

**MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
December 7, 2015 ~ 2:00 P.M.  
Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Commission Room  
110 W. Michigan Avenue, Suite 800  
Lansing, MI 48933

**MINUTES**

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

EXCUSED: Commissioner Deloris Hunt

*The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Horwitz at 2:04 p.m.*

I. WELCOME

Commission Chair Horwitz opened the meeting with roll call of the Commissioners and welcoming remarks.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

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

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2015 COMMISSION MEETING

**MOTION: To approve the September 28, 2015 Meeting Minutes as submitted. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Minutes were approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

OCTOBER 12, 2015 SPECIAL MEETING

**MOTION: To approve the October 12, 2015 Meeting Minutes as submitted. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Resio), the Minutes were approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

OCTOBER 23, 2015 SPECIAL MEETING

**MOTION: To approve the October 23, 2015 Meeting Minutes as submitted. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Minutes were approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

## V. DIVISION REPORTS

Director's Report, Dr. Agustin Arbulu – Director Arbulu reported on his work activity during his first thirty days, which included Cabinet-level meetings with the Executive Office and state directors, meetings with legislators, one-on-one meetings with MDCR Staff, as well as leadership from partnering agencies. Other areas of focus included reorganization of the Office of Public Affairs, restructuring of Detroit office space with the transfer of Flint Office Staff and the DODDBHH, update on ALPACT expansion, closure of the 2015 fiscal year, early planning stages of the 2016 All Agency Meeting, and two government initiatives – Strategic Excellence and LEAN Process Review. New Deputy Director Colleen Pero was introduced.

## VI. COMMISSION MATTERS

\*Chair Report, Arthur Horwitz – Chair Horwitz reported on the transitional changes in MDCR leadership, including the resignation of Leslee Fritz as deputy director, Dr. Arbulu's appointment as executive director and Colleen Pero's appointment as deputy director; the re-appointment of Commissioners Rasha Demashkieh and Deloris Hunt for an additional four-year term, and filling a vacancy created by the resignation of former commissioner Agustin Arbulu; acknowledgement of Vicki Levengood for the op-ed on the Take on Hate Campaign; setting a date and agenda for the next Commission orientation and retreat.

\*Attorney General Report, Dan Levy (for Ron Robinson) – In addition to Mr. Robinson's submitted written report, Mr. Levy provided an update with regards to the case *Barbara Smith v. Countryside Townhouses*, indicating that the Michigan Court of Appeals has granted the Application for Leave.

\*Finalization of 2016 Commission Meeting Schedule, Chair Horwitz

**MOTION: To approve the proposed 2016 Commission Meeting schedule with the dates of January 25, March 28, May 23, July 25, September 26 and December 5, for a start time of 2:00 p.m. and located at the MDCR Lansing Executive Office. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Voss) and supported (Commissioner Tarver), the 2016 Commission Meeting schedule was approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

\*2016 Election of Officers Nominating Committee, Vice-Chair Demashkieh

The Nominating Committee includes Vice-Chair Demashkieh, Commissioner Hunt, and Commissioner Voss; following discussion, the following nomination slate was presented: Chair Horwitz and Vice-Chair Demashkieh to serve as Co-Chairs, and Commissioner Haque to serve as Secretary.

**MOTION: To approve the proposed nominations for the 2016 Election of Officers, including Chair Horwitz and Vice-Chair Demashkieh to serve as Co-Chairs and Commissioner Haque to serve as Secretary. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Voss) and supported (Commissioner Tarver), the nominations for the 2016 Election of Officers were approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

## VII. COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS

\*Finance Committee – Commissioner Voss and Committee member Laura Reyes Kopack will provide a structural recommendation at the next Commission meeting.

\*Communications and Outreach Committee – Vice-Chair Demashkieh reported that Melanie Brown, Deputy Director for External Affairs, State of Michigan’s Talent and Economic Development Department has joined the Committee; the full group will be meeting before the close of the year, with a focus on the annual report.

\*African-American Committee and Executive/Legislative Liaison Committee – Chair Horwitz indicated that these committees will move forward in 2016.

