

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF PUBLIC COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 26, 2021**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting convened virtually at 2:10 PM, on Monday, April 26, 2021.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

Joel Bolstein, Chair (excused)
Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chair
Mayur Patel, Secretary
Rad Agrawal
George Dawson
Michael Hardiman
Curtis Jones
Adrian Shanker
Aleena Sorathia

Staff:

Chad Dion Lassiter, Executive Director
Samuel Rivera, Chief Counsel
Morgan Williams, Deputy Chief Counsel
Carl Summerson, Hearing Examiner
Guerline Laurore, Esq., Director of Policy & Intergovernmental Affairs
Adrian Garcia, Director of Fair Housing and Commercial Property
Laura Argenbright, Director of Communications
Lyle Wood, Pittsburgh Regional Office Director
Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Office Director
Debbie Walters, Administrative Officer
Anja Mijocevic, Special Assistant to Executive Director (absent)

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Yiengst 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 quorum noted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION:

Commissioner Dawson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sorathia to approve the minutes of the March Public Meeting. With all in favor, except for Commissioner Hardiman who abstained from the vote, motion carried.

ADJUDICATION

Hearing Examiner Summerson presented to the commissioners Riccardi v. Harold Richard Garten d/b/a Above All Chimney and Masonry, case number 201305895. Each commissioner voting signifies by their vote that they have reviewed the record in these matters to determine whether the recommended findings are supported by substantial evidence. Furthermore, because it is for the commission, as the adjudicative body to determine whether the respondent has engaged in or is engaging in an unlawful discriminatory practice as defined by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, any findings, conclusions, and order approved today are so approved only after the commission itself has determined that the evidence upon which it is based has been resolved correctly; and that any credibility determinations have been decided correctly.

MOTION:

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Agrawal to approve the Recommendation to find for charging party in the case of Riccardi v. Harold Richard Garten d/ba/ Above All Chimney and Masonry. With all in favor, motion carried.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Executive Director Lassiter welcomed the staff and guests to the monthly meeting. Guests this month included Luz Colon, Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs; Raf Alvarez, Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Commission on LGBTQ Affairs; Stephanie Sun, Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian American Pacific Islanders; and Samantha Williams, Esquire. The Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

Executive Director Colon was asked to share with the commission information about the commission's mission, make-up she leads. Director Colon also provided the Commission with an in-depth overview of current issues impacting the Latino community followed by an open forum of questions and discussion.

Attorney Samantha Williams provided a presentation with Commissioner Jones on the proposed Police Oversight Commission in Philadelphia. The presentation was followed by an open forum of questions and discussion.

Commissioner Yiengst thanked Attorney Williams and Commissioner Jones for their presentation and noted that this is something every city in Pennsylvania should be looking at formulating.

MANAGEMENT REPORTS

Current highlights of division activities and upcoming outreach events were shared for the benefit of meeting guests. Executive Director Lassiter provided a list of upcoming outreach events.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

NEXT SESSION

The next Commission Meeting is scheduled to be held virtually on Monday, May 24, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Commissioner Dawson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shanker to adjourn. With all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Raquel Yiengst
Raquel Yiengst
Vice Chair

s/Mayur Patel
Mayur Patel
Secretary