

Commission on Human Relations Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 3, 2024

Attendance: virtual meeting via Zoom and in Room 902, City-County Bldg.

Commissioners:

Chair Rev. Liddy Barlow
Rabbi Jamie Gibson
Teaira Collins
Luz Blandon
Kyle C. Webster
Namita Dwarakanath
Mary Jayne McCullough
Genevieve Rosselot
Alberto Benzaquen

Staff:

Rachel Shepherd, Executive Director
Chris Soult, Deputy Director
Rita Turpin Porterfield, Senior Investigator

Guests: (Pre-registered through Zoom) Anne Marie Ellison (Office of Equal Protection)

- I. CALL TO ORDER –**
 1. Chair Barlow Called the meeting to Order at 3:32P
- II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES – April**
 1. Corrections: Amending Lauren Law's title to Senior Investigator
 2. Motion to adopt minutes, including any corrections noted above, made by Commissioner Rabbi Gibson
 3. Seconded by Commissioner Webster
 4. Voice vote in favor
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Thea Young, individually thanking Commission for its support for the Peoples' Assembly
- IV. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORT**
 - A. Director's Report –**
 1. Personnel: Investigator Position open, posted until June 18, 2024
 2. Investigation:
 - a. 58 open cases
 - b. 33 intakes
 - c. 14 post-cause cases
 - d. 3 case on the public hearing track

3. Education and Outreach
 - a. Annual Report 2023 is finished! Shout out to Kevin and Courtney. Awaiting print copies, but digital version lives.
 - b. FHP trained staff on how to investigate federally funded housing providers as we continue to get HUD transfers re this case type.
 - c. Dir. Shepherd attended Trauma and Racism training through Lakeside
 - d. Dep. Dir. Soult and Dir. Shepherd attended Pittsburgh Community Redevelopment Group Summit. Every panel discussion and presentation had tied to systemic racism. Opportunity to meet potential partners
 - e. Staff attended a virtual EEOC training: Theories of Discrimination/Model of Proof; good refresher and personalized EEOC connections.
 - f. City in the Streets tabling:
 - a. Hill District – 6/29/2024 – 10a-2p
 - b. Hazelwood – 7/17/2024 – 6p-8p
 - g. Juneteenth Tabling:
 - a. Awaiting table confirmation
 - b. June 14, 15, 16
 - c. 11a – 4p
 - d. B. Marshall event is where we'll be as City sponsored event doesn't appear to have tabling options.
 - e. Map sent via Director's Report
 - f. Invoice submitted today
 - h. Working with FHP to scheduled next housing provider training. June 17 or 19 tentative dates
4. Meetings and New Connections
 - a. Had follow up with Standing Firm to discuss fall conference and engage City as a trained employer
 - b. PA Fair Housing Colloaborative meeting 5/17/2024; able to share Fair Housing Month updates
 - c. PA HRC and NAACP re police academy rejections based on psych evaluation; highlighted in local news; police are allowing for new assessments with another psychologist. NAACP is watching closely.
 - d. Dir. Shepherd and Dep. Dir. Soult toured Latino Community Center's new location
5. Special Projects:
 - a. CLE Employment Discrimination: The Administrative Process; 7/31/2024 City-County Building; lunch provided
 - b. Targeting attorneys and paralegals
 - c. WESA equal employment ads; looking into bus shelter ads
 - d. Council briefings are tentatively rescheduled for 7/9/2024 and 2 45-minute sessions starting at 2p
 - e. Working on new City Code protections for:
 - a. Medical marijuana user (employment)

- b. Individualized assessment for criminal history (housing)
 - c. Homelessness (employment, housing, and public accommodations)
- f. Working Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Housing Implementation Team to prepare a Renting to Newcomers presentation. This is an extension of the Renting to Refugees program where landlords were given info on the benefits of renting to refugees
- g. Pittsburgh LGBTQIA+ Housing Rights Survey is drafted with our vendor Outwith Studio; beginning community engagement

B. *Committee Reports*

- 1. ***Community Relations Committee*** –
 - a. Materials for Just Mediation ready to go for distribution.
 - b. Language access at public transportation terminal has garnered media attention this past weekend
- 2. ***Justice & Equity Committee*** – None
- 3. ***Finance Committee*** – None
- 4. ***Personnel Committee*** – Investigator Position open
- 5. ***Public Hearing Section*** – Several cases pending mandatory conciliation, 3 slated for public hearing; Commissioners to be on the ready, sections to be decided upon term expirations
- 6. ***Executive Committee*** – Session held from 3:40p to 4:01p

