

DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) met on September 16, 2025, at 6:56 p.m., with Chairman Mishoe Sudler presiding. Members present were Mr. Fleming, Mr. Lott, Ms. White, Ms. Brinkley, and Mr. Faust. Ms. Mullen and Mr. Lott were absent.

Staff members present were Ms. Wheeler.

OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum was held at 6:03 p.m., prior to commencement of the Dover Human Relations Meeting.

Helena Rose and Chiara Fox, 420 East Wind Drive, addressed the Commission about Lemonade Day Dover, an initiative to bring the Lemonade Day Wilmington experience to Dover to give children entrepreneurial experience. She noted that they presented to council on September 8, 2025 and planned to meet with the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce on October 5, 2025 to hopefully secure a 501c license. They requested support from Mayor Christiansen and council, financial backing through sponsorships and/or donations, and coverage of the \$2,500 licensing fee. They are encouraging local businesses to participate as a vendor, along with sponsors and mentors throughout the event. Lastly, identifying a date in the summer of 2026 to proclaim as Lemonade Day Dover. **(Attachment #1)**

Responding to Ms. Fox, Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that if they needed further support from other city officials or agencies, please let them know, and they would look into providing that.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Fox stated that they have prepared a letter to send out and had individuals contact them to offer their support in the form of donations. Unfortunately, she noted that without a license holder yet, they could not officially begin fundraising. She noted that they have had outreach from the local Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), city council members, and local businesses.

Responding to Ms. White, Ms. Fox stated that they have had significant outreach regarding sponsorship, but noted they could not accept sponsorship donations until a license holder was in place.

Responding to Ms. White, Ms. Fox clarified that they were looking into non-profits for assistance.

Responding to Ms. White, Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that while the commission could not provide direct financial support to Ms. Fox, they could assist by sharing contact information for agencies able to help. He added that the commission could explore supporting her efforts through facilities, vending, or event space, including helping to expedite processes and assess costs for constituents.

Ms. Fox suggested that the city council and the mayor's office supported their initiative by encouraging the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to consider their presentation and offer their support as a license holder. If the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce declines, she would then ask for recommendations of other local nonprofits to consider. She noted that they would also need support from the city for licensing and related items once a date was set to make the event

successful.

Responding to Ms. White, Ms. Fox clarified that since they are not a 501(c) organization, her daughter's lemonade stand was a family event at home. However, as Lemonade Day moves forward, they plan to use sites throughout the city to host the event and any associated events.

Responding to Ms. White, Ms. Fox clarified that once they received the license holder, they would be looking for financing immediately.

Responding to Ms. White, Ms. Fox clarified that donations could not be accepted if they hoped to become a Lemonade Day affiliate city. She explained that Lemonade Day was a national program, and they require a license holder before any fundraising or sponsorships could be accepted.

Responding to Ms. Fox, Ms. Brinkley offered her support and volunteered to assist with the event.

Responding to Mr. Faust, Ms. Fox stated that they have not reached out to the governor's office. She noted that her work with students in the juvenile justice and behavioral health systems on career and technical education and mentioned that there were grant opportunities available. She stated that there was currently an open call for Grant-Made applications, but since they were not a 501(c) organization, securing a license holder was essential to proceed.

Responding to Ms. Fox, Ms. Brinkley stated that literacy was currently an initiative of Governor Meyer and suggested that as a resource to explore.

Ms. Carolyn Brinkley, a Dover Resident, in regard to Lemonade Day, the program was a wonderful opportunity for parents and children of the community to work together. She explained that it was an opportunity for parents to support their children in an endeavor where they could learn how to earn money and work together.

Dr. Reshid Walker, 49 Heartleaf Lane, expressed frustration with the Capital School District Board, superintendent, and leadership regarding the Dover High School girls' dance team. He noted the team was dropped without sufficient reason, despite parents following all protocols, and communications going unanswered. He expressed concern about inequity and injustice to the children, advocating not only for current students but future students inspired to dance. He asked how the commission could assist in continuing the discussion, noting that he felt the platform at the Capital School District had been closed and that an injustice had been done to the children.

