

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING
OF AUGUST 26, 2019**

The meeting convened at 5:20 PM, Monday, August 26, 2019 in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

Joel Bolstein, Chair
Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chair (Absent)
Mayur Patel, Secretary (Absent)
Rad Agrawal (Absent)
George Dawson (Phone)
Kathleen Dormer (Phone)
Michael Hardiman
Curtis Jones (Absent)
Gerald S. Robinson (Absent)
Adrian Shanker (absent)
Aleena Sorathia (absent)

Staff:

Chad Dion Lassiter, Executive Director
Martin Cunningham, Interim Chief Counsel
Jinada Rochelle, Director of Enforcement
Carl Summerson, Hearing Examiner
Guerline L. Laurore, Esq., Director of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Lyle Wood, Pittsburgh Regional Office Director
Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Office Director
Debbie Walters, Administrative Officer
Reed Reynolds, Education & Outreach Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bolstein called the meeting to order. The meeting had been advertised and was open to the public, in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine Act. Prior to the meeting, in keeping with the confidentiality requirements of the Sunshine Act; there had been a closed session to discuss compliance matters.

Attendance was taken and a lack of quorum noted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the Minutes of the July 22, 2019 Public Meeting will be held over to the September meeting due to lack of quorum.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chairman Bolstein apologized for the delay in starting the meeting and asked guests to introduce themselves.

In attendance were Dr. Stephanie Bressler, Reverend Barnes, Paul Strunk, Aja Wentum and Pedro Anes of the Scranton Human Relations Commission, Constance Denohy, a local artist, Yerodin Lucas Director at Marywood University, Alejandra Marroquin an Adult Behavioral Health Coordinator for Lackawanna Mental Health, Jay Notartomaso the Lead at Action Together NEPA and Bernie McGurl, Executive Director of Lackawanna River Conservation Association.

Chairman Bolstein then asked the staff to introduce themselves.

In the interest of time and given that no quorum was noted, Chairman Bolstein proceeded in the agenda to the report from local partners.

The Scranton Human Relations Commission Chair, Pedro Anjas provided information to the commission on the make-up of the Scranton Commission noting the membership mirrors the local community demographics. Mr. Anjas also discussed the current status of the local school district and that it has been taken over by the state. Of concern is the funding of urban schools and the need to explore the link between underfunding of urban area schools and the relation to underachievement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Education and Outreach Coordinator, Reed Reynolds explained what an Advisory Council is and their need in the local community for those in attendance explaining how the Advisory Council assists with looking for information on townhalls, trainings needed to prepare and prevent discrimination.

Executive Director Lassiter explained that people like to be reactive in nature. PHRC organizes "No Hate in Our State" events using the Martin Luther King theory the Beloved Community which focuses on love.

Dr. Bressler discussed the Scranton School Districts teacher diversity. The district currently has one teacher that is not white. The local demographic is 74% white. Chairman Bolstein asked if the district has a diversity officer. There has been in the planning for a year to have a diversity council, but this has not come to fruition yet.

REPORT OF DIRECTORS

Director of Enforcement, Jinada Rochelle reported about the 2019 Fair Housing Conference being held September 27 in Harrisburg and provided an update on the current status of the EEOC contract.

Director of Policy, Guerline Laureore reported the work on updating the PHRA to include sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and hair guidelines.

Director of Communications, Renee Martin reported on the updated brochures in production, social media outlets and web page usage additional ways PHRC is

sharing meeting notices and upcoming events. Executive Director Lassiter noted an upcoming outreach event partnering with Carlos Lopez.

NEXT SESSION

The August Commission Meeting will be held Monday, September 23, 2019, at 5:00 PM in Harrisburg, PA.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Joel Bolstein
Chairman



o/b/o Mayur Patel

Mayur Patel
Secretary