NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY COMMISSION ON REPARATIONS REMEDIES

Business Meeting Minutes - Final

Friday, January 9, 2026 - 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Locations: Philipse Manor Hall Historic Site, 29 Warburton Avenue, Yonkers, NY and Urban League of Rochester, 265 N. Clinton Ave, Rochester, NY 14605

Commissioners Present (Yonkers): Vice Chair Rev. Dr. Deborah Jenkins, Secretary Linda Tarrant-Reid, Treasurer Jennifer Jones Austin, Dr. Darrick Hamilton, and Lurie Daniel Favors (via videoconference)

Commissioners Present (Rochester): Chair Dr. Seanelle Hawkins, Commissioner Timothy Hogues and Parliamentarian Stuart Mitchell

Commissioners excused: Dr. Ron Daniels and Linda Brown-Robinson

Staff Acknowledgments: Thank you: General Counsel India Sneed Williams, Operations Manager Melody Harkness, Executive Assistant Jessy Adwar and NYS Office of General Services (OGS) for their support.

Acknowledgments: Thank you: Philipse Manor Hall Historic Site (Yonkers, NY) and NY Urban League of Rochester (Rochester, NY) for hosting and A/V support and appreciation to New York State Legislature and Community Partners for their assistance.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Dr. Seanelle Hawkins called the Business Meeting to order. She welcomed commissioners, staff, and members of the public observing via livestream and acknowledged the dual-site meeting format in Yonkers and Rochester.

II. Roll Call

Secretary Linda Tarrant-Reid conducted roll call. Quorum confirmed.

III. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Timothy Hogues moved to accept the minutes from the Business Meetings of April 10, 2025, August 1, 2025, and October 24, 2025.

Treasurer Jennifer Jones Austin seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Business Meetings of April 10, 2025, August 1, 2025, and October 24, 2025.

IV. Staff Updates

Chair Hawkins introduced new staff and vendors supporting the work of the Commission.

A. Operations Manager
Melody Harkness of Harkness Consulting Solutions, LLC was introduced as the Operations Manager for the New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies.

B. General Counsel
Commissioner Jennifer Jones Austin introduced India Sneed-Williams of IQEQ Law, who will serve as General Counsel to the Commission. The General Counsel will provide legal guidance to ensure compliance with governing statutes, rules, and procedures applicable to the Commission.

V. Old Business

1. Review of the Commission's adopted Working Definition of Reparations:

"Reparations is a process that authentically repairs and acknowledges the physical, cultural, psychological, mental, material, and/or physical destruction, injury, and/or harm of a people and/or society, including their identity. It includes processes of repairing, healing, and restoring a people and society who were injured due to their group identity in violation of their fundamental human rights by governments, corporations, institutions, and/or individuals."

2. Review of approved timeline for the Final Report to the Governor and Legislature:

- March – May 2026: Work with PSA and Subject Matter Contributors, conduct Public Hearings, and Business Meetings.
- June 2026: Draft Final Report due.
- July–August 2026: Commission review and feedback.
- September 2026: Final revisions and acceptance of Draft Final Report by Commissioners (majority vote).
- December 2026: Final Report submitted to Governor and Legislature.
- Jan–Mar 2027: Community education and advocacy on recommendations.

3. Discussion on the structure of Commissioner engagement and subcommittees, including liaison roles to vendors and subject-area contributors. Commissioners encouraged to select a subcommittee to participate in, subject to compliance with the New York State Open Meetings Law.

Subcommittee	**Consultant / Role Supported**	**Commissioner Liaison**
Economist Subcommittee	Economist	Dr. Darrick Hamilton
Policy Subcommittee	Policy Analyst	Dr. Deborah D. Jenkins, Vice Chair
Historian Subcommittee	Historian	Linda Tarrant-Reid, Secretary
Public Education Subcommittee	Education Coordinator	Timothy R. Hogues
Legal Subcommittee	General Counsel	Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq.
Governance Subcommittee	Parliamentarian	Linda Tarrant-Reid, Secretary
Operations Coordination	Operations Manager Executive Director	Dr. Seanelle Hawkins, Chair
Communications and Outreach	Communications	Linda Tarrant-Reid, Secretary

VI. Presentation by Policy Studies Associates on a Framework of Reparations

Chair Hawkins introduced Jeanine Hildreth, Research Historian and Ayanna Platt, Policy Analyst from Policy Studies Associates. In January 2025, the New York State Office of General Services (OGS), on behalf of the New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies issued two requests for proposals (RFPs) to support the work of the Commission as Research Historian and Research and Policy Analyst. Policy Studies Associates (PSA) was selected to lead both projects, with contract kickoff in late July 2025.

The Following Draft Reports submitted by PSA Staff were Reviewed in Detail:

- New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies (NYSCCRR) Research Historian & Research and Policy Analyst Project Approach and Timeline
- New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies (NYSCCRR) Research Historian Draft Report Outline
- New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies (NYSCCRR) Research and Policy Analyst Draft Report Outline

Commissioners engaged in discussion and provided guidance on analytical lenses, policy domains, and areas for further consideration. Commissioners emphasized the importance of grounding recommendations in historical evidence, legal analysis, and testimony received during Public Hearings.

Commissioners expressed appreciation for the work completed to date and acknowledged the leadership of Vice Chair Jenkins and Secretary Tarrant-Reid as Commission liaisons to PSA.

PSA will continue to refine the reports and will fulfill their contractual obligation with products completed as per the approved timeline outlined above.

VII. Hiring Updates

Chair Hawkins provided updates on the following positions:

- Executive Director – Candidate has been identified. Position closed.
- Economist – Candidate has been identified. Position closed.
- Education Coordinator – Candidate has been identified. Position closed.

VIII. New Business

A. Working Definition of “Harms”
Chair Hawkins introduced a discussion regarding the need for a working definition of “harms” and clarify research questions for consideration by PSA team. The commissioners offered several comments and recommendations. The Commissioners instructed the PSA team to carefully analyze the detailed recommendations from public testimony provided by hundreds of New York State citizens who have and will continue to testify at the commission Public Hearings being held throughout New York State.

B. Communications and Public Engagement
Commissioner Timothy Hogues introduced discussion regarding strategies for communicating the work of the Commission to the public. The Commission's communications vendor, Words Warriors, was discussed. Commissioner Linda Tarrant-Reid serves as liaison to the vendor.
It was agreed that Words Warriors will prepare a Presentation to the Commission outlining Words Warriors communications strategy for the Commission and will present at a future Reparations Business Meeting.

IX. Announcements

Chair Hawkins announced that the Commission's next Public Hearing will be on January 17, 2026, in Binghamton New York.

Chair Hawkins announced that the Commission will attend and host a workshop at the New York State Association of Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislators, Inc. Caucus on February 14, 2026, in Albany New York.

X. Adjournment

Business Meeting adjourned at 2:00m PM. An unedited transcript of the proceedings of the Business Meeting of Friday, January 9, 2026 can be reviewed at:
https://documentcloud.adobe.com/spodintegration/index.html#