Responding to Mr. Fleming, Dr. Walker stated that he had sent emails to the superintendent and the president of the school board, and he had not received a response.

Responding to Mr. Faust, Dr. Walker stated that the age group ranged from 14 to 18 years old.

Responding to Mr. Faust, Dr. Walker was unaware of the funds that were needed to reinstate the dance team. He noted that they had not been allowed to discuss that with the school district.

Responding to Mr. Faust, Dr. Walker estimated that funding to support the after-school dance program, including a licensed teacher or paraprofessional to supervise rehearsals and games, would be approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Responding to Mr. Faust, Dr. Walker stated that he was not aware of any meetings with the Capital School District regarding cuts to other programs, such as basketball, football, or other sports, and noted that he was unaware if that information had been disclosed to the parents.

Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that the commission does not provide immediate responses to concerns raised during the open forum. He noted that he had spoken with another parent about the issues Mr. Walker raised and encouraged both parents to complete an intake form. He explained that the commission cannot make decisions regarding school district matters but would stay informed and follow up where possible. He acknowledged concerns about the dance program affecting academic scholarships and expressed intent to discuss the situation with other individuals, including Bishop Lott of District Two (2), to address any potential disregard by the Capital School District.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Dr. Walker clarified that there were approximately 15 girls on the team.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Dr. Walker stated that he was not there to criticize the school district but to advocate for the students.

Chiara Fox, 420 East Wind Drive, stated that she worked with parents and families in Kent County to promote civic education and engagement in local government. Regarding Dr. Walker's concerns, she noted that the public comments at the last school board meeting were strong, and parent representatives had received a letter from the superintendent. She encouraged those with questions or concerns to attend the school board meeting on Wednesday, September 18th. She also referenced the Student Advocacy Center, which could help support families when the district had not addressed issues. She noted that the center offers education and equity ambassador training beginning in October to help parents engage effectively with their schools and boards.

Jacklyn McClain, 15 Terry Circle, stated that her daughter was a captain of the Dover High School Dancing Divas. In response to Mr. Faust, she noted that the school district had not incurred costs for the team. The parents had funded uniforms and competition fees for the past three years. Dover High School only provided the coach's salary, who has since been let go. She raised concerns about recent issues with uniforms and noted that her daughter learned via email that the team would no longer perform at football games, limiting performances to home basketball games. She questioned how the team could continue to represent Dover High School in competitions and parades under those restrictions.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Ms. McClain stated that initially, the dance team was part of the Century 21 after-school program. She explained that the dance team became involved with the school band, performing in the stands during games.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Ms. McClain stated that she was unsure who oversaw the entire Century 21 program. She explained that it was an after-school program that had several different activities for the children to partake in.

Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that he planned to attend the Capital School District Board meeting on September 18th. He noted that if too many commissioners attended, it could create a quorum and violate protocol. He added that the commission would discuss the meeting afterward if other

commissioners were unable to attend.

Responding to Ms. Brinkley, Ms. McClain stated that over the summer, the girls' dance team learned routines prepared by the coach. She noted that the coach had appointed an individual to oversee the team and had arranged for the dance room to be available on Mondays and Wednesdays, but the schedule would not resume until the Century 21 program begins.

Suzanne Sanders, 183 Willis Road, followed up regarding the challenges faced by the Dover High School Dancing Divas. She noted that 11 seniors would miss the opportunity to complete portfolios for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) applications. In response to Mr. Faust, she stated that other sports programs at Dover High, such as basketball and football, have not been canceled or faced similar challenges. She explained that repeated attempts to meet with Dr. Solomon were unsuccessful, as meetings were either declined or delegated to other principals. Ms. Sanders noted that Dr. Shawndell Solomon initially approved the dance team but later reversed the decision without providing a valid explanation.