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Elections:

- 1. survey of interest sent at last meeting;
- 2. Slate/Ballot:
 - a. Chair – Teairra Collins
 - b. 1st Vice Chair – Genevieve Rosselot
 - c. 2nd Vice Chair – Rev. Jaime Gibson
 - d. Secretary – Alberto Benzaquen or Teaira Collins
 - e. Treasurer – Carleen King or Teaira Collins
- 3. Namita Dwarkanath withdrawing for Secretary
- 4. Teaira withdrawing from all nominations except for the Chair
- 5. Motion to accept slate by Cmr. Rabbi Gibson; Seconded by Cmr. Dwarkanath

B. Slate approved uncontested upon withdrawals!

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Motion to approve settlement of EO-2023-0912
 - i. Amount of \$15,000.00
 - ii. Unanimous voice vote in favor
 - iii. Review for Director in June; may look different given that Dir. Shepherd has only been in there for a year
- 2. Budget: looking to amend/reorganize current staff to better allow for outreach

- i. Administrative Assistant would be converted to Outreach and Intake Coordinator (which exists but remains vacant)
- ii. Renames Administrative Assistant/Fiscal Contract Coordinator to Executive Assistant
- iii. Keeps part-time allowance of \$5,000.00
- iv. Less than \$12,000.00 ask.

3. Motion by Cmr. Rabbi Gibson to recognize Cmr. Rev. Barlow's work as Chair.

VII. ADJOURNMENT –

1. Motion made by Commissioner Rabbi Gibson
2. Seconded by Commissioner Rosselot
3. Unanimous vote in favor at 4:30 p.m.

EDWARD C. GAINES
MAYOR



RACHEL SHEPHERD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CITY OF PITTSBURGH
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
CITY-COUNTY BUILDING

Monthly Commission Meeting Agenda

June 3, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. MEETING MINUTES
 - a. 5/6/2024
3. PUBLIC COMMENTS
4. EXECUTIVE SESSION
5. COMMITTEES
 - a. FINANCE
 - b. PERSONNEL
 - c. COMMUNITY RELATIONS
6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT
7. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS
8. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. EEOC CASE SETTLEMENT
 - b. ANNUAL DIRECTOR REVIEW
 - c. DRAFT BUDGET REVIEW
9. ADJOURNMENT

Commission on Human Relations Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 6, 2024

Attendance: virtual meeting via Zoom and in Room 902, City-County Bldg.

Commissioners:

Chair Rev. Liddy Barlow
Rabbi Jamie Gibson
Teaira Collins
Luz Blandon
Kyle C. Webster
Mary Jayne McCullough
Genevieve Rosselot
Alberto Benzaquen
Namita Dwarakanath

Staff:

Rachel Shepherd, Executive Director
Chris Soult, Deputy Director
Courtney Smith, Fiscal Contracts Coordinator
Rita Turpin Porterfield, Senior Investigator
Kevin Carroll, Administrative Assistant
Lauren Law, Field Investigator

Guests: Sherri Bridgett, Zeke Rediker, Thea Young

I. CALL TO ORDER –

1. Chair Barlow Called the meeting to Order at 3:35PM

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES – April

1. Corrections: None
2. Motion to adopt minutes, including any corrections noted above, made by Commissioner Rabbi Gibson
3. Seconded by Commissioner Webster
4. Voice vote in favor

III. PUBLIC COMMENT: Thea Young, individually thanking Commission for its support for the Peoples' Assembly for Fair and Equitable Housing

IV. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORT

A. Director's Report –

1. Personnel:
 - a. Jeffrey Cameron returned from leave
 - b. Lauren Law completed one year of service and is now a Senior Investigator

