

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING
OF FEBRUARY 26, 2018**

The meeting convened at 1:00 PM, Monday, February 26, 2018 at 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

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

Staff:

Michael Hardiman, Interim Executive Director
Tammy McElfresh, Special Assistant to the Executive Director (absent)
Kathy Morrison, Chief Counsel
Jinada Rochelle, Assistant Director of Enforcement
Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Office Director
Geoffrey Biringer, 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
Ian Fahnstock, Clerk Typist
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. She 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

Waldo V. Alverado, M.S.Ed., Reading School District
Anja Velemir, Executive Office of PHRC

APPROVAL OF COMPLIANCE MINUTES**MOTION:**

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the minutes of the December Commission Meeting. With all in favor, the motion carried to approve the minutes as written.

MOTION:

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the minutes of the January Special Meeting. With all in favor, the motion carried to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Hardiman abstained from the vote.

CHIEF COUNSEL'S LITIGATION STATUS REPORT

Chief Counsel Morrison reviewed her status report and a copy was provided. Chief Counsel Morrison provided additional details for guests in attendance.

Commissioner Yiengst inquired if PHRC is keeping track of the number of students enrolled in PA schools after Hurricane Maria. This will have an effect on all schools in Pennsylvania and significantly in Lebanon County who was to be receiving the most students from Puerto Rico. PHRC should be keeping track on how districts are meeting the needs of these students.

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

Executive Director Hardiman provided an update of the PHRC budget. A copy of the budget summary is included in the meeting records. A projected balance of \$115,000 will be remaining at the end of the fiscal year and these funds will be used to reduce gaps in EEOC and HUD contracts. The governor's proposed new budget for PHRC shows an increase and commissioners are requested to send letters to representatives to thank them for their continued support. Press Secretary Christina Reese asked that she be provided with a list of those who have been reached out to and thanked.

HUD and EEOC Reports

Assistant Director of Enforcement Jinada Rochelle noted that monthly closure numbers are behind on the contracts. Overtime will be necessary for investigators to specifically concentrate on closing cases for contracts.

Report on Mediation

An overview of the monthly report was provided. Ms. Petruczok noted she has begun assisting with making respondent contacts for the Harrisburg referrals. Interim Executive Director Hardiman noted efforts are underway to get more cases in to mediation.

Taskforce

Director Biringier provided an overview of the monthly report. Commissioner Bolstein asked what are the current high priorities being brought to our attention? Director Biringier offered to have Tameka Hatcher attend the next commission meeting to provide information to the commissioners.

Advisory Councils

Director Biringier noted there are some councils that are very active and meet regularly such as Hazleton. The Hazleton area is showing higher arrests of students versus discipline.

Chairman Bolstein asked if there was any correlation to the increased arrests and race? Commissioner Yiengst responded that it is possible and that this is not a new issue for the Hazleton area.

Director Biringier noted a meeting is scheduled to review the data with the school district and super intendant. This issue is to be added to the Programs Committee agenda.

Commissioner Yiengst stated she would be interested in attending the meeting with the school district.

Local HRCs

Local HRCs meet infrequently and we need to make contact with those we have sent proposed MOUs. We continue to collect zip codes from LHRCs to be able to provide them with the case information as required.

REPORT OF PRESS SECRETARY

Press Secretary Christina Reese highlighted her report provided in advance of the meeting and noted the Annual Report has been sent out

Interim Executive Director Hardiman noted the upcoming Black History events scheduled for this week and the NAACP meeting with commissioners and Education Division staff after the Public meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Adjudication

Gayle M. Hoffer v. John D. Light

MOTION:

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Carusone to approve the Hearing Examiner's recommendation to enter judgment for the complainant on the issue of liability upon consideration of a "Petition for Rule to Show Cause". With all in favor, the motion carried. Commissioner Hardiman abstained from the vote on this motion.

Advisory Council Membership Approvals

James A. Strong for membership in the Montgomery County Advisory Council

MOTION:

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Robinson to approve the minutes of the December Commission Meeting. With all in favor, the motion carried to approve the minutes as written.

Aimee R. Grugan for membership in the Centre County Advisory Council

MOTION:

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the minutes of the December Commission Meeting. With all in favor, the motion carried to approve the minutes as written.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Appointment of Secretary

MOTION:

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Yiengst to appoint Commissioner Mayur Patel as Secretary. With all in favor motion carried. Commissioner Hardiman abstained from this vote.

Appointment of Vice Chair

MOTION:

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Robinson to appoint Commissioner Raquel Yiengst as Vice Chair. With all in favor, motion carried. Commissioner Hardiman abstained from this vote.

LETTERS OF COMMENT

Congratulations were extended regarding a letter of comment received from a Respondent attorney for providing outstanding customer service by Ronnessa Edwards.

NEXT SESSION

The March Commission Meeting will be held on Monday, March 26, 2018 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