

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING  
OF MAY 23, 2016**

The meeting convened at 1:00 PM, Monday, May 23, 2016 at 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Commissioners present:

Joel Bolstein, Interim Chair  
Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chairperson  
Dr. Radheshyam Agrawal (phone)  
George Dawson (phone)  
Gerald S. Robinson

Commissioners Absent:

Kathleen Dormer-Carusone (excused)  
Hon. Terence Farrell (excused)

Staff present:

JoAnn Edwards, Executive Director  
Tammy McElfresh, Special Assistant to the Executive Director  
Kathy Morrison, Chief Counsel  
John Clark, Director of Enforcement  
Geoffrey Biringer, Director of Education and Community Services  
Christina Reese, Press Secretary  
Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Office Director  
Carl Summerson, Hearing Examiner  
Debbie Walters, Administrative Officer  
Morgan Williams, Acting Pittsburgh Regional Office Director  
Diana Medley, Acting Philadelphia Regional Office Director (phone)  
Lyle Wood, Human Relations Representative (Phone)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bolstein called the meeting to order 1:00 PM. He further announced that the meeting had been advertised and was open to the public, in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine Act. He stated that prior to the meeting, in keeping with the confidentiality requirements of the Sunshine Act; there had been a closed session to discuss compliance matters.

Chairman Bolstein announced the meeting was being recorded.

Attendance was taken and the presence of a quorum was noted.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Chairman Bolstein noted the attendance of guest, Howard Reid.

**APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the Public Commission held on April 25, 2016 were presented for approval.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Robinson to approve the minutes with the correction noted on the spelling of Mr. Reid's name. With all in favor, motion carried.

**CHIEF COUNSEL'S LITIGATION STATUS REPORT**

Chief Counsel Morrison provided a review of her status report and a copy is attached for review. Ms. Morrison also provided in her report an outline of work done by the legal staff and trainings they have conducted.

Chief Counsel Morrison provided follow-up to questions regarding Air-BNB from the previous commission meeting and discussed a federal law suit regarding race discrimination.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Edwards welcomed Mr. Reid and extended her appreciation of his continued support and partnership with the PHRC.

**Report on the Budget**

Executive Director Edwards noted that the Office of the Budget provided the commissioners with an update during the Executive Session held earlier in the day. At this time, it is anticipated there will be a \$46K surplus incumbent on the media campaign being completed. A discussion ensued regarding the carry-over of waver funds going forward.

**Report of Education and Community Services Division**

Director Biringer provided an update stating the Education Division is active in 17 school districts at various stages.

Director Biringer provided an update on the training being coordinated with the assistance of Howard Reid and Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Director.

Executive Director Edwards asked for an update on the Penn Hills School District and current issues. Director Biringer provided as background that the school district currently has \$113M deficit as a result of theft of services, construction overages, etc. The District Attorney is looking at criminal charges. Director Biringer believes Education Attorney Jelani Cooper has made contact with the school district related to a student's alleged assault. Due to the current issues with the school district, residents in the area are placing their homes up for sale.

Chairman Bolstein asked who is responsible. Is the school board diverse? The district is currently working through the impacts such as which schools to close and which teachers to lay off.

Director Biringer noted that the Education Division's first priority is education cases that come to the division. Director Biringer has been working those cases because Jelani is working on two cases on the Public Hearing docket.

The Inter Agency Taskforce meeting minutes were added to the commission packet this month. Director Biringer asked if the commissioners would like these added. It was noted that Taskforce meetings are conducted on the third Thursday of every other month. The next Taskforce meeting will be July 21, 2016 and will be held in the Central Office Main Conference Room.

Director Biringer provided a summary of the Outreach and Training reports as well as an update on the school reading project.

Press Secretary Christina Reese continues outreach efforts with conducting budget meetings with legislators.

### **Report on EEOC and HUD Contracts**

The monthly and year-to-date reports contain specifics and are attached. The performance of each office toward meeting its MTD goal for the EEOC contract is as follows:

**Pittsburgh** - 23 cases submitted for a target of 28 = 82% toward satisfying goal  
**Harrisburg** - 60 cases submitted for a target of 45 = 133% toward satisfying goal  
**Philadelphia** - 24 cases submitted for a target of 40 = 60% toward satisfying goal

Year to date, Pittsburgh has submitted 129, Harrisburg 364 and Philadelphia 177 cases for credit. 791 cases or 58% remain to reach the goal of 1,356. The monthly and year-to-date reports are attached. The 169 contract deficit will relate to be a projected \$118K decrease in contract value.

The monthly HUD report was provided in the commission packet for review in advance of the meeting.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

An update on the Strategic Plan was provided by the Executive Director and current scorecards were distributed. The management team met last week to look over the plan and reported to the commissioners during the Executive Session this morning. Adjustments noted were that two goals need to be taken out for the QA position and the Education/Outreach position in each office and once removed from the plan we can move forward.

### **NEXT SESSION**

The May Commission meeting will be held Monday, June 27, 2016, at 1:00 PM in Harrisburg, PA.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chairman Bolstein reviewed the list of proposed list of the FY 16-17 Commission meeting dates and approved the list as provided.

Chairman Bolstein also extended a thank you to the regional directors for including the Star Reports in this month's packet. Joel expressed he personally agrees that there needs to be positive reinforcement and appreciation extended to our staff as it is clear people are working hard.

The Executive Director and Chairman Bolstein presented a plaque to Gerald Robinson for his years of service, commitment and dedication while chairing the Commission.

Director Biringer provided the resume of Alicia Carpenter for Commission approval as a member of the Southwest Advisory Council.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Robinson to approve Alisha L. Carpenter as a member of the Southwest Advisory Council. With all in favor, motion carried.

**ADJUDICATION**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting was electronically recorded. The file will become part of the permanent record.

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Agrawal to adjourn. With all in favor, Chairman Bolstein adjourned the Public Session.

Respectfully submitted,

S\Joel Bolstein

S\Radheshyam Agrawal

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Joel Bolstein  
Interim Chairman

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Dr. Radheshyam Agrawal  
Commissioner