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PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

M I N U T E S

TIME: 3:02 P.M.

Monthly Meeting

VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

June 23, 2025

1 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
2 Monthly Meeting
3 June 23, 2025

4
5 COMMISSIONERS:

6
7 Joel Bolstein, Esquire, Chair
8 Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chair
9 Mayur Patel, Esquire, Secretary
10 Dr. Rad Agrawal
11 Michael Hardiman, Esquire
12 Curtis Jones (Absent)
13 Aleena Sorathia, Esquire (Absent)

14
15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

16
17 Chad Dion Lassiter, MSW

18
19 INTERIM CHIEF COUNSEL

20
21 Morgan Williams, Esquire

22
23 STAFF PRESENT:

24
25 Amanda Brothman, Director of Communications
26 Alana Burman, Director of Policy, Intergovernmental
27 Affairs and Mediation
28 Desiree Chang, Director of Education
29 Caroline Griffin, Director of Fair Housing and
30 Commercial Property
31 Adrian Garcia, Director of Enforcement
32 Amber Harris, Regional Office Director, Philadelphia
33 Darlene Martin, Esquire, Hearing Examiner
34 Sheryl Meck, Supervisor, Civil Rights Division
35 LaDawn Robinson, Regional Office Director, Pittsburgh
36 Heather Roth, Regional Office Director - Harrisburg
37 Tamara Shehadeh-Cope, Hearing Examiner
38 Debbie Walters, Administrative Officer

39
40 GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

41 Andrea Heymann, Associate Regional Director, Anti-
42 Defamation League
43 Ben Popp, Investigative Researcher, Center on
44 Extremism, Anti-Defamation League
45 Morris France
46 Jorganna Showers, Sargent's Court Reporting
47 Service, Inc.

1 ***

2 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

3 June 23, 2025

4 ***

5 MEETING CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING STATEMENT

6 Joel Bolstein, Chairperson of the Pennsylvania
7 Human Relations Commission, welcomed all to the
8 monthly meeting of the Pennsylvania Human Relations
9 Commission. He stated this public meeting has been
10 advertised in accordance with the provisions of the
11 Sunshine Act. And prior to the meeting and keeping
12 with the confidentiality requirements of the Sunshine
13 Act, a closed session was held to discuss compliance
14 matters, management updates, and adjudicative case
15 deliberations.

16 After concluding with the business portion of the
17 meeting, guests will be invited to introduce
18 themselves and any organizations they represent.
19 Guests will have an opportunity briefly to address
20 the Commission. Public comments are welcomed about
21 equal opportunity and Civil Rights issues or problems
22 of discrimination. Any statements expressed during
23 the Public Session by members of the public represent
24 the opinions and beliefs of that speaker alone and
25 not the opinions and beliefs of the Commission.

1 [The motion passed unanimously.]

2 ***

3 CONCILIATION AGREEMENTS/CONSENT ORDERS

4 [Chair Bolstein stated the two Agenda Items at No. 4,
5 202202050 and No. 5, 202202038, would be tabled until
6 the next meeting due to discussion in Executive
7 Session.]

8 ***

9 REQUESTS FOR PRELIMINARY HEARINGS

10 CHAIR BOLSTEIN:

11 We have two requests for preliminary
12 hearings. They're items six and seven
13 on the Agenda. I would call for a
14 motion to deny the request for
15 preliminary hearings unless one or more
16 of the commissioners think we should
17 hear those.

18 Is there a motion?

19 COMMISSIONER HARDIMAN:

20 So moved.

21 COMMISSIONER YIENGST:

22 Second.

23 CHAIR BOLSTEIN:

24 It's been moved and seconded. I assume
25 that's a motion to deny the request for

1 Is there any discussion or comment on
2 those?

3 Not hearing any, all those in favor
4 of the motion, please say aye.

5 [The motion carried unanimously.]

6 ***

7 APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

8 CHAIR BOLSTEIN:

9 Item No. 2, a motion to approve the
10 minutes of the public meetings from
11 April 28, 2025 and May 19, 2025.

12 Is there a motion to approve those?

13 COMMISSIONER YIENGST:

14 So moved.

15 COMMISSIONER AGRAWAL:

16 Second.

17 CHAIR BOLSTEIN:

18 Is there any comment, discussion,
19 revisions for those minutes?

20 Not hearing any, then all in favor
21 of the motion, please say aye.

22 [The motion carried unanimously.]

