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ENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

M I N U T E S

TIME: 3:11 P.M.

Held at
Honors Suite
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

October 23, 2023

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Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
October 23, 2023

COMMISSIONERS:

- Joel Bolstein, Esquire, Chair
- Dr. Raquel O. Yiengst, Vice Chair
- Mayur Patel, Esquire, Secretary - Absent
- Dr. Rad Agrawal - Absent
- Michael Hardiman, Esquire
- Curtis Jones - Absent
- Aleena Sorathia - Absent

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chad Dion Lassiter, MSW

CHIEF COUNSEL

Meredith Millard, Esquire

COMMISSION COUNSEL

Vacant

STAFF PRESENT:

- Amanda Brothman, Director of Communications
- Lauren Daman, Director of Human Resources
- Adrian Garcia, Director of Fair Housing and Commercial Property
- Darlene Hemerka, Esquire, Hearing Examiner
- Robert Lindsey, Regional Office Director, Philadelphia
- Heather Roth, Regional Office Director, Harrisburg
- Tamara Shehadeh-Cope, Hearing Examiner
- Ashley Walkowiak, Director of Policy, Intergovernmental Affairs and Mediation
- Debbie Walters, Administrative Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

1 Litrena Staton
2 Michael Staton
3 Anette Nance, Governor's Advisory Commission on
4 African American Affairs
5 Henry Sias, Governor's Advisory Commission on
6 LGBTQ+Affairs - Via Telephone

7 ***

8 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

9 October 23, 2023

10 ***

11 MEETING CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING STATEMENT

12 [Joel Bolstein, Esquire, Chair, called the meeting to
13 order at 3:14 p.m.

14 Pursuant to Section 711 (a) of the Sunshine Act,
15 this Commission meeting may be recorded by attendees.
16 Voluntary participation in the meeting constitutes
17 consent to be recorded. The meeting was advertised
18 in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine
19 Act. Prior to the meeting and in keeping with the
20 confidentiality requirements of the Sunshine Act, a
21 closed session was held to discuss compliance
22 matters, management updates, and adjudicative case
23 deliberations.

24 After concluding the business portion of the
25 meeting, any guests present will be invited to

1 introduce themselves and any organizations that they
2 represent. Guests will have an opportunity to
3 briefly address the Commission. All comments are
4 welcomed about equal opportunity and Civil Rights
5 issues and problems with discrimination. We value
6 everyone's partnership in promoting equal opportunity
7 and we're glad to hear about the work of different
8 organizations that are represented; however, the
9 Commission cannot hear any specifics about any open
10 investigations or cases that the Commission may have
11 to rule on in the future.

12 Mr. Bolstein convened the monthly meeting of the
13 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. He noted no
14 voting would be done during the public session as
15 only three members were present.]

16 ***

17 (WHEREUPON AN OFF-RECORD DISCUSSION WAS HELD.)

18 ***

19 [Chad Dion Lassiter, Executive Director, thanked
20 Commissioners and staff and all in attendance. He
21 explained the meeting starts with a Closed-Door
22 Executive Session, then to a break or working lunch,

1 African American Affairs, introduced herself and
2 noted this commission is represented in many counties
3 in the state and is also comprised of three
4 subcommittees including education, workforce
5 development and gun violence and provided a brief
6 explanation of each subcommittee.

7 She noted the education subcommittee, which is in
8 early stages, considers ways to diversify the
9 teaching profession, alternative authorization
10 processes within certain school districts.

11 The workforce development committee reviews
12 programs at the correctional institutions and how
13 they're funded, making sure needs are met when re-
14 entering society, making sure the 18-24 age range is
15 prepared and identifying organizations that are led
16 by people of color.

17 Ms. Nance explained the gun violence committee
18 addresses issues across the state no matter what
19 community, addresses how to take action on
20 preventative measures and ensures nonprofits are
21 aware of technical assistance available.

22 Ms. Nance mentioned opportunities for young

1 people as another avenue of prevention, and there be
2 a connection with leaders across the state as well as
3 being present.

4 There was discussion regarding Black History and
5 those interested in historical preservation projects
6 at locations including Gettysburg.

7 She talked about lectures to help youth
8 understand social issues. Executive Director
9 Lassiter noted ways to partner with the group would
10 include showing the PHRC's film The Hate You Give and
11 a series of other films, partnering with its HBCU
12 initiative at Lincoln University and Cheyney
13 University as well s the initiative to end racism on
14 college campuses. He suggested that a meeting be
15 scheduled regarding these matters. Executive
16 Director Lassiter also suggested teaching these
17 issues in neighborhood houses of faith and libraries.

18 Ms. Staton had questions regarding PHRC resources
19 available. In that regard, Ms. Nance talked about
20 the efforts of Ruby Mundok Executive Director of
21 Governor Shapiro's Advisory Commission for Next
22 Generation Engagement to make Pennsylvania a place

1 professional background. He noted that this year's
2 focus is on the healthcare, mental health of kids in
3 school and legal reform. Executive Director Lassiter
4 will follow up with the LGBTQ+ regulations that were
5 just passed.

6 Chair Bolstein commented that the new regulations
7 became effective as of August 2023, which defines
8 LGBTQ as a protected class that can bring complaints
9 before the Commission. He indicated the matter was
10 personal to him.]

11

12 [Executive Director Lassiter noted some PHRC
13 initiatives include training in DEI, anti-racism,
14 unconscious/conscious bias, explicit bias, employment
15 and preventing sexual harassment. All were invited
16 to a Sexual Harassment Awareness Prevention
17 Conference, which will be held on November 2, 2023,
18 and a Lunch and Learn will soon be held online.]

19

20 [There was an inquiry if there was a report regarding
21 the initiatives of the PHRC. Executive Director
22 Lassiter noted racism in schools is being addressed,

1 [Executive Director Lassiter provided closing
2 comments and thanked all in attendance in person and
3 virtually. He indicated PHRC forms of social media
4 include LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and
5 also to follow colleagues for the Governor's Advisory
6 Commission's Instagram Page.

7 [The meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.]

8 ***

9 [The next meeting is scheduled for November 27,
10 2023.]

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3 CERTIFICATE4
5 I hereby certify that the foregoing summary
6 minutes of the Pennsylvania Human Relations
7 Commission, was reduced to writing by me or under my
8 supervision, and that the minutes accurately
9 summarize the substance of the Pennsylvania Human
10 Relations Commission meeting.11 
12 _____

13 Victoria Lantz,

14 Minute Clerk

15 Sargent's Court Reporting

16 Service, Inc.
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1 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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MOTION: At the November 27, 2023, Public Meeting, Commissioner Hardiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Yiengst to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2023, Public Meeting. With all in favor, motion carried.



M. Joel Bolstein, Chairman



o/b/o Commissioner Mayur Patel

Mayur Patel, Secretary