

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
Monday, September 28, 2015 – 4:30 p.m.
Genesee County Commission Chambers, 3rd Floor
County Administration Building
1101 Beach Street, Flint

MINUTES

PRESENT: Commission Chair Arthur Horwitz
Commission Vice-Chair Rasha Demashkieh
Commissioner Mumtaz Haque
Commissioner Deloris Hunt
Commissioner Ricardo Resio
Commissioner Linda Lee Tarver
Commissioner Brad Voss

EXCUSED: Commission Secretary Agustin Arbulu

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Horwitz at 4:33 p.m.

I. WELCOME

Commission Chair Horwitz opened the meeting with roll call of the Commissioners, and welcoming remarks. Genesee County Commissioners Jamie Curtis and Young, State Representative Neeley.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the Meeting Agenda as submitted. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Resio) and supported (Commissioner Tarver), the meeting agenda was approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Haque) and supported (Commissioner Hunt), the consent agenda was approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JULY 20, 2015

MOTION: To approve the July 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes as submitted. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Voss) and supported (Commissioner Hunt), the meeting Minutes from the July 20, 2015 meeting were approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

V. DIVISION REPORTS

Director's Report, Matthew Wesaw - Director Wesaw reported that the new Commission on Middle Eastern Affairs will convene their first meeting tomorrow in

the MDCR Executive Office in Lansing, Governor Snyder is scheduled to provide remarks at the meeting; the Hispanic Latino Commission meets on the following day, followed by an annual celebration event that evening; Mary Chapman has joined MDCR's Grand Rapids office as Executive Secretary; a new Executive Secretary will also be hired for the DODDBHH; in the ALPACT expansion effort, new coalitions have been launched in Jackson, Kalamazoo and Ottawa County/Holland – all have convened their initial meetings, Benton Harbor is convening a meeting organized by the Governor's Office regarding community policing next week; Anne Urasky was introduced to the audience as the Director and point person for the Division on Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing (DODDBHH), highlighted the accomplishments and challenges faced over the past two years of administration. Commissioner Horwitz indicated that a portion of time would be dedicated to the DODDBHH for updates during the next Commission meeting on December 7th.

Deputy Director's Report, Leslee Fritz – Ms. Fritz reported that Lori Vinson and Dan Levy were excused from today's meeting as they attended a conference in Alabama hosted by IAOHRA (International Association Of Human Rights Advocates), presentation given on police and community relations; the current fiscal year closes on September 30, 2015, all state departments are closing their books and starting the new fiscal year 2016 on October 1, 2015; mobile technology upgrades include ordering and dissemination of Helix laptop/tablet devices provided for all staff who work off-site. Fiscal year 2017 budget planning is underway.

There was a brief break/recess between 5:15-5:20 p.m. to accommodate the ASL Interpreter.

VI. COMMISSION MATTERS

Chairman's Report, Commissioner Horwitz – Mr. Horwitz reported that he has been working with Jennie Daniel and Ron Robinson on the Executive Director candidate search process, including posting the position and setting a potential date in October for a special meeting for the selection and interview process. Mr. Horwitz took a few moments to thank and honor Director Wesaw for his years of service to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights and to the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. Mr. Horwitz reported that he along with Jacki Miller and Dan Levy attended an event on September 22 honoring George Romney with a Resolution that was passed by the Commission on July 20th; the Resolution was presented to his son Scott. Last, Mr. Horwitz acknowledged U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District Barb McQuade as she will be honored for a Shining Light Award on October 8 for her efforts at building regional cooperation and trust. **MOTION: To direct the Department to craft a letter of congratulations to Barb McQuade for receiving the Shining Light Award. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Department will craft a letter congratulating Barb McQuade for receiving the Shining Light Award. Motion carried unanimously.**

Attorney General Report, Ron Robinson – Mr. Robinson introduced his new interns, Sumer Ghazala who is a third year student at U-M Dearborn, and Laila Malki who is in her final year at Oakland University. Updates included the ***Barbara Smith v. Countryside Townhouses*** – still awaiting Michigan Court of Appeals' decision on Application for Leave to Appeal, filed in April 2015, a decision was expected in May;

with regards to the Burton Gordin investigation, no new updates to report, Mr. Robinson has spoken with the new Criminal Division chief Rick Cunningham, the sole suspect is deceased, no new information has been received. Mr. Robinson has been serving as an advisor to the new Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs, and has met with the Chair Manal Saab, looking forward to assisting in getting them off to a good start at their initial meeting tomorrow.

