



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males**  
**Government Center South**  
**Conference Room D**  
**302 W. Washington Street**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46204**  
**Wednesday, November 8, 2023**

**Call to Order:** A meeting of the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males (ICSSBM) was held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, in person at the Government Center South Building, Conference Room D, and virtually via WebEx. The meeting was called to order at 10:50am.

**Roll call - Commissioners in attendance:** Commissioner Kenneth Allen (Speaker Huston), Commissioner Veneta Becker (Senator), Commissioner Damein Jones (Proxy FSSA), Commissioner (Chair) Kari Jones (Proxy Div. of Mental Health and Addiction), Commissioner Richard Okello (Proxy ICRC), Commissioner Keshia Rich (Proxy IDOA), Commissioner (Vice-Chair) Dave Rozzell (Senator Bray).

**Via WebEx:** Commissioner Elijah Neal (Senator Bray), and Commissioner David Stewart (Proxy to Lt. Governor).

**Commissioners absent:** Commissioner William Durham (Proxy Dept. of Education), Commissioner Shanel Poole (Speaker Huston), Commissioner Dwayne Sawyer (Senator Bray), Commissioner Vernon Smith (Representative), Commissioner Larry Stribling Jr. (Proxy Dept. of Health), Commissioner Lamar Sykes (Speaker Huston), Commissioner Greg Taylor (Senator), and Commissioner Tori Williams (Proxy Dept. of Corrections).

Commissioner (Chair) Kari Jones stated a quorum was established at 10:53am.

**Others in attendance:** N/A

**Chair's Report:** Chair Jones informed everyone regarding the Commission's purpose and five-areas of focus. The Chair provided an update on the 2023 ICSSBM grant program. She stated that 22 proposals were submitted, and the grant subcommittee will provide the commission with the recommendations. A special meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 6, at 10:30am to vote on the grant recipients.

In January (2024) the Commission will have a retreat and elections for 2024. The Chair asked that if anyone is interested in running for Chair or Vice-Chair to please email Director Giles with qualifications. Chair Jones provided what she believes as great qualifications for a Chair so that the Commission can keep its momentum for 2024. In addition, the Chair shared that the Commission will be participating in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis.

At the October Commission meeting, there was a productive discussion regarding programming for 2024, and at that time Commissioner Kenneth Allen stated that there is a strategic plan that exists. Based on that discussion the Chair stated that she wants to form a subcommittee to work on the strategic plan and use the SWOT Analysis as the base to create the strategic plan.

Chair Jones made a motion to create a Strategic Planning Subcommittee which was approved by Commissioner Kenneth Allen and seconded by Commissioner Dave Rozzell. Roll-call vote as follows: Commissioner Kenneth Allen (Y), Commissioner Damein Jones (Y), Commissioner (Chair) Kari Jones (Y) Commissioner Elijah Neal (Y), Commissioner Richard Okello (Y), Commissioner Kesha Rich (Y), Commissioner (Vice-Chair) Dave Rozzell (Y), and Commissioner David Stewart (Y). The vote passed unanimously.

Following the vote, Chair Jones volunteered to Chair the strategic plan subcommittee. Commissioner Kesha Rich and Commissioner Dave Rozzell will also serve on the subcommittee.

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Chair Jones moved forward with the adoption of the minutes from the October 18, 2023, meeting. Commissioner Dave Rozzell approve the October 18, 2023, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard Okello. Roll-call vote as follows: Commissioner Kenneth Allen (Y), Commissioner Damein Jones (Y), Commissioner (Chair) Kari Jones (Y) Commissioner Elijah Neal (Y), Commissioner Richard Okello (Y), Commissioner Kesha Rich (Y), Commissioner (Vice-Chair) Dave Rozzell (Y), and Commissioner David Stewart (Y). The vote passed unanimously.

Following the approval of the meeting minutes, Senator Becker questioned if she gets a vote. Following the Senator's question, there was a group discussion regarding political officials voting on Commission motions brought before the Commissioners. Director Giles stated that he will review the statute and have an answer at the January Commission meeting regarding political officials having a vote on agenda items. During the meeting Commissioner Kenneth Allen emailed Chair Jones and Director Giles the section of the statute that states political officials are voting members.

**Review and Approval of the Financial Report:** Commissioner Kenneth Allen motioned to approve the September 2023; financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Damein Jones. Roll-call vote as follows: Commissioner Kenneth Allen (Y), Commissioner Damein Jones (Y), Commissioner (Chair) Kari Jones (Y) Commissioner Elijah Neal (Y), Commissioner Richard Okello (Y), Commissioner Kesha Rich (Y), Commissioner (Vice-Chair) Dave Rozzell (Y), and Commissioner David Stewart (Y). The vote passed unanimously.

**Director's Report:** Director Giles provided an update on the career and resource fairs and his grassroots marketing efforts while in Gary, IN. In addition, the Director informed Commission members that he had State Claim 11294 Voucher Forms for those who need to be reimbursed for attending the meeting. Following Director Giles report, Commissioner Dave Rozzell asked how far in the past can you go back when you submit your Per Deim form. Director Giles did not have an answer, but he would get the answer and inform the Commission at the next meeting.

Commissioner Kenneth Allen stated that in the past Commissioner reimbursement was \$50.00 instead of the current reimbursement for \$35.00. Director Giles stated that he will research the reasoning behind the cost change and report back to the Commission. In addition, he asked about the status of the annual report and there was a general discussion about when will the report be completed for commission review? Chair Jones stated an update will be provided to the Commission at the January meeting.

**Unfinished Business:** Commissioner Kenneth Allen asked Director Giles how was the public notified about the November meeting and Director Giles replied by social media and outside of the offices of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission.

**New Business:** Chair Jones provided information that was shared by community partners during IBBHI planning meetings. Our community partners stated that when they communicated with local barbers, they did not know about the Commission's IBBHI. Based on that feedback, Chair Jones stated that she will develop talking points on the IBBHI and distributed to Commission members to help spread the word about the IBBHI and increase barbershop participation. Chair Jones further stated that it would be great if Black men share the information with barbers instead of herself to provide more impact.

Following Chair Jones' report, she asked Director Giles to share his experiences when he met with the barbers in Gary, IN regarding their participation in April IBBHI event. Director Giles informed the Commission that he was well received in Gary, IN, and they stated that the IBBHI is needed in the community. The barbers are just waiting on information to participate in the April event.

**Announcement for the Good of the Order:** Commissioner Kenneth Allen mentioned that on November 18, the Indianapolis Commission will have a conversation geared to black owned business at the Ivy Tech Community College Culinary and Conference Center.

Commissioner Dave Rozzell informed the Commission that there is a salute to celebrate veterans on the Black Male Commission webpage and suggested if something like that could be added to the ICSSBM webpage. Director Giles informed Commissioner Dave Rozzell there is not enough time to approve his request. Commissioner Dave Rozzell was informed that all new communication request must be approved by the Governor's office.

There being no further business to discuss, the ICSSBM November Commission meeting concluded at 11:57am.