

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING
OF MAY 22, 2017**

The meeting convened at 1:00 PM, Monday May 22, 2017 at 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners present:

Joel Bolstein, Interim Chair
Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chairperson (excused)
Dr. Radheshyam Agrawal (absent)
George Dawson
Kathleen Dormer-Carusone (absent)
Michael Hardiman
Curtis Jones
Mayur Patel (absent)
Gerald S. Robinson

Staff present:

JoAnn Edwards, Executive Director
Tammy McElfresh, Special Assistant to the Executive Director
Kathy Morrison, Chief Counsel
Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Office Director
Jinada Rochelle, Assistant Director of Enforcement
Geoffrey Biringer, Director of Education and Community Services
Christine Reese, Press Secretary
Carl Summerson, Hearing (absent)
Lyle Wood, Pittsburgh Regional Office Director
Diana Medley, Philadelphia Regional Office Director
Debbie Walters, Administrative Officer
Katie Petruczok, Mediation Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bolstein called the meeting to order at 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 not noted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

No guests were in attendance for this meeting.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Approval of minutes of the April 24, 2017 Public Meeting were tabled due to lack of a quorum.

CHIEF COUNSEL'S LITIGATION STATUS REPORT

Chief Counsel Morrison reviewed her status report and a copy was provided. Chief Counsel Morrison provided in her report an outline of work done by the legal staff and trainings they have conducted. Chief Counsel Morrison also provides for the commissioners an overview of cases filed in commonwealth court and cases of interest to PHRC.

Commissioner Jones asked about sovereign immunity granted to SEPTA from the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations which had gone back and forth between Commonwealth Court and Supreme Court.

Chief Counsel Morrison noted that PHRC former special counsel and friend Sharon Lopez has become the first Latina and mother to become the President of the PA Bar Association.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**Report on the Budget**

Executive Director Edwards provided an update of the PHRC budget and reviewed the current budget summary noting a surplus anticipated of approximately \$71,000. A copy of the budget summary is included in the meeting records.

Assistant Director of Enforcement Jinada Rochelle advised the HUD contract is currently at three cases ahead of projections; however, still slightly behind on the overall goal of 120 case closure goal for the fiscal year. A joint training was conducted with Director Rochelle and Assistant Chief Counsel Stephanie Chapman, the You Tube video has been posted to the internet and a fair Housing Conference at the Turnpike Commission is scheduled for August 9, 2017.

Report on Mediation

An overview of the monthly report was provided. Ms. Petruczok noted a change to the closure procedure where cases will be processed at the Regional Office. First phone calls to respondents are up to date and Ms. George is working on processing four cases. Ms. George of the Pittsburgh Office, who has been processing phone calls for the Mediation program sat in on a mediation to gain additional knowledge about the process. Ms. Petruczok also noted she is working on statistics for the year-end report.

On behalf of the commissioners, Regional Director Lyle Wood was instructed to thank Karen George and her assistance is much appreciated.

Report of Director of Education and Community Service

Director Biringner noted the notes of the last Taskforce meeting are attached to the report distributed and that he is looking for a presenter for the June Taskforce meeting.

Minutes continue to be gathered from Local HRC meetings and the next LHRC to be focused on will be the Erie area.

Chief Counsel Morrison noted she continues working with Carl Summerson to draft the medium level agreement where LHRCs will give a copy of the questionnaire and can accept questionnaires on behalf of PHRC, will forward a copy to the PHRC and then attempt to mediate. If mediation is unsuccessful then the LHRC notify the PHRC which will proceed with an investigation.

Report of Press Secretary

Press Secretary Christina Reese provided update from the Communications Report distributed in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Reese also noted that invitations went out the previous week for the Partnership Summit scheduled for June 19, 2017.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJUDICATION

Due to lack of a quorum, adjudication was deferred to the June Commission Meeting for a decision by Commissioners.

Director Biringer presented the resume of Joshua L. Wilder for Commissioner approval for the Lehigh County Advisory Council. Due to lack of a quorum, approval was deferred to the June Commission Meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Hardiman asked Executive Director for a survey of IAOHRA members to be conducted by asking if other HRCs have had similar budget cuts to those experienced by PHRC.

NEXT SESSION

The June Commission meeting will be held on Monday, June 26, 2016, at 1:00 PM at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh at Homewood, PA.

ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION:

Commissioner Robinson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardiman to adjourn. With all in favor, the Public Session was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel Bolstein
Interim Chairman

S\Radheshyam Agrawal

Dr. Radheshyam Agrawal
Commissioner