

**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF PUBLIC COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 24, 2021**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting convened virtually at 2:14 PM, on Monday, May 24, 2021.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

Joel Bolstein, Chair
Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chair
Mayur Patel, Secretary (absent)
Rad Agrawal
George Dawson
Michael Hardiman
Curtis Jones (absent)
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
Kurt Jung, Director of Enforcement
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

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 quorum noted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION:

Commissioner Hardiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sorathia to approve the minutes of the April Public Meeting. With all in favor, motion carried.

ADJUDICATION #1

Hearing Examiner Summerson presented a recommendation to find probable cause and enter a judgement of liability to the commissioners on Jose Rivera v. Chase Eckert, case number 201903162. 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 Agrawal made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Yiengst to approve the Recommendation to find probable cause and enter a judgement of liability on behalf of the complainant in the case of Jose Rivera v. Chase Eckert, case number 201903162. With all in favor, motion carried.

ADJUDICATION #2

Hearing Examiner Summerson presented a recommendation to find probable cause and enter a judgement of liability to the commissioners on Joanie Sexton v. Lazer Spot, Inc., case number 201903485. 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 Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dawson to approve the Recommendation to find probable cause and enter a judgement of liability on behalf of the complainant in the case of Joanie Sexton v. Lazer Spot, Inc., case number 201903485. 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 Raf Alvarez Febo, Executive Director of the Governor's Affinity Commission on LGBTQ Affairs and Judie Senkow Richards of the Dickson City Human Relations Commission. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

Executive Director Febo was asked to share with the commission information about the commission's mission, make-up he leads. Director Febo provided the Commission with an in-depth overview of what the commission does and current

issues impacting the LGBTQIA+ community followed by an open forum of questions and discussion.

MANAGEMENT REPORTS

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

Executive Director Lassiter and Chairman Bolstein noted their appreciation of the work conducted by the local Advisory Councils and commissions.

Also discussed was the plan to conduct quarterly meetings with the local Human Relations Commissions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Executive Director Lassiter noted that the June monthly meetings would be held virtually, and plans are underway to possibly have the July meetings held in-person in Harrisburg.

NEXT SESSION

The next Commission Meeting is scheduled to be held virtually on Monday, June 28, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION:**

Commissioner Yiengst made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sorathia to adjourn. With all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



M. Joel Bolstein
Chairman

s/Mayur Patel

Mayur Patel
Secretary