- c. Shaneise Murray will be leaving May 20th, 2024
- 2. Investigation:
 - a. 73 open cases
 - b. 28 intakes
 - c. 14 post-cause cases
 - d. 3 cases on the public hearing track
- 3. Outreach
 - a. Rachel ADA Masterclass included overlap to title VII and Workers' Compensation
 - b. 4/3/2024 event was a success; great for language access and second chance/criminal history in housing. Available on YouTube through City Channel
 - c. 4/4/2024 was the Bridge to Equity: Workforce Development; Director learned more about City's trade programs; working on an employment program to collaborate with Trade Institute of Pittsburgh and other labor leaders to recognize discrimination in the workplace.
 - d. 4/9/2024: City Council Fair Housing Proclamation
 - e. 4/13/2024: People's Assembly for Fair and Equitable Housing in Oakland. CHR co-sponsored the event
 - f. 4/16/2024: Director Shepherd participated in the Domestic Violence panel at the PA HRC event at the Convention Center.
 - g. 4/20/2024: Operation Home presentation with Urban League. Dep. Dir. Soult shadowed for training.
 - h. 4/25/2024: Take your Kid to Work Day hosted by the City. Lots of interaction, slap bracelets were very popular.
 - i. 4/26/2024: Staff tabled at Northside Job Fair at PNC Park; lots of community facing interaction and interest in the Commission's work
 - j. 4/30/2024 City in the Streets – held monthly from April to September.
 - k. Dir. Shepherd met with La Dawn Robinson, the new PHRC Pittsburgh Regional Director to coordinate for warm handoffs and formalize MOU for work-sharing referrals.
 - l. Met with Sheryl Meck of the Civil Rights Division of the PHRC, Daylon Davis of the Pittsburgh NAACP, and La Dawn Robinson to discuss new police policies. Some info may touch on Commission work, but for now NAACP is taking lead
 - m. Allegheny County Anchored Re-entry (ACAR_ Summit; met and discussed individualized assessment for criminal histories/involvement and add protection to City Code
 - n. Met with Chief of Staff Blake Plavchak of Dist. 4 and Adriana Sanchez-Solis of the Allegheny County Dep't. of Human Services to discuss language access issues; Some overlap with City Council's work
- 4. Special Projects
 - a. EEOC FEPA Joint Innovation Project – rescheduled

- b. WESA Fair Hosing radio ads; June will also have employment focus
- c. SOAR Survey discussion meeting 4/18 for staff. Working on a plan forward
- d. Commission's City Council briefing is postponed indefinitely due to initial briefing being scheduled privately and concerns about the Sunshine Act; exploring options how to relay info to Council and Staff about Commission
- e. Online Inquiry Portal is now accessible to public; contract wrapping up
- f. City in the Streets let to connection w/ Northside Community Safety Council and training in California-Kirkbride neighborhoods.

B. *Committee Reports*

1. *Community Relations Committee* –

- a. Cmr. Namita Dwarakanath elected as chair
- b. Squirrel Hill as a next community meeting site due to accessible transportation; looking to engage youth and spread work on language access

2. *Justice & Equity Committee* – None

3. *Finance Committee* –

- a. 2025 budget reconfiguring to best utilize/allocate available staff.
- b. Next month will be budget presentation for a vote in July
- c. Cmr. Rabbi Gibson asked about reports from Controller having any effect; Update meeting with budget analyst, but limited ask to minimize requests and maximize impact/service to community

4. *Personnel Committee* – Also contained in Director's report;

- a. Jeffrey Cameron returned from leave
- b. Lauren Law completed one year of service and is now a Senior Investigator
- c. Shaneise Murray will be leaving May 20th, 2024

5. *Public Hearing Section* – Several cases pending mandatory conciliation, 3 slated for public hearing; Commissioners to be on the ready, sections to be decided upon term expirations

6. *Executive Committee* –

- a. June is election time, see below

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Elections
- B. Roles are what they say on paper
 - 1. Chair – only other person allowed to talk to Press other than Director; assists Director in deciding priorities and action
 - 2. Vice-Chairs – step in as needed for Commissioners
 - 3. Secretary – Does not take minute (as Staff volunteers), may have to sign documents
- C. Survey sent for completion by Commissioners

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Pittsburgh Homelessness – Dep. Dir. Soult
 - i. Sat in a few roundtables

- ii. Stats are fairly harrowing; homelessness increased by 19% in Pittsburgh, but national average is 12%
 - iii. Johnson v. Grants Pass – laws now banning homelessness and illegality of being unsheltered; campsites in town are illegal; defines campsite as “anywhere a homeless person is”
 - iv. Advocates in City wanted to stress that it is unlikely for a similar law to pass here, but we cannot allow for our own standards of law enforcement to slip; ruling can also open the door to similar legislation in other municipalities that may put strain on municipalities that do not pass such law
 - v. If upheld (as expected) it would be the first in US history to make it legal to make a person illegal because of status alone
 - vi. Seeking to have Commission be involved in the issue and adding a Civil Rights lens
2. Summer Outreach
- i. City in the Streets – monthly through September; calendar invites sent to Staff and Commissioners
 - ii. Pride celebrations and Juneteenth:
 - 1. Going to reach out to Commissioner King
 - 2. Considering highlight raffle prizes for Black-owned or LGBTQ+ businesses – to be purchased by individual and donated to Commission for purpose of raffling.
 - 3. Biggest events of the summer, asking Commissioners to participate

VII. ADJOURNMENT –

- 1. Motion made by Commissioner Rabbi Gibson
- 2. Seconded by Commissioner Rosselot
- 3. Unanimous vote in favor at 4:27 p.m.



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

June 3, 2024

PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

- We are hiring for a new Investigator. Please share the link widely!
<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/pittsburgh/jobs/4518859/investigator-field>

CASES AND ENFORCEMENT

As of 5/30/2024 there are:

- 58 open investigations;
- 33 pending intakes;
- 14 post-cause cases (4 in court, 10 pending mandatory conciliation); and
- 3 cases on the public hearing track.

Compliance Review will see 6 determinations this month, including one settlement.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- The 2023 Annual Report is finished! Special thanks to Kevin for running our statistics and Courtney for all the amazing design work. We are awaiting the printed version but here is the link:
http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/25026_2023_Annual_Report_FINAL_with_1inks.pdf
- Staff received training from the Fair Housing Partnership on how to investigate federally funded housing providers, as we continue to receive this type of case from HUD as transfers.
- I took a free Trauma and Racism training through Lakeside, which was helpful in humanizing the work that I am typically arms-distance from.
- Chris and I attended the Pittsburgh Community Redevelopment Group Summit. Every panel discussion and presentation had ties to systemic racism, and there is much to be done. Thankfully there are so many driven professionals in Pittsburgh to partner with.
- Staff attended a virtual Theories of Discrimination/Models of Proof training with the EEOC, which was a good refresher and opportunity to put faces to names we usually only see in emails.
- Reminder for City in the Streets tabling:
 - Hill District - Saturday, June 29th from 10am-2pm
 - Hazelwood – July 17th from 6-8pm
- We are waiting on confirmation for our table, but the Juneteenth tabling should be on June 14-16 from 11am-4pm. We are participating in the event hosted by B Marshall, as there do not appear to be tabling opportunities for organizations like ours at the event being held by the City. The map for this event is included in this packet.



- I am working with the Fair Housing Partnership to schedule our next housing provider training. We are aiming to hold these more frequently to offer free training to providers who are interested in learning more about their fair housing responsibilities.

MEETINGS AND NEW CONNECTIONS:

- I had a follow-up meeting on 5/10/2024 with Standing Firm to discuss their fall conference, the City's involvement in the training program, and next steps for outreach and education on the domestic violence protections in employment.
- The PA Fair Housing Collaborative meeting was held on 5/17/2024. Attendees were able to share the activities from Fair Housing Month as well as upcoming endeavors.
- I met with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and the NAACP on the police academy rejection issues on 5/21/2024. The update, which was also highlighted in the press, is that the police are giving another opportunity to those who were rejected from the police academy to be evaluated by a different psychologist. The NAACP is watching this matter closely, and we have follow-up meetings scheduled to discuss movement on this issue.
- On 5/22/2024 Chris and I toured the Latino Community Center's new location and spoke with their outreach and education team. We are working to schedule a time to join them for a community meeting to field questions from their community members.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Our CLE *Employment Discrimination: The Administrative Process* is scheduled for July 31st at the City-County Building. The flyer for same is attached. Please share with anyone who may be interested!
- Listen for our WESA equal employment radio ads this month! We are currently looking into bus shelter advertisements as well.
- The Commission's council briefing is tentatively rescheduled for Tuesday, July 9th and will be held in two 45-minute sessions beginning at 2pm.
- We are working on new City Code protections for Medical Marijuana User (employment), individualized assessment of people with a criminal history (housing), and homelessness (employment, housing, and public accommodations).
- Staff continue to work with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Housing Implementation Team to prepare a Renting to Newcomers presentation. This project is an extension of the previous Renting to Refugees project, wherein landlords were given information on the benefits of renting to refugees and provided support for welcoming those tenants.
- Our *Pittsburgh LGBTQIA+ Housing Rights Survey* is drafted and our vendor Outwith Studio is beginning community engagement.