23 ***

24 [Commissioner Hardiman exited the meeting at 3:07
25 p.m.]

1 ***

2 PUBLIC SESSION

3 [Alana Burman, Director of Policy, Intergovernmental
4 Affairs and Mediation, introduced the guest speakers,
5 Andrea Heymann and Ben Popp, from the Anti-Defamation
6 League.

7 Ben Popp, Investigative Researcher, Center on
8 Extremism, Anti-Defamation League, explained in his
9 position, he specifically tracks white supremacist
10 movements throughout the Northeast from Pennsylvania
11 through Maine. He stated he was at the meeting to
12 share information about some of the white supremacist
13 activity in Pennsylvania, specifically centered
14 around the Goyim Defense League (GDL). The GDL was
15 responsible for an incident in Pittsburgh in May.

16 Mr. Popp explained the ADL Center on Extremism is
17 a research center set up to monitor, expose, and
18 disrupt extremist actors across ideological spectrums
19 on both the internet and in the real world. They
20 analyze trends in extremist activity, tactics,
21 ideologies, and key figures in different movements.
22 The data gathered is shared through reporting and by
23 working with legislators, local leaders, houses of
24 worship and any person in the community that combats
25 hate and extremism.

1 Mr. Popp shared they have two tools that are
2 useful resources, The H.E.A.T. Map and the Hate on
3 Display database. The H.E.A.T. Map stands for Hate,
4 Extremism, Antisemitism and Terrorism, and tracks
5 incidents throughout the United States each year.
6 The Hate on Display database is where they collect
7 and analyze extremist hate symbols, particularly
8 white supremacist symbols.

9 Mr. Popp highlighted the growing trend of white
10 supremacist groups using propaganda such as flyers,
11 stickers, signs, and banners as a primary and
12 effective tactic to spread their ideology. Each year
13 there is a new high for the amount of propaganda
14 distributed. In 2023, the amount was 7,546
15 distributions. In context, one distribution is not a
16 single flyer but can be a couple hundred to a few
17 thousand in one area. Mr. Popp explained white
18 supremacists are doing this to make their presence
19 known in the community as well as to be a form of
20 intimidation. The groups are inserting themselves
21 into the public narrative and attempting to normalize
22 their ideology.

23 Mr. Popp reported on a specific incident that
24 occurred in May in Pittsburgh. There was a vehicle
25 with four occupants that drove around several

1 neighborhoods in Pittsburgh and tossed propaganda out
2 of the vehicle windows. The propaganda was in
3 baggies weighed down with corn, which is a common
4 tactic that allows the propaganda to be thrown out of
5 windows easier. Police in the Pittsburgh were able
6 to determine the driver of the vehicle was Jeremy
7 Brokaw of Zanesville, OH, who now faces \$48,000 in
8 fines. He added the other occupants have not been
9 held legally responsible, and Brokaw has started a
10 crowdfunding campaign that has raised over \$3,000 in
11 donations from other white supremacists. Mr. Popp
12 stated, because of the Pittsburgh incident, the ADL
13 was able to connect Brokaw to his online presence as
14 live streamer and possibly to a secondary white
15 supremacist group, The Hate Club.

16 Mr. Popp explained that the GDL is a network as
17 they do not have a formalized membership and are a
18 group of people who share the same hateful
19 ideologies, particularly antisemitism and white
20 supremacy. They operate a streaming platform called
21 Goyim TV (GTV) that launched in May 2020 and remains
22 active today. There are dozens of streamers who
23 collect thousands of dollars every week. He added
24 they seek to create online content by engaging in
25 antisemitic stunts and look for any way they can find

1 to monetize their hateful activities. The person who
2 started GDL, John Minadeo, has been a part of the
3 white supremacist scene since 2019 and has an online
4 presence as Handsome Truth. Mr. Popp stated one way
5 to combat the GDL is through financial means due to
6 money being a big reason for why they engage in
7 hateful activity.

