

## MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

Detroit Cadillac Place Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Grey Room  
3054 West Grand Boulevard, Suite 3-600  
Detroit, Michigan 48202

### MINUTES

PRESENT: Co-Chair Rasha Demashkieh  
Co-Chair Laura Reyes Kopack  
Commission Secretary Deloris Hunt  
Commissioner Mumtaz Haque  
Commissioner Jeffrey Sakwa (NEW)  
Commissioner Linda Lee Tarver

EXCUSED: Commissioner Ricardo Resio  
Commissioner Bradley Voss

#### CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME

The meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by Commission Co-Chair Laura Reyes Kopack.

#### INVESTITURE OF NEW COMMISSIONER JEFFREY SAKWA

New Commissioner Jeffrey Sakwa succeeds former commissioner Arthur Horwitz, and was appointed to the Commission for a 4-year term on March 6, 2017. Commissioner Sakwa was sworn-in by Commissioner Kopack by taking the Oath of Office.

#### ROLL CALL

A Roll Call of the Commissioners was taken to determine if a quorum was present. Commissioner Haque, Commissioner Hunt, Commissioner Demashkieh, Commissioner Kopack, Commissioner Sakwa, Commissioner Tarver were present. Commissioners Resio and Voss were excused from this meeting. With six of eight commissioners present, a quorum is established.

#### APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

After discussion, the following decisions were made. Amendments: To remove the New Business item entitled: "Status of Administrative Rules for Commission/MDCR"; to add a New Business item entitled: "Public Comment on Amicus Brief Filing" after the discussion on the Amicus Brief filing.

**On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Demashkieh), the Agenda was Approved with the noted amendments. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### PUBLIC COMMENT ON AMICUS BRIEF FILING

Concerns were brought regarding the repercussions of governor-appointed Emergency Managers assigned exclusively to communities of color, and violation of the people's voting rights by the following:

Teresa Kelly, Elena Herrada, Russ Bellant, Rogelio Landin

## VOTE ON RESOLUTION TO FILE AMICUS BRIEF

Following discussion, the final decisions were made. Amendment: To add "...and furthermore that the voting for a seat-holder is not the same as voting for a decision-maker. And therefore, the voting process is abridged."

Results of Vote: 5-0-1

Yea: 5 (Commissioner Demashkieh, Commissioner Haque, Commissioner Hunt, Commissioner Kopack, Commissioner Tarver)

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 (Commissioner Sakwa)

**On Motion duly made (Commissioner Tarver) and supported (Commissioner Demashkieh), the amended language of the Resolution was Approved, and the Resolution was Adopted.** *Motion carried by majority vote, and reads as follows:*

***Resolved***, *The Michigan Civil Rights Commission (Commission) directs the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (Department) to prepare and submit an amicus brief on its behalf in support of the Petition for Writ of Certiorari filed with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Bellant v Snyder. The brief shall present the Commission's position that Michigan's Emergency Manager Law should be subject to judicial review under the federal Voting Rights Act, for the reasons outlined in the Findings and Recommendations set forth in the "Flint Water Crisis Report, Systemic Racism Through the Lens of Flint" adopted and approved on February 17th, 2017, and furthermore the Commission finds that voting for a seat holder is not the same as a decision maker and therefore people's voting rights have been abridged;*

***Furthermore***, *the Commission directs the Department to take such action, as may be necessary, to prepare and timely submit the amicus brief along with any necessary motion(s), supporting documents and/or fees, in the Commission's name.*

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter DePhillips brought concerns regarding the handling of his complaint by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

## ADJOURNMENT

**On Motion duly made (Commissioner Sakwa) and supported (Commissioner Demashkieh), the meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission Adjourned at 5:21 p.m.** *Motion carried unanimously.*