

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING
OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2017**

The meeting convened at 1:13 PM, Monday, September 18, 2017 at 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

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

Staff:

JoAnn Edwards, Executive Director
Tammy McElfresh, Special Assistant to the Executive Director
Kathy Morrison, Chief Counsel
Jinada Rochelle, Assistant Director of Enforcement
Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Office Director
Geoffrey Biringier, Director of Education and Community Services
Christine Reese, Press Secretary
Carl Summerson, Hearing Examiner
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 1:13 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

Matthew Sealy, Statewide Center for Independent Living

APPROVAL OF COMPLIANCE MINUTES**MOTION:**

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Patel to approve the minutes of the August Commission Meeting. With all in favor, the motion carried to approve the minutes.

CHIEF COUNSEL'S LITIGATION STATUS REPORT

Chief Counsel Morrison reviewed of her status report and a copy was provided. Chief Counsel Morrison also provided in her report an outline of work done by the legal staff and trainings they have conducted. Chief Counsel Morrison provided additional details for the benefit of the guest.

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

Executive Director Edwards provided an update of the PHRC budget and reviewed the current budget. A copy of the budget summary is included in the meeting records. It was also noted that there continues to be no agreement on the budget and revenue for the requested positions to be filled in October versus January. We do have Katherine Barone's support from the Office of the Budget. Executive Director Edwards noted she will continue to monitor the status.

The HUD and EEOC Contracts were reviewed. Assistant Director of Enforcement, Jinada Rochelle stated that PHRC did meet the HUD contract and had a phone conference with regard to the cases that remain unpaid. The discussions will continue as PHRC has been paid for 14 of the 36 cases. There has been no status update received on the performance plan.

Chairman Bolstein offered to sign off on a letter to Secretary Carson if needed. Assistant Director Rochelle noted we are working with the HRR's to correct what deficiencies we can.

Assistant Director Rochelle advised we are making good progress on reaching the EEOC contract and as of this past Friday 935 cases have been submitted to EEOC.

Thanks were expressed to the regions for all your hard work to reach the goal.

Commissioner Robinson requested a status update on the reports to be added to the annual report.

Report on Mediation

An overview of the monthly report was provided. Mediation Coordinator Katie Petruczok advised that Karen George of the Pittsburgh Regional Office has been in a week-long training on how to get the best respondent contact when making the Mediation phone calls. As of the writing of the Mediation Report, all cases have been assigned to a mediator.

Executive Director Edwards asked if the Mediation is on track to meet the three agreements this month. Ms. Petruczok said yes, one was submitted to Harrisburg Regional Office and two are to be finalized this week.

Taskforce

Education Director Geoffrey Biringer noted monthly meetings are now hosted by Tameka Hatcher. During the August meeting, the Charlottesville situation was discussed, and a meeting took place with the Department of Education to share the Crisis Protocol outline.

Advisory Councils

Director Biringer was asked by Executive Director Edwards to send reminders to the commissioners regarding attending council meetings. Director Biringer noted the next area to be targeted will be a council in the Erie area.

Chairman Bolstein asked the status of signed MOUs and levels of participation. Commissioner Robinson asked if there was any projection on when we will start sending and receiving notifications regarding charges filed.

Hearing Examiner Summerson stated the information has not been returned yet and will be following up.

REPORT OF PRESS SECRETARY

Press Secretary Christina Reese highlighted her report provided in advance of the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Advisory Council Membership Approvals

Proposed: Joyce Zandieh, Harrisburg
Dara Purvis, University Park

MOTION:

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve Ms. Zandieh and Ms. Purvis for Advisory Council membership. With all in favor, the motion carried.

A letter of comment was received regarding Lisa Knight; thanks were extended by Executive Director Edwards through Chief Counsel Morrison.

Chairman Bolstein wished all those attending the IAOHRA Conference well.

NEXT SESSION

The October Commission meeting will be held on Monday, October 23, 2017 at 1:00 PM at 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

S\Joel Bolstein

Joel Bolstein
Interim Chairman

S\Radheshyam Agrawal

Dr. Radheshyam Agrawal
Commissioner