Commission on Human Relations 105000					
		2024	2024	Diff	notes
51 SALARIES					
					Please see separate table
52602 - TUITION REIMBURSEMENT					
53 PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES		50,188	50,688	500	
53101 - Administrative Fees		600	600	0	
	Membership costs	600	600	0	
53105 - Recording/Filing Fees		1,000	1,000	0	
	Stenographer Services	1,000	1,000	0	
53301 - Workforce Training		4,438	4,438	-500	
	Registrations/travel	4,438	3,938	-500	Move to 53509
53509 - Computer Maintenance		7,100	7,600	500	
	Canva (graphic design)	150	150	0	
	Zoom (webinar license)	1,000	1,000	0	
	Hootsuite (social media planning)	500	500	0	
	CaseText	0	500	500	Moved from 53301
	Creatio (customer service software license)	5,450	5,450	0	
53901 - Professional Services		32,150	32,150	0	
	General solicitor	30,000	25,000	-5,000	
	Speaker fees, translation/interpretation services, etc.	2,150	7,150	5,000	
55 OTHER SERVICES		2,550	2,550	0	
55305 - Advertising Promotional		2,300	2,300	0	
	Ads to promote services, hearings & events	2,300	2,100	-200	Move to 56151
55309 - Advertising Regulatory		50	50	0	
	Required legal ads for special meetings	50	50	0	
55701 - Transportation		200	200	0	
	Parking reimbursement for Commission members	200	200	0	
56 SUPPLIES		2,350	2,350	0	
56101 - Office Supplies		1,850	1,850	0	
	Staples, Amazon Business, Office Depot	1,850	1,850	0	
56151 - Operational Supplies		500	500	0	
	Water, catering	500	700	200	Moved from 55305

55,088	55,588	0
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2025 Salary Roster

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>FTE</u>		<u>2025 Salary</u>	<u>2025 Total Benefits (30%)</u>	<u>2025 Total Position Cost</u>
Director	Rachel Shepherd	1	32G	\$109,640	\$32,892	\$142,532
Deputy Director	Christopher Soult	1	26E	\$79,541	\$23,862	\$103,403
Senior Investigator, Field	Rita Porterfield	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Senior Investigator, Field	Jeffrey Cameron	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Senior Investigator, Field	Lauren Law	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Senior Investigator, Field	VACANT	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Fiscal & Contracting Coordinator	Courtney Smith	1	18E	\$57,006	\$17,102	\$74,107
Administrative Assistant	Kevin Carroll	1	17E	\$54,448	\$16,334	\$70,782
Part-Time Allowance	VACANT			\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
				\$559,826	\$167,948	\$727,774

assumes a 2% raise

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>FTE</u>		<u>2025 Salary</u>	<u>2025 Total Benefits</u>	<u>2025 Total Position Cost</u>
Director	Rachel Shepherd	1	32G	\$109,640	\$32,892	\$142,532
Deputy Director	Christopher Soult	1	26E	\$79,541	\$23,862	\$103,403
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Senior Investigator, Field	Lauren Law	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Senior Investigator, Field	VACANT	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Outreach & Intake Coordinator	Kevin Carroll	1	8-H	\$63,548	\$19,064	\$82,612
Executive Assistant	Courtney Smith	1	18E	\$57,006	\$17,102	\$74,108
Part-Time Allowance	VACANT			\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
				\$568,926	\$170,678	\$739,604

Requested increase: \$11,831



**Pittsburgh Commission
On Human Relations**
Education · Collaboration · Enforcement



FREE CLE

EMPLOYMENT **DISCRIMINATION: THE** **ADMINISTRATIVE** **PROCESS**

- Attorney and Paralegal CLE credit-eligible
- Familiarize yourself with the administrative investigation process
- Learn how to make the most of working with the Commissions (at the local and Federal level) to support your clients
- FREE lunch provided



Wednesday, July 31, 2024
from 11:30am to 2:30pm



Learning Lab, Room 646
City-County Building
(Grant Street Side)
414 Grant St
Downtown
Pittsburgh



Register here:

