



Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission Meeting
Minutes of Friday, January 24, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Chairman West called the meeting to Order at 1:07 p.m.

Roll Call, Introductions, & Verifications

The Roll was called.

Commissioners Present:

- Chairman Little V. West (Speaker of the House appointee)
- Vice Chair Constance Williams (Governor appointee)
- Secretary Ahdohny Routheni (Senate President *Pro Tem* appointee)
- Commissioner Carrie Traub (House Minority Leader appointee)
- Commissioner Joseph Dabney, III (Governor appointee)
- Commissioner Brandi Stone (Governor appointee)
- Commissioner Oscar Robinson (Senate Minority Leader Appointee)
- Christine Anaya, designee for State Treasurer Laura Montoya, *ex officio*
- Mclee Kerolle, designee for PRC Chairman Pat O'Connell, *ex officio*
- Human Right Bureau Director Hazel Mella, Ph. D., *ex officio*

Commissioners Absent:

- Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver, *ex officio*
- Cabinet Secretary Josett Monette, *ex officio*
- Commissioner Anthony Umi (Governor appointee)

Chair West acknowledged the Commission's newest Commissioner, Carolyn Traub, who was appointed to the Commission by House Minority Leader Gail Armstrong in December. The Chair welcomed Commissioner Traub to the Commission. Commissioner Traub introduced herself.

Chair West also acknowledged the Commission's longest serving Commissioner, Oscar Robinson; the Chair noted Commissioner Robinson had not been present for some time and welcomed Commissioner Robinson back to the Commission. Commissioner Robinson introduced himself.

Establishment of a Quorum

10 Commissioners being present, the Commission established a quorum.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Traub moved to approve the agenda. Vice Chair Williams seconded the motion. The Commission approved the agenda by a vote of 10-0 (Dabney, Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Robinson, Routheni, and West, voting in the affirmative).

Approval of Minutes of December 13, 2024

Commissioner Stone moved to approved the minutes of December 13, 2024. Commissioner Anaya seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor, with 2 abstaining. (Commissioners Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Robinson, Routheni, and West voting in the affirmative, and Commissioners Robinson and Dabney abstaining). The approved minutes of December 13, 2024 are attached as **Attachment A**.

“Dr. King Minute”

The Chair presented the Dr. King Minute, summarizing the message he shared with the public at commemorative events in Albuquerque, Clovis, and Santa Fe over the King Holiday Weekend. The Chair shared two quotes from Dr. King:

- “We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there ‘is’ such a thing as being too late.”
- “Rarely do we find [people] who willingly engage in hard, solid thinking. There is an almost universal quest for easy answers and half-baked solutions. Nothing pains some people more than having to think.”

The Chair stated that, if we, at once recognize both *i*) the fierce urgency of this now that we are facing and *ii*) the persistence of some stubborn inequities in our society that have not turned loose even since the time of Dr. King, we will be motivated to apply the full force of our minds to confront and correct those issues. In doing so, the Chair stated his belief that we will find out how to accomplish “Mission Possible,” which is the National Observance Theme of the King Holiday in 2025.

Inspired by Dr. King’s teachings, the Chair stated that he asked Community members to apply to be on an Advisory Committee he would ask the Commission to form at the January 2025 meeting of the Commission so that the Community can give the Commission their comments on how to improve their communities across the State; and the Chair stated that he expressed his hope and belief that, working together, we can change things for the better.

This is a process that, at ABQ Civic Plaza following the Commemorative March, the Chair metaphorically invited the community and the Commission to engage in together in 2025 called “Marching with our Minds.”

The Chair explained that the New Day @ MLK Committee would be considered as part of agenda item No. 11(a) on the agenda.

Potential Department Creation

The Chair inquired if Rep. Pamelya Herndon was online; she was not. The Chair explained that the Legislature is in Session and it's very busy and hectic time for the Representative as a Legislator. The Chair stated that the Commission will prioritize her presentation and interrupt its proceedings to allow her to do her presentation whenever she's available to do so, noting that, if for any reason she's not able to attend today, the Commission would roll this item to next meeting.

Public Comment & Community Input

The Commission received public comment.

FY 2024 Audit Presentation

The Chair recognized Mobile CFO Lisa Jennings to present regarding Commission's FY 2024 Audit. There was a clean, unmodified opinion with this audit with two findings regarding a late audit report and timely reversion, and there were no other significant issues regarding the Commission. CFO Jennings confirmed that as to the late audit, as of where the audit process stood as of October 18, 2024 when the transition in leadership occurred, the auditors had not been provided sufficient information to timely complete the audit. Therefore, even though the officers and staff of the Commission worked to provide as much information as quickly as possible after October 18, 2024, it was not possible for the audit to be timely completed. CFO Jennings also confirmed that the timely reversion finding related to a statutory deadline of September 30, 2024; therefore this audit finding is also not attributable to officers or staff of the Commission, which took office as of October 18, 2024.

Acting Executive Director Report – Ms. Beverly A. Gaines

Acting Executive Director Beverly Gaines presented a report addressing the following matters:

- 2025 Commemorations Report
- Monthly Budget/Financial Status and Updates
- YLC Planning
- Commissioner Emails
- Website/Social Media Report
- Office Staffing
- CFO Finance Trainings
- Legislation/Budget Status
- Dr. Harold Bailey Memorial

The Acting Director's presentation is attached as **Attachment B**.

