

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, March 26, 2018 ~ 4:00 P.M.
MDCR Detroit Office, Cadillac Place Building
3rd Floor Grey Room, 3054 W Grand Boulevard, Suite 3-600
Detroit, MI 48202

MINUTES

PRESENT: Commission Co-Chair Mumtaz Haque
Commission Co-Chair Laura Reyes-Kopack
Commission Secretary Rasha Demashkieh
Commissioner Jeffrey Sakwa
NEW COMMISSIONER Stacie Clayton
NEW COMMISSIONER Ira Combs, Jr.
NEW COMMISSIONER Alma Wheeler Smith

EXCUSED: Commissioner Ricardo Resio

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting was Called to Order at 4:00 p.m. by Commission Co-Chair Mumtaz Haque. Roll Call of the Commissioners was taken to determine a quorum. Commissioner Sakwa, Commissioner Demashkieh, Co-Chair Kopack, Commissioner (NEW) Ira Combs, Jr., Commissioner (NEW) Stacie Clayton, Commissioner (NEW) Alma Wheeler Smith. With seven of eight commissioners present, quorum requirements were met.

INVESTITURE OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Stacie Clayton, Ira Combs, Jr. and Alma Wheeler Smith took the Oath of Office, sworn-in by Commission Co-Chair Mumtaz Haque.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Following discussion, the Meeting Agenda was amended; the Co-Chair Report to be provided by Co-Chair Haque instead of Co-Chair Kopack. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Sakwa) and supported (Commissioner Combs), the amended Meeting Agenda was Approved. *Motion carried unanimously.*

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Following discussion, the Consent Meeting Agenda was amended; removing the ALPACT and Leadership Collaborative Reports. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Sakwa) and supported (Commissioner Demashkieh), the amended Consent Agenda was Adopted. *Motion carried unanimously.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 22, 2018 MEETING

This agenda item was postponed, to be presented again at the next meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Agustin V. Arbulu provided status updates on the Department's activity.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Deputy Director Mary Engelman provided a status update on the Department's budget.

ALPACT REPORT

Anthony Lewis, Director of Business and Community Affairs, provided a status update on the activity of the ALPACT coalitions throughout the State. Commission Secretary Rasha Demashkieh asked that a written report be included in the meeting packets moving forward.

COMMISSION MATTERS

- **CO-CHAIR REPORT**
Commissioner Mumtaz Haque provided a status update on Commission activity.
- **ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT**
Assistant Attorney General Ron Robinson provided a status update on current cases.
- **COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS**
This agenda item was waived.
- **SPECIAL MEETING SCHEDULING**
A special meeting is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on April 17, 2018 in Detroit to discuss the role of the Executive Council and the Commission, and the MDCR Executive Director and Department goals and priorities for 2018-19.

ONGOING BUSINESS

- **FOLLOW-UP: Education and Civil Rights, next steps for the Commission**
A Resolution was presented to the Commission to convene hearings around the State on Education and Civil Rights.

Resolution by Michigan Civil Rights Commission to conduct hearings regarding alleged issues of discrimination in the Educational System in Michigan

Whereas,

Article 5, Section 29 of the Michigan Constitution establishes a civil rights commission whose duty is in a manner prescribed by law to investigate alleged discrimination against any person because of religion, race, color or national origin in the enjoyment of civil rights guaranteed by law and by the constitution, and to secure the equal protection of such civil rights without such discrimination.

Whereas,

Act 453 of 1975, known as the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and related Acts, prohibits discriminatory practices, policies and customs in the exercise of those rights based upon religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status, disability or marital status;

Whereas,

Article 5, Section 29 of the Michigan Constitution, empowers the commission to hold hearings, administer oaths, through court authorization require the attendance of witnesses and the submission of records, to take testimony, and to issue appropriate orders;

Whereas,

Article 6(2) of the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act stipulate that the commission may hold hearings, administer oaths, issue preