



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

Special Meeting to Review Discrimination and Human Relations Legislation

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

[15-7711](#)

Bill 46

AN ORDINANCE: Repealing and Replacing Chapter 27 DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION with updated provisions expanding protected classes and prohibitions and establishing various other regulations.

Sponsors: Affa, Gerlach, Hendricks, Mota, Napoli, Santos and Mr. Zucal

Attachments: [Bill 46 HRC.docx](#)

[Lehigh County DHR.pdf](#)

[City DHR Provisionsn.docx](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated good evening.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated good evening. This is a Special Meeting to review Discrimination and Human Relations Legislation. He asked Mr. Hanlon to do a Roll Call.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Hanlon and asked is there something who would like to open or discuss.

Attorney Maria Montero stated that they usually allow the individual from Council who presented the Ordinance to speak on it, if they would like to start it off.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok, Ms. Gerlach.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated yes, so when they passed the Resolution on protecting members of the LGBTQ community, members of the community came forth and suggested that they update the city's Human Relations Ordinance so that it would be better reflective of 2025. It was suggested that they look at the county's ordinance which is the most comprehensive

ordinance out there as a model to follow. She stated that is what is in front of them and that is what they will be discussing tonight. A very comprehensive ordinance that really looks at multi-facets of society and different groups that definitely needs protection. She stated that she thinks that they have Ms. Bradbury here, if anyone has questions because she wrote the ordinance stating that I did not write the ordinance.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated before they go is it anybody on he dais that wants to make any comments about it.

Mr. Santo Napoli asked do they know the last time that this was updated. He stated that he remembers Ms. Bradbury mentioned.

Attorney Adam Rosenthal stated that he believes it was 2020, they were working representatives with the PHRC. They made those amendments back in 2020.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated amendments in 2020, but the actual legislation was before that though.

Attorney Adam Rosenthal stated that the legislation was from 2002. The city amended the protected class and in a few other sections in 2020.

Attorney Maria Montero stated to her knowledge, Allentown has had a functioning Human Relations Commission since the 80s which had investigations and had individuals that were employees so Allentown has been on the cutting edge for Human Relations and this streamlining this ordinance along with the county's. In fact, it is almost like a mirror of the county's with a couple of added protections.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok.

Attorney Adam Rosenthal stated one correction. He stated just looking at the Bill now. It was first introduced in 1963, amended in 2002 and then amended again 2020. It has been here since 1963.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok, thank you and stated that he will open it up to the public. He stated at this point if anybody wishes to speak to it. He stated that he sees nobody. He stated to Ms. Bradbury if she wishes to speak.

Ms. Liz Bradbury stated that she does. She stated that she is the author of the Lehigh County Ordinance and very familiar with the Allentown Ordinance because she served on the Human Relations Commission with you for 15 years. She stated that she has already trained the Allentown

Human Relations Commission to understand investigations, but that was based on their Ordinance. The current Ordinance. The Ordinance, the Allentown Ordinance is very outdated. It was written in 1963. Most of the Ordinance is the 1963 language. There are parts of it that are just not applicable anymore and the additions happened through the years that included things that happened federally and state, the Disability Act and things like that that was put to it that was part of state and federal law, but the addition of sexual orientation gender identity happened 23 years ago in 2002 and that is where it is now. They did make some changes to some of the language. She stated it is a little bit of streamlining. They took some protected classes out in 2020, but the Lehigh County Ordinance is the most progressive in the state. It was vetted by the lawyers at Lehigh County and it was also acknowledged by the state as being up to date and it includes things that are required by the federal government and it also has additional protected classes that are happening in other parts in the state of Pennsylvania. She asked if anybody had any questions about it. She stated that she would be happy to answer.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach thanked Ms. Bradbury for

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach thanked Ms. Bradbury for

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach thanked Ms. Bradbury for when you came here the last time and bringing this forth. She stated that she doesn't think many of them knew that our Ordinance was so out of date. She thanked Ms. Bradbury for letting them know.

Ms. Liz Bradbury stated thank you very much.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he would ask from Council's Solicitor what specific items would not be in ours now that would then be (inaudible).

Attorney Maria Montero stated that one of the items that was added was and stated that she is going to get the exact language. She stated one second. She stated that one of the items that was added was protecting different ethnic hair stylings stating that was one of the things that she do not believe was in the county ordinance, that is going to be added.

Mr. Liz Bradbury stated that it is actually in and actually it's a hair style and natural hair as long as it does not affect the safety and performance of the job. She stated that is called the Crown Act and actually in 25 full state laws in the United States, not Pennsylvania. The Lehigh County Law does cover that under the Gender Expression Section, but not as clearly as this

addition. She stated that is the only addition that goes beyond what Lehigh County law. She stated that Lehigh County law kind of covers that. It pretty much covers it, but this covers it more explicitly.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Ms. Bradbury.

Ms. Liz Bradbury stated you're welcome.

Attorney Maria Montero stated that is the only other addition.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok and asked if there were any other comments or questions from his colleagues.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he would also like to thank Ms. Bradbury and stated that he can't imagine doing his day job with 2002 standards. He stated that this is well overdue and he appreciates all her help and helping them get to this point.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Napoli and asked anyone from the public wishes to make any comments. He stated seeing none and what they are asking if this would be expanded to conclude those items that are within the county ordinance.

Attorney Adam Rosenthal stated that this is a full repeal and replace of the existing Ordinance. He stated that you are eliminating everything from the previous Ordinance and voting on the new Ordinance to replace it.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that the differences aren't that extensive. He asked you have no concerns regarding this.

Attorney Adam Rosenthal stated that the differences are extensive, but it is your legislative determination on this. He stated that he had proposed a couple of tweaks to take some of the remaining county language out of it. He stated that he doesn't know if Mr. Hanlon wants to deal with those.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the proposed amendments has been forwarded to Councilperson Gerlach.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the proposed amendments has been forwarded to Councilperson Gerlach.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the proposed amendments has been forwarded to Councilperson Gerlach.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that the proposed amendments has been

forwarded to Councilperson Gerlach.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that at the Council meeting, they can have a conversation about them, but they are and if you look at your Agenda maybe in preparation to the Council meeting you can see some of the amendments. She stated that the amendments from her read of them and Mr. Hanlon's explanation of them, they do appear to be kind of like house cleaning amendments making sure that the language applies to Allentown law and Allentown operations and not the county. She stated that if they want, they could have that conversation now and then vote on the amendments in Council. She asked if anyone has questions on the amendments.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked does that matter, Clerk.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated they can at the Council meeting.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated at the Council meeting, ok. He asked if they need a Motion to send it to the full Council meeting. He asked if he has a Motion to do so.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated ok. This will move forward to the full Council which will begin at 6:30 PM.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Ce-Ce Gerlach, that this Bill be forwarded to the full Council.

Yes: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

ADJOURNED: 6:13 PM