Old Business

“New Day @ MLK”: Strategic Planning Committee Appointment

The Chair moved to Appoint a Strategic Planning Committee through a three-step process, as follows:

STEP 1. To appoint A Strategic Planning Committee of Commissioners, consisting of:

- Secretary Ahdohny Routheni,
- Vice Chair Constance Williams;
- PRC Chair O’Connell or his Designee, McLee Kerolle;
- Commissioner Brandi Stone;
- Commissioner Carolyn Traub, Chair of the Committee; and
- Chair Little V. West, *ex officio*,

to receive Community advice and comment on how the Commission can and should better serve the public of the State of New Mexico and meet its Mission and Statutory Duties over the next 3-5 years, and to return to the Commission a strategic action plan for accomplishing those goals based primarily on that community input and other relevant information and considerations, including but not limited to input received from the Commission’s staff, not later than July 31, 2025; and

STEP 2. To empower the Strategic Planning Committee to recommend to the full Commission an advisory committee of Community members (the “New Day @ MLK” Advisory Committee) to serve in an advisory role to the Strategic Planning Committee at the February meeting of the Commission; and

STEP 3. To authorize a Statement of Interest, in a form approved by the Acting Director, to be issued in both physical form and online immediately to any Community Members who are interested to serve in the role of volunteer member of the New Day @ MLK advisory committee, so that the Strategic Planning Committee can begin receiving the contact and other relevant initial information about qualifications of potential members of the advisory committee who may be present and interested to apply, even at today’s meeting.

The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Kerolle.

In discussion, several amendments to the motion were proposed and accepted, as follows: by Commissioner Traub to appoint Commissioner Stone as a Co-chair of the Committee with her; by Chair West to remove steps 2 and 3, and to instead add a clause to the end of Step 1 to “empower the Committee to take such other and further steps as it shall deem necessary and proper.”

The amended motion therefore read as follows:

To appoint A Strategic Planning Committee of Commissioners, consisting of:

- Secretary Ahdohny Routheni,
- Vice Chair Constance Williams;
- PRC Chair O’Connell or his Designee, McLee Kerolle;
- Commissioner Brandi Stone, Committee Co-Chair,
- Commissioner Carolyn Traub, Committee Co-Chair; and
- Chair Little V. West, *ex officio*,

to receive Community advice and comment on how the Commission can and should better serve the public of the State of New Mexico and meet its Mission and Statutory Duties over the next 3-5 years, and to return to the Commission a strategic action plan for accomplishing those goals based primarily on that community input and other relevant information and considerations, including but not limited to input received from the Commission’s staff, not later than July 31, 2025, and to empower the Committee to take such other and further steps as they shall deem necessary and proper.

The Commission approved the amended motion by a vote of 9-0 (Dabney, Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Routheni, and West, voting in the affirmative; Robinson was absent for the vote.)

Executive Director Search Committee Report

The Chair of the Executive Director Search Committee, Commissioner Mella presented a report from the Executive Director Search Committee, with the following recommendations:

- February 11 to February 25, Screening Deadline extended to February 28.
- Newspaper and other Hard Copy Publications and Online Recruitment Portals and America’s Job Centers and DWS to be used as part of search process
- Bylaws Amendment proposed for Evaluation of Acting Executive Director.

The Chair of the Committee, Commissioner Mella moved to adopt the Committee Report, seconded by Chair West. The Commission approved the motion by a vote of 9 in favor, with one abstention (Dabney, Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Routheni, and West, voting in the affirmative; Robinson abstaining.)

New Business

Legislative Advocacy Committee

Vice Chair Williams moved form a Legislative Advocacy Committee for the current Legislative Session consisting of herself, Chair West, Secretary Routheni, and Commissioner Kerolle to support the Commission’s budget requests, the motion was seconded by Commissioner

Robinson. The Commission approved the motion by a vote of 10-0 (Dabney, Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Robinson, Routheni, and West, voting in the affirmative).

Funding Request Approvals and Authority

Vice Chair Williams moved to approve the Acting Director's Recommendation of the Sheraton Contract for the Youth Leadership Contract, seconded by Commissioner Mella. The Commission approved the amended motion by a vote of 10-0 (Dabney, Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Robinson, Routheni, and West, voting in the affirmative).

Final Review and Approval of Annual Report

Vice Chair Williams moved to approve the final version of the annual report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mella. In discussion, Vice Chair Williams asked Acting Director Gaines if the revisions requested by Treasurer Montoya were reflected in the document. Acting Director Gaines stated that the revisions had not yet been made. Chair West then noted that the report was therefore not yet ready for final approval and moved to table the motion for approval, indicating that the final review and approval of the annual report would need to be rolled to the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dabney. The Commission approved the motion to table and roll the item to the next meeting by a vote of 10-0 (Dabney, Stone, Williams, Kerolle, Mella, Anaya, Robinson, Routheni, and West, voting in the affirmative).

Commissioner Orientation

The Commissioners discussed the Orientation materials and handbook. Due to limited time remaining in the meeting, the Chair encouraged the Commissioners to study these materials on their own and to reach out to him with any questions. The Chair especially emphasized the importance of the Recurring Annual Calendar document for their review, consideration, and suggestions.

The Commission discussed that there may be time at the February meeting for the Deputy Attorney General to make a presentation as part of a continued Orientation effort.

Next Meeting

The Chair announced the next meeting would be February 21, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.