8 Mr. Popp elaborated on the GDL, and shared that
9 aside from live streaming, propaganda and
10 demonstrations are the GDL's bread and butter. They
11 have their own version of the H.E.A.T. map, which
12 shows where they have distributed propaganda. He
13 showed the PHRC examples of the propaganda from the
14 GDL. The propaganda is often identifiable by the GTV
15 logo and the catchphrase "every single aspect of ---
16 is Jewish." They fill in the blank with whatever
17 narrative is in the news at the time. He used the
18 examples of the war in Ukraine, COVID, abortion and
19 both the presidencies under Joe Biden and Donald
20 Trump. He elaborated he found it interesting that
21 they do not engage in any mainstream politics, as
22 they choose to believe everything is influenced by
23 Jewish people.

24 Mr. Popp added the propaganda is most commonly
25 spread by tossing the baggies from car windows;

1 however, they also target places where it can just be
2 posted. Examples given include bathrooms, little
3 libraries, and newspaper distribution locations. He
4 pointed out many times they distribute the propaganda
5 and do nothing else; however, some cases include
6 activities like shouting slurs and antisemitic
7 sentiments out of car windows to attempt to make the
8 news.

9 The ADL has also seen the GDL post URLs to
10 websites so people go there unknowingly and are then
11 inundated with white supremacist or antisemitic
12 propaganda. In addition to using live streaming as a
13 revenue stream, the GDL operates an online store
14 selling everything from antisemitic soap to 3D
15 printed busts of Hitler to apparel. They also sell
16 prepacked flyers if someone did not want to print and
17 pack the flyers themselves.

18 Two tactics Mr. Popp mentioned that have not been
19 recently used are the Post Waffen and the City
20 Council Death Squad. The Post Waffen was a technique
21 where they sent hateful postcards to elected
22 officials but stopped the practice since it was hard
23 to prove they were not targeting specific
24 individuals. The City Council Death Squad was a
25 tactic used to disrupt public meetings during the

1 public comment section.

2 Mr. Popp added that the Hate Club is a splinter
3 group of the GDL started in late 2014 by a GDL
4 affiliate named Anthony Altick. They are more
5 hardcore in appearance and go out in public with
6 swastika flags and wear red skull masks with all
7 black clothing. The Hate Club is primarily active in
8 Missouri and Ohio and have had demonstrations that
9 received national attention. They have violently
10 clashed with individuals at protests and have used
11 bear spray.

12 Mr. Popp elaborated that most white supremacist
13 groups are not out looking to engage in violence
14 because they want to avoid arrest but that the
15 possibility of violence is always present.

16 The last group Mr. Popp touched on is the
17 Atlantic Nationalist Club based out of Pennsylvania,
18 New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. Their
19 leadership is based in New Jersey, but they have
20 entered Pennsylvania several times to distribute
21 propaganda as far as Lancaster. They are openly
22 white supremacist, often using symbols like the
23 Celtic cross. They tend to target areas and places
24 they think are housing migrants and generally use
25 anti-immigrant language. He concluded by asking if

1 anyone had any questions or feedback.

2 Chair Bolstein thanked Mr. Popp for his
3 presentation. He thought the groups mentioned were
4 crazy individuals trying to get attention, but also
5 felt there was a dilemma in either ignoring them or
6 taking them seriously. He asked where the ADL stood
7 on that dilemma.

8 Mr. Popp responded that it is a tricky position
9 since the groups thrive on attention and will make a
10 big deal out of legal action as a source of
11 fundraising. He acknowledged even a small group of
12 them can create a huge impact in a community and
13 create a lot of fear as seen in the Pittsburgh
14 incident. He added from his perspective one of the
15 most important things people can do is educate others
16 and explain that while these groups are a concern,
17 there is usually not a concern of immediate violence.

18 Director Lassiter explained from his perspective
19 sometimes society has a hard time calling these
20 individuals and groups for what they are, which is
21 organized terrorists and not just sympathizers. He
22 used the example of Charlottesville as someplace where
23 they were not covered in historical Ku Klux Klan
24 sheets. He added a biopsychosocial assessment of
25 those in Charlottesville would find doctors,

1 pediatricians, school teachers, lawyers, social
2 workers, parents and even ministers.

