



CITY OF DECATUR HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2021

Included in this report is a synopsis of the cases processed in 2021 and a letter from the Human Relations Commission Chair highlighting the Commission's events for the year.

Under the provisions of Chapter 28, titled "Unlawful Discrimination", there are nine members who serve as Human Relations Commissioners, appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. All Commissioners serve without compensation. The Human Rights Investigator, Fred Spannaus, is an independent contractor who the City pays to review and investigate claims that are turned in to the Human Resources office. Acting Human Resources Manager Penny Rogers serves as liaison to the Commission. The Commission meets at 4:00 p.m. the third Thursday of each month in the City Council Chamber. The meetings are open to the public. The Commission continued recording its monthly meetings for broadcast on Comcast Channel 18 and the City's website.

At the end of the fiscal year, the Human Relations Commission consisted of 7 commissioners whose names are listed below. In February 2022, Vivian Goodman was appointed to the Commission; therefore, there is currently only one vacancy.

Derrick Thaxton (Chair), Nikki Garry (Vice Chair), Byron Hansbro, Francie Johnson, Joyce Keller, Gina Taylor and Richard Zaker.

Commissioners Anay Hunt and Marty Watkins resigned from the Commission during the fiscal year.

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COMPLAINTS

The following is a synopsis of cases processed in 2021.

Case #	Type	Date Filed	Disposition
#190725	Race discrimination in employment (discharge) and retaliation	07/25/2019	Found probable cause in 2020 and set a public hearing. The parties reached an "agreement in principle" a few days before the scheduled hearing. They finalized the settlement agreement in July. Case was closed.
#200928	Race discrimination and retaliation in employment (discharge)	09/28/2020	Fred conducted a mediation, but the parties could not reach an agreement. Respondent filed a motion to dismiss, which was rejected by the Hearing Officers. The Public Hearing was held on December 16. Both parties agreed to submit closing arguments by written briefs by February 3, 2022.
#201120	Sexual harassment	11/22/2020	While the investigation was underway, both parties requested mediation. Fred conducted a mediation meeting on August 6. The parties agreed to a settlement. The case is closed.
#210601	Discharge	6/1/2021	Fred conducted the initial interview and found that there was no allegation of a violation of the Unlawful Discrimination ordinance. Case was dismissed.

Case #	Type	Date Filed	Disposition
#210611	Disability discrimination (public accommodations)	6/11/2021	Respondent requested that Fred mediate this case via telephone and email. The Complainant then agreed to withdraw the charge on August 26. This case is closed.
#211014	Discrimination in employment (layoff)	10/14/2021	Fred conducted the initial interview and found that there was no allegation of a violation of the Unlawful Discrimination ordinance. Case was dismissed.

**City of Decatur Human Relations Commission
Annual Report of Fiscal Year 2021**

Letter from the Human Relations Commission Chair

Mayor and Decatur City Council Members:

The Human Relations Commission continues with its duty to uphold the provisions set forth in Chapter 28, "Unlawful Discrimination" of the Decatur City Code.

The Human Rights Investigator, Fred Spannaus, is an independent contractor who the City pays to review and investigate claims that are turned in to the Human Resources office. There was one hearing in 2021 and Commissioners Nikki Garry and Byron Hansbro served as hearing officers.

Due to Covid-19, the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. luncheon and Freedom March were cancelled.

In February, the Commission held a virtual event for Black History Month. The theme of this event was "Decatur – Walking and Talking Together into our Future." The keynote speaker was Commissioner Byron Hansbro who is also the Pastor at Greater Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church. The essay and poem contest for Decatur Public School students was held and the winners in each category for each grade level read their essays and poems.

In June, the Commission had an information table at the annual Juneteenth event at Central Park organized by the African-American Cultural and Genealogical Society.

We welcome visitors to attend our meetings which are held on the third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m. in the Council chambers, located on the 3rd floor of the Decatur Civic Center.

Respectfully,



Derrick Thaxton, Commission Chair