

**NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY COMMISSION ON REPARATIONS REMEDIES**  
**Commissioner Conversation**  
**Tuesday, March 4, 2025**

**Location: Memorial Art Gallery, 500 University Avenue, Rochester, New York 14607**

**Members Present: Commissioner Dr. Seanelle Hawkins and Commissioner Timothy Hogues**

**Via Zoom: Commissioner Dr. Deborah Jenkins, Commissioner Dr. Ron Daniels, Commissioner Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq., Commissioner Linda Tarrant-Reid, Commissioner Linda Brown-Robinson, and Commissioner Jennifer Jones Austin, Esq.**

**Member Excused: Commissioner Dr. Darrick Hamilton**

## **I. Call to Order and Welcome**

Chair Hawkins called the business meeting of the New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies (NYSCCRR) to order at 4:13 p.m. Commissioner Timothy Hogues introduced himself and made brief comments. Commissioners Jennifer Jones Austin and Linda Tarrant-Reid introduced themselves virtually. Commissioner Linda Brown-Robinson was attending virtually, but unable to introduce herself due to technical difficulties. Commissioner Dr. Ron Daniels also joined the meeting virtually and made brief comments.

Chair Hawkins stated that she is proud that New York State is the second state, after California, to establish a statewide Commission to study reparations and the enduring harms and impacts of slavery.

Chair Hawkins thanked two staff members from Governor Hochul's office, Jacob Mahoney & Shakera Tems, for attending the meetings, stating their presence acknowledged the support of the Governor, along with the bill sponsors, NYS Senator James Sanders, Jr. and NYS Assemblymember Michaelle Solages.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

Chair Hawkins requested a motion to approve the December 16, 2024 minutes.

**Motion:** Commissioner Hogues moved to accept the December 16, 2024 meeting minutes.

**Second:** Commissioner Tarrant-Reid seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was moved and carried by unanimous vote.

## **III. Update on the work of the Commission**

Chair Hawkins presented a PowerPoint deck introducing the Reparations Commission, a brief history of slavery in New York, an overview of the Reparations Bill and similar actions across the U.S., and the work of the Commission and community outreach. The presentation is available online at [www.ny.gov/reparations](http://www.ny.gov/reparations)

Chair Hawkins spoke about the Commission's mandate to produce a report of recommendations to address the longstanding harms and inequities that descendants of the enslaved and African American New York residents experienced and continue to experience. The Chair stated that the Commission is not ready to submit a report in July 2025 as the Commission is still staffing up, and have requested an extension to ensure the submission of a quality report.

Chair Hawkins expressed her gratitude for the leadership and support of the Commission's partners including the Office of General Services, OGS. She noted that there are RFQs and RFPs seeking individuals or firms to fill positions including: Operations Manager, Research Historian, Research and Policy Analysis Firm, and an Audio-Visual Firm. Several of the positions are in process of interviewing candidates or still accepting submissions. For those interested in working with the Commission, Chair Hawkins encouraged interested parties to visit the website, [www.ny.gov/reparations](http://www.ny.gov/reparations) to apply for the positions.

Commissioner Hogues further explained that these positions will help the Commission to execute the work needed. He stated that those positions are contracted and not employees of the Commission or the State.

#### **IV. Commissioner Engagement**

Chair Hawkins urged the Commissioners to be active participants in the business meetings and the public hearings that take place all over New York State to engage with the community members and hear their stories about the harms and impact of slavery on their lives.

The Commissioners also discussed establishing a separation of the business meetings from the public hearings as a way to allow for the opportunity to engage more actively. It was then decided by Chair Hawkins that the Commission would take the recommendations back to the Executive Committee.

Chair Hawkins made known that each of the Executive Committee Members are charged with and have agreed to take a group, noting that there needs to be a commitment from all the Commissioners to attend so we can there can be those small meetings to talk about points of view and the work they have.

#### **V. Community Engagement**

Chair Hawkins and the Commissioners discussed how to best to deepen its understanding of community perspectives and solutions to strengthen its report as they are looking to ensure that they are receiving solutions that are going to inform the work by expanding all possible opportunities for public involvement.

#### **VI. Subject Matter Expert Engagement**

Commissioner Daniels opined that the mandate was to come up with subject matter experts and couple them with specific themes and specific issue areas.

Chair Hawkins added that there were discussions to have zoom public hearings with specific invited subject matter experts attending to talk about specific topics.

Chair Hawkins recognized that there was still work needed to be done regarding the latter agenda items and suggested that the issues be taken back to the small groups to deepen those conversations. She indicated that, for the sake of time, the Commission would just move forward with the public hearing.

#### **VII. Public Hearing Plans**

Chair Hawkins reported that Public Hearings would be held throughout New York State and the schedule of meetings is being prepared and will be uploaded to the Commission website as soon as dates and

locations are confirmed. Commissioner Linda Brown-Robinson expressed interest in assisting in organizing public hearings.

### **VIII. Adjournment and Closing Remarks**

Chair Hawkins thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m. with a five-minute recess to prepare for the public hearing.