by attending town hall meetings so they can obtain information to pass on to others in their communities. He also encouraged making monetary donations to assist with legal expenses.

*Equality*

Dr. Burt-Stewart welcomed and introduced Mr. Quinn Diaz, Equality Florida, to provide an update on issues related to equality and the LGBTQ community.

Mr. Diaz introduced himself as an organizer whose primary role is to lobby legislative and executive branches. He also works with local governments to mitigate the harmful impacts of anti-LGBTQ laws and regulations, defend existing protections, and advance innovative policies.

Mr. Diaz discussed the impact of recent anti-LGBTQ laws and government actions on the LGBTQ community. He also discussed the actions local governments can take to continue to protect those in their communities who are being targeted. Mr. Diaz reported that since 2021, Florida has led the nation's "assault" on LGBTQ rights and freedoms and has shown itself to be the testing ground for "cruel" and discriminatory policies. Mr. Diaz mentioned that two years ago, the substance of 17 anti-LGBTQ bills passed into law across the state included administrative policies that redefined sex to exclude transgender people, increased anti-transgender discrimination, banned healthcare for transgender minors, and criminalized transgender people's access to restrooms and publicly owned, leased, and operated buildings. Mr. Diaz also reported that anti-LGBTQ laws have banned youths from playing sports in teams that align with their gender, censored classroom discussions and curricula, prohibited books, and defunded programs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. Mr. Diaz stated that most recently, the ban extended to rainbow crosswalks.

Mr. Diaz pointed out that in January, the President signed several executive orders targeting the LGBTQ community but reminded the HRB that executive orders do not override constitutional protections, established legal precedent, or federal law. Mr. Diaz indicated that one executive order states that it is the policy of the federal government to recognize sex only as it is assigned at birth. Mr. Diaz explained that this "effectively diminishes" the legal recognition of transgender Americans across all federal agencies, which can increase discrimination, specifically in education and employment. Mr. Diaz highlighted that these executive orders will affect healthcare and housing as they relate to transgender persons and that a transgender person is prohibited from updating their gender on federally issued identifications such as passports. Mr. Diaz reported that federal funding is being halted for anything related to an "offensive and vague definition of gender ideology." Mr. Diaz pointed out that several of the policies that the President has implemented are blocked by courts nationwide. Mr. Diaz reported that in 2024, Equality Florida helped to stop or neutralize 21 of the 22 anti-LGBTQ bills that were filed in the Florida state legislature, and in 2025, Equality Florida defeated every "expressly" anti-LGBTQ bill that was introduced.

Mr. Diaz stated that attacks on the LGBTQ community are just the starting point for broader attacks on other minority communities. Mr. Diaz implored HRB members to have courage. He said courage is contagious and they should not be afraid to stand up, because chances are there is already someone waiting to stand beside them.

Mr. Rajner expressed his concern about the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) decisions on cases involving gender identity discrimination. Mr. Rajner asked Mr. Diaz if Equality Florida is aware and is involved in obtaining a solution. Mr. Diaz stated that there has been new litigation filed regarding the EEOC's refusal to investigate or enforce federal workforce protections. Mr. Diaz noted that Equality Florida is "waiting and watching" the outcome of these cases.

- **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

- **REPORTS – CHAIR AND COMMITTEES**

Dr. Burt-Stewart expressed her appreciation to the presenters.

Dr. Burt-Stewart reported that she attended the homeless symposium held on Thursday, June 12, 2025. She applauded the Housing Options, Solutions, and Supports Division (“HOSS-D”) for the work they are doing to help with homelessness. Dr. Burt-Stewart stated that Broward County has a problem with homelessness, and the rules that apply to homelessness do not make sense to her. Dr. Burt-Stewart stated that she was able to meet people at the symposium who helped her to better understand the issues. Dr. Burt-Stewart encouraged HRB members to get more involved. Dr. Burt-Stewart suggested that HRB members adopt a shelter, provide food, or do what they can to help. She reminded them that even a small effort can make a difference.

- **HUMAN RIGHTS SECTION REPORT**

Ms. Paldino reported that the Human Rights Section (“HR Section”) is fully staffed; however, she is working with county administration to add a permanent Office Support Specialist (“OSS”) position to the HR Section. Ms. Paldino explained that currently, the HR Section has a temporary staff member in the position. Ms. Paldino stated that approval for this position is not guaranteed, but she is actively working to transfer the position from another Section in HOSS-D to the HR Section.

Mr. Rajner stated that the HRB was not given an opportunity to make a recommendation to the budget and asked for more information so the HRB could make a recommendation. Ms. Paldino explained that she already has the money in the budget for the position and she is realigning her resources from a position that is available in another Section; however, she needs approval from county administration to use it for the OSS position in the HR Section. Mr. Rajner recommended that the HRB send a memo of support to the county administrator to help solidify the approval of the OSS position.

**MOTION** by Michael Rajner that the HRB Chair send a memo to the county administrator in support of permanent office support staff for the HR Section. Motion was seconded by Pamela Kelner. *Adopted unanimously.*

Ms. Paldino reported that the HR Section had a good conversation with HUD regarding the Performance Improvement Plan (“PIP”), and the HR Section has been given an extended deadline to complete the PIP by December 31, 2025. Ms. Paldino reported that HUD acknowledged that one of the goals was challenging to meet within the given timeframe.

Ms. Paldino referred the HRB to the July 18, 2025, letter from HUD sent to all FHIPs and FHAPs, regarding the use of HUD’s logo on advertisements. Ms. Paldino explained that after reviewing all materials used for advertisements to ensure that they do not have HUD’s logo, the County responded to HUD acknowledging compliance.

Ms. Paldino thanked Monica Ribeiro for translating the HR Section's flyer into Portuguese. Ms. Paldino stated that the Creole and Spanish versions are awaiting final review before production.

Mr. Rajner followed up with his request for summaries of cases. He stated that the summaries will help familiarize HRB members with the different types of cases being investigated by the HR Section. Ms. Wiltshire advised that the requested summaries will be provided at the next board meeting.

- **OUTREACH, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

None.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

- **COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE/LITIGATION**

Mr. Katzman informed the HRB that there is no current litigation.

Mr. Rajner asked about the status of the Friedman v. Elbo Room matter. He asked whether action is required by the HRB in terms of members being potentially subpoenaed. Mr. Katzman informed the HRB that the case is on appeal and is fully briefed, which means that during the appeals process, the court is looking at the records.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

- **MEMBER CONCERN**

HRB members asked about the Department of Government Efficiency's (DOGE) visit to the County. Ms. Paldino reported that the County received a request from DOGE for several documents with different subparts, but there was nothing specific to the HR Section. Ms. Paldino explained that there was a request specific to homelessness, but nothing related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

Ms. Kelner asked if there was any loss of funding as it relates to DEI. Ms. Paldino explained that the County did not receive funding to help with the fair housing month events, but regular funding was not affected.

- **IDENTIFY AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

1. American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, "ACLU of Florida" presentation.
2. Sunset Review.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

**The next scheduled Board meeting will convene:**  
**Monday, October 20, 2025, at 4 PM, Governmental Center**

*If any Board Member or other party would like more detailed information about the contents of these summarized minutes, a compact disk will be available by contacting the Human Rights Section at 954-357-7800.*