3 Director Lassiter added, when one sees Dylann
4 Roof target a Black church and kill nine people, it
5 shows a protracted history in this country that is
6 related to white Christian evangelicalism. He stated
7 there is a reason for why these individuals target
8 Jewish Americans and why antisemitism is at an all-
9 time high. He related it to antiblack racism having
10 been part and parcel to many aspects of our democracy
11 and that is why antisemitism should be taken
12 seriously.

13 Director Lassiter elaborated his thoughts that
14 everyone should be vigilant at all times as well as
15 organize and recognize white supremacist groups for
16 who and what they are. He added there is a lot of
17 work being done to decode white supremacy and white
18 nationalism and how they relate to what happens in
19 courts and even with police officer stops.

20 He acknowledged Mr. Popp's presentation but added
21 his opinion was to be mindful that no one left
22 thinking these are just a bunch of guys who feel
23 disgruntled. He added it is a threat to democracy.
24 Those individuals often disguise themselves as being
25 left behind; when in reality, they are angry and use

1 a scapegoat hypothesis. That scapegoat hypothesis
2 blames Jewish people, African Americans, women, and
3 immigrants and is rooted in the psyche of white
4 nationalism.

5 Director Lassiter shared when the civil rights
6 division at the PHRC started, he gave them ten books
7 to help understand the moment. They attempted to
8 reframe white supremacists as having a form of human
9 brokenness. He added, at the end of the day, if it
10 is human brokenness, white supremacy or white
11 nationalism, those people desecrate synagogues, burn
12 crosses, target people who are disabled and people
13 are who are LGBTQ+.

14 He further added the data from the last
15 Department of Justice, the information from the ACLU
16 and from the ADL all spoke to them being indifferent
17 actors. He concluded by stating that we are at a
18 tipping point and it continues to be the same where
19 multiple diverse groups are being attacked.

20 Commissioner Patel thanked Mr. Popp for his
21 presentation and acknowledged the disturbing nature
22 of it. He asked for confirmation that the work could
23 be seen on the ADL's website. Mr. Popp replied in
24 the affirmative. Commissioner Patel also said he
25 found it interesting one of the slides showed

1 Robbinsville, NJ, home of the largest Hindu temple on
2 the East Coast which shows, as Director Lassiter
3 stated, there is no group that is not a target of
4 hate.

5 Director Lassiter shared that a few years ago the
6 PHRC developed a H.E.A.T. index for Pennsylvania in
7 conjunction with Jewish colleagues and the ADL. They
8 were unable to complete the project due to a lack of
9 funding in the budget.

10 Chair Bolstein stated the groups mentioned all
11 sound like right wing white supremacist groups that
12 have been around a long time in various forms. He
13 shared, at his age of 65, he has heard a lot of
14 stories about antisemitism from his parents and
15 grandparents but had never felt personally on edge
16 until recently. He added in his opinion the groups
17 protesting with bullhorns outside of a Hillel at a
18 college are more intimidating then things like GTV.

19 He expressed hope that with college being out for
20 the summer, things would quiet down. He added to be
21 Jewish in America today was very different from when
22 he was growing up. He stated, too many people, while
23 obviously related to the Middle East, it feels like
24 people simply do not like Jewish people. He
25 explained many Jewish people can go back generations

1 tracing their heritage and they simply feel that
2 people are just coming after them for being Jewish.
3 He stated, when contacted by people regarding acts of
4 vandalism, he has told them to report it to the
5 police, the ADL, and the PHRC. He asked if the ADL
6 had any other advice on what to tell people when such
7 issues arise.

8 Andrea Heymann, Associate Regional Director,
9 Anti-Defamation League responded in her position at
10 the ADL, offered to connect with folks offline if
11 they have specific questions about data or incidents
12 in their areas of responsibility. She shared while
13 the trends concerning antisemitism are nonpartisan,
14 the GDL propaganda does show a more right leaning
15 view. She added nearly 50 percent of the incidents
16 in Pennsylvania in 2024 were Israel related. She
17 acknowledged there is a ripple effect from the
18 ongoing conflict in Israel.