2016 Commission Meeting Schedule

The proposed meeting schedule for 2016 includes the following dates:

January 25

March 28

May 23

July 25

September 26

November 28 or December 5

MOTION: To add the proposed 2016 meeting schedule to the next meeting agenda, and to finalize the schedule. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Demashkieh) and supported (Commissioner Resio), the proposed 2016 meeting schedule will be added to the agenda at the December meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. ONGOING BUSINESS

Finance Committee Report, Commissioner Voss – Mr. Voss indicated that the Finance Committee convened their first meeting on September 21 and gained knowledge on the budget development process from Leslee Fritz; the timeframe had passed to provide input on the FY2016 budget, however, the Committee will be involved in FY2017 budget development. The Committee will also submit a proposal to the IT Innovation Fund for additional funding.

Outreach and Engagement Committee Report, Commissioner Demashkieh – Ms. Demashkieh indicated that a communication has been disseminated to all Commissioners with the names of potential committee members, including Commissioner Haque, Rana Abbas (ACCESS), Khalil Hachem (bizmagazine.org), and Rana Elmir (ACLU); all bring a wealth of knowledge and experience and have strong communications backgrounds. Commissioner Tarver inquired if anyone from the African-American community will be approached to serve on the Committee, Ms. Demashkieh indicated that the Committee will be diverse and the African-American community should be represented as well, requesting that names be forwarded as soon as possible.

With regards to the African-American Affairs Committee and the Executive/Legislative Liaison – Mr. Horwitz indicated that these committees will move forward once the new executive director is appointed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Horwitz indicated that the Michigan Department of Civil Rights created a Resolution honoring Janet Cooper, as she will be posthumously inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. **MOTION: To move forward with honoring the memory of Janet Cooper and congratulate her family and friends on her induction into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Commission will honor the memory of Janet Cooper in congratulating her family and friends on her induction into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. Motion carried unanimously.**

PRESENTATION: New Accessible Icon, Erica Coulston

Ms. Coulston provided written materials of a Power Point presentation on a new Accessible icon; the Department will draft a resolution for review at the next meeting.

PRESENTATION: Update on The Disability Network, Mike Zelley

Former Commission Chair and President of The Disability Network Mike Zelley indicated that the ADA is celebrating its 25th Year, and that 1200 people attended the celebration in Flint where the Lieutenant Governor and the Honorable Richard Bernstein were speakers; Mr. Zelley provided updates on the Disability Network's initiatives, and that there have been strides in technology, housing, education and employment for People With Disabilities.

Executive Director Search

Jennie Daniel reported that 24 applicants applied for the posted executive director position. After review of the applicant resumes and discussion, the Commission determined three candidates: Applicant #3, Applicant #5 and Applicant #17; and determined four alternates: Applicant #10, Applicant #13, Applicant #9 and Applicant #19.

MOTION: The Commission will interview only the top three selected candidates, Applicants #3, #5 and #17.

On Motion duly made (Commissioner Hunt) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Commission will interview the top three selected candidates for the Executive Director position: Applicant #3, Applicant #5 and Applicant #17; unless the interview process is declined, for which the Commission will alternatively select Applicant #10, Applicant #13, Applicant #9 and Applicant #19 for interviews. Motion carried with a majority vote of 5 -2.

Yeas: Commissioner Demashkieh, Commissioner Haque, Commissioner Horwitz, Commissioner Hunt, Commissioner Resio.

Nays: Commissioner Tarver and Commissioner Voss.

The Commission will convene a special meeting in the third week of October 2015 at a Detroit venue to be determined. The date and location will be announced soon.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

John Gleason, Genesee County Clerk thanked the Commission for convening this meeting in Flint and bringing attention to the important issues that were discussed. Dallas Barker, Margaret Barker, Susan Lundy and Freida Morrison represented Michigan Deaf Rights Advocates, and brought concerns regarding issues with the Deaf Community, issues with MDCR and the DODDBHH, the DODDBHH Rules, the amendment for endorsements, and the delays with the ASL Interpreter certification process resulting in lapsed certifications.

Diana McKittrick, General Manager of the Communication Access Center (CAC) brought concerns regarding information on services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the availability of complaints in an Accessible format.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was adjourned at 7:13 p.m. by Chair Horwitz.

Secretary

Director