## VIII. ONGOING BUSINESS

\*Draft Resolution re: New Accessible Icon

Resulting from a presentation on a new Accessible Icon provided by Erica Coulston, a request was made for the Commission’s support on this effort. The Commission determined that a resolution in support of a new Accessible Icon would be most appropriate. After discussion, a motion was proposed to move forward with drafting a resolution.

**MOTION: To direct the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to draft a resolution in support of a new Accessible Icon for the January 2016 Commission Meeting. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Commission approved directing the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to prepare a draft resolution in support of a new Accessible Icon for the January 2016 Commission Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.**

## IX. NEW BUSINESS

\*Proposal to establish MCRC Awards, Vicki Levengood

Ms. Levengood distributed a memo to the Commissioners for their review. The establishment of two awards is proposed: 1) the Keith-Feikens Leadership Award and 2) the Elliott-Larsen Award; accompanied by the purpose of each award, suggested selection criteria, and suggested nomination and selection processes. Comments and suggested revisions to be sent to Commissioner Demashkieh; the Communication and Outreach Committee will apply revisions and finalize the proposal for submission to the Commission.

**MOTION: To move the establishment of MCRC Awards proposal to the Communications and Outreach Committee to work in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to further explore, define, refine the proposal for submission to the Commission at a future meeting for further action. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Haque), the Motion was approved. Motion carried unanimously.**

\*Lead Commissioner Assignment, Dan Levy

On the Rule 12 case, *Angela Bercheni ex rel v Charlie’s Family Dining, Inc., and Bashar Moussa, individually*, Mr. Levy conducted a blind-draw of the Commissioners, and indicated that Ron Robinson would not be serving as case counsel, as he has done work on this case previously. The recommendation to the lead commissioner will be that Marcelina Trevino-Savala serve as case counsel. The result of the blind-draw determined that Commissioner Deloris Hunt would serve as lead commissioner.

\*Presentation by Michigan Deaf Rights Advocates (MDRA): Dallas Barker, Carmen Johnson, Dylan Secord

Commissioner Tarver introduced each of the speakers by the reading of their individual bios. Informational packets on the presentation were distributed to the Commissioners, entitled **“DOD to DODDBHH, What Happened?”** The purpose of this presentation was to raise awareness regarding Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing Community issues, including challenges with services provided by the State, legislation, challenges regarding interpreter services (testing and certification), and the disproportionate allocation of state and federal funding, as compared to the Commission for the Blind.

Following the presentation and discussion, the Commission requested that the MDCR provide an update presentation addressing the issues raised by the MDRA.

\*Resolutions Honoring former executive director Matthew Wesaw and former deputy director Leslee Fritz

**MOTION: To adopt the Resolutions honoring former executive director Matthew Wesaw and former deputy director Leslee Fritz. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Resio) and supported (Commissioner Demashkieh), the Resolutions honoring Matthew Wesaw and Leslee Fritz were adopted. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### X. PUBLIC COMMENT

Courtney McDowell, Student, Oakland Community College Sign Language Interpreter Program – Ms. McDowell brought concerns regarding challenges with certification of Educational Interpreters, upcoming criteria changes in 2016, implications of shortfall of educational interpreters for K-12 students, and concerns about her future employment.

Lisa Fairbrother, Student, Oakland Community College Sign Language Interpreter Program – Ms. Fairbrother brought concerns regarding the requirements for Interpreter certification, the unavailability of provisional certifications, and limited practice time.

Margaret Barker, Resident, City of Flint– Ms. Barker brought concerns regarding Genesys Healthcare System and other healthcare systems use of VRI technology in Emergency Rooms.

Levi Klock, Student, Michigan School of the Deaf– Levi indicated that he is enjoying school more at the Michigan School of the Deaf, as compared to his previous school.

Jeff Klock, Parent, Michigan School of the Deaf– Mr. Klock, parent of Levi Klock brought concerns regarding the use of VRI technology in schools. He recommended that live Interpreters be used in schools instead of the VRI technology.

Diana McKittrick, General Manager, Communication Access Center – Ms. McKittrick brought concerns regarding the July 2016 deadline for endorsements, waivers regarding qualified interpreters, requested that the Commission provide qualified interpreters for access to state buildings and state government, as there is currently no state interpreter.

#### XI. ADJOURNMENT

*The meeting was adjourned by Commission Chair Horwitz at 4:27 p.m.*