19 The ADL has done a lot of work directly with
20 Jewish students and staff on campuses where they have
21 seen incidents occur. Pennsylvania differs from the
22 national trend in that Jewish institutions like
23 community centers, synagogues and day schools are
24 being targeted.

25 Ms. Heymann sharedm while there is a significant

1 increase in antisemitic threats via email, telephone
2 and text messages, historically using flyers for
3 propaganda was higher four or five years ago in
4 Pennsylvania. They have seen many of the people
5 using flyers have moved into other parts of the
6 country but acknowledge the threat still exists.

7 Director Garcia thanked the ADL for the
8 presentation. He acknowledged while discrimination
9 can start with words, it can escalate to violence.
10 He added while some people may say that they are
11 practicing their freedom of speech, if one is not
12 being vigilant and watching what is happening, the
13 violence can happen rapidly. He also added it may
14 not even be the organization committing violent acts
15 but the people involved may take it upon themselves
16 because they do not care about going to jail and do
17 not have a regard for human life.

18 Examiner Martin expressed her thanks for the
19 presentation and inquired if the ADL has seen an
20 increase in discrimination against people with
21 multiple identities such as being both Jewish and
22 Black or Jewish and LGBTQ+.

23 Mr. Popp responded groups like the GDL and other
24 white supremacists do tend to target people that have
25 multiple identities which fall into categories of

1 people they do not like. He added, often times, they
2 think that Jewish people are behind the people they
3 do not like as if minority groups are unable to
4 organize themselves.

5 Commissioner Yiengst expressed her appreciation
6 for the presentation.

7 Director Lassiter shared his recommendation for
8 *Racism A Short History* by George Frederickson which
9 has a chapter entitled "Rise of Modern Racism, White
10 Supremacy and Antisemitism in the 18th and 19th
11 Centuries" showing that the topic is not new. He
12 added that despite living in a society where people
13 think you don't have to read and study, he thinks
14 people need to put in the work to learn.

15 He added his experience of antisemitism at the
16 University of Penn is what led him to use the book in
17 his courses. He shared in his experience antisemitism
18 has always had a history at the University of Penn
19 which he experienced when he was a student there. He
20 concluded his statements by reaffirming the
21 partnership with the ADL.

22 Chair Bolstein again thanked the ADL for the
23 presentation and for the work that they do. He
24 expressed that the PHRC is happy to be partnering
25 with them. He finished by stating that nobody wants

1 to live in a state where hate is not confronted and
2 it is on everyone to confront hate.]

3 ***

4 PUBLIC COMMENT

5 [Morris France stated he was there to observe the
6 meeting. He intended to attend the public meeting in
7 August to present to the commission thoughts on what
8 has transpired in the Civil Rights struggle over the
9 past 60 years. He acknowledged his appreciation for
10 the work of the PHRC. Chair Lassiter thanked him for
11 joining the meeting and stated he looked forward to
12 hearing from him in August.]

13 ***

14 ADJOURNMENT

15 CHAIR BOLSTEIN:

16 If there is a motion to adjourn?

17 COMMISSIONER PATEL:

18 So moved.

19 CHAIR BOLSTEIN:

20 We got a motion to adjourn. I assume
21 all of us are in favor. I look forward
22 to seeing everybody in person next month
23 and just keep doing the hard work. I
24 know all the commissioners want to
25 express our gratitude to everybody on

1 the staff for continuing to do what's
2 needed, especially on this last topic of
3 fighting hate.

4 [The motion passed unanimously.]

5 ***

6 [The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.]

7 ***

8

9 CERTIFICATE

10

11 I hereby certify that the foregoing summary
12 minutes of the Pennsylvania Human Relations
13 Commission was reduced to writing by me or under my
14 supervision, and that the minutes accurately
15 summarize the substance of the Pennsylvania Human
16 Relations Commission meeting.

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Jorganna Showers,
Minute Clerk
Sargent's Court Reporting
Service, Inc.

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M. Joel Bolstein

M. Joel Bolstein, Chairman

Debbie A. Wollesse

o/b/o Commissioner Mayur Patel
Mayur Patel, Secretary