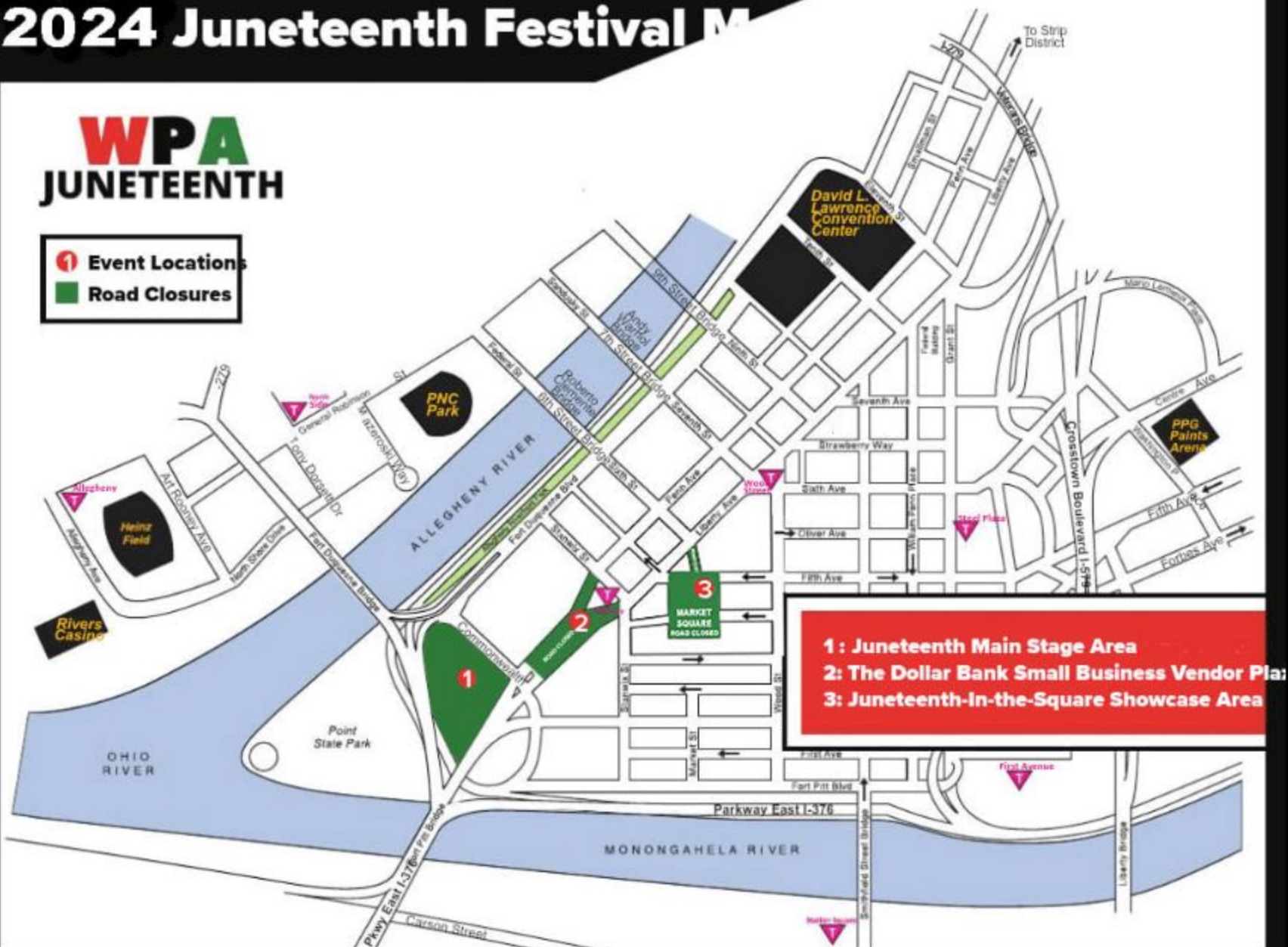
<https://forms.gle/6fpRmQTZWymdm2f59>

Need an accommodation? Let us know by calling
412-328-6786 or emailing
human.relations@pittsburghpa.gov

2024 Juneteenth Festival Map

WPA
JUNETEENTH

- 1 Event Locations
- 2 Road Closures





**Pittsburgh Commission
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- FREE lunch provided



Wednesday, July 31, 2024
from 11:30am to 2:30pm



Learning Lab, Room 646
City-County Building
(Grant Street Side)
414 Grant St
Downtown
Pittsburgh



Register here:

<https://forms.gle/6fpRmQTZWymdm2f59>

Need an accommodation? Let us know by calling
412-328-6786 or emailing
human.relations@pittsburghpa.gov