Belinda Jones, 2485 Chestnut Grove Road, followed up regarding the Dover High School Dancing Divas. She clarified that the correct program name was 21st Century, not Century 21, and noted that Ms. Brittany Smith was now working with the Dancing Divas team. She expressed concern for both current and future students, highlighting that the majorette dance team would be stopped starting in 2026, which prompted the parents to raise the issue.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Jones noted that she has not yet spoken with the Dover High Alumni and will reach out to them regarding the situation.

For the record, Chairman Mishoe Sudler wanted to clarify that it was the 21st Century program, not Century 21.

Dr. Walker clarified that he spoke with the Dover High School principal regarding the issues, but, unfortunately, no resolution was reached.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Faust moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Ms. White, and unanimously carried.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Ms. Brinkley moved to adopt the minutes from the Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting on August 19, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Faust and unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

Assessment

Chairman Mishoe Sudler shared an assessment template for outlining goals, noting that it included the mission and vision statements, which were also posted on the City of Dover website. He reminded members that at the August 19, 2025 meeting, he distributed a folder containing the non-discrimination complaint and compliance review procedure, along with the commission's strategic plan. He asked the commission to review the packet and use the information to complete the assessment template.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Wheeler stated that she did not receive his email with the attached template to print out for the commission.

Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that at the next Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting, they would review the template for the Assessment Committee.

Community Programs

Mr. Faust distributed 211 cards (**Attachment #2**), printed in English and Spanish with resource information. He suggested providing the remaining cards to council members for distribution and noted more could be obtained as needed. He reported attending an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) meeting with Ms. Vondalear Smack. He noted that the next meeting is expected in November but was unaware of the exact date. He stated that housing information from the City of Dover could not be printed due to a clerical error but would be available at the next meeting. He was also compiling accurate phone numbers for an information card to be distributed once finalized.

Chairman Mishoe Sudler reported meeting with residents of Barrister Place and informed them of the Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting on September 16th. He noted that he would be meeting with District Two Commissioners, Mr. Faust and Ms. White, at 101 Babb Drive, Luther Village, Building 2, Activity Room 2, at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Wheeler, responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, stated that no business should be conducted outside City Hall and that a quorum could not be held.

Responding to Ms. Wheeler, Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that there would be no quorum.

School Programs

Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that they heard the concerns from the constituents regarding the schools, which were some of the items he was going to discuss during the meeting. He urged the Commission to remain focused to what was happening, particularly to the comments raised by the constituents during the open forum. He noted that he plans to attend the Capital School District Board Meeting on Wednesday, September 17th, so he can get an update from the school board itself and hear what they are saying about the interaction between the community and the board itself. He did remind commissioners that they do not want to create a quorum, but that he would be at that meeting.

Responding to Chairman Mishoe Sudler, Mr. Faust mentioned that if he were detained at work, he could be contacted by call or text, and he would be available to fill in if needed for the Capital School District Board Meeting.

By-laws

Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that everyone should have a copy of the bylaws. He has not made any changes but emphasized the need to review them, especially the changes going on with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) concerns. He stressed that the bylaws should reflect their commitment to DEI and asked members to review them for future discussion.

Finance

Chairman Mishoe Sudler reported that the commission had spent money only on shirts and carts, noting that every fiscal year, they receive a \$3,000 budget. He encouraged the commissioners to be

proactive with any questions or activities, noting that they were planning for the Community Relations Weekend. He suggested coordinating the Community Relations Weekend with the city calendar to align with existing events for the benefit of both the Commission and the City of Dover.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Mishoe Sudler stated that he and Ms. White had a productive visit with state officials to observe operations and explore potential collaboration with the Attorney General's Office.

Open Discussion

There was nothing discussed.

ADJOURNMENT BY 7:00 P.M.

Chairman Mishoe Sudler moved for adjournment of the Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting, hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Travis Mishoe Sudler, I
Chair

TMS/cw

Attachments

Attachment #1 – Lemonade Day flyer and PowerPoint Presentation

Attachment #2 – 211 cards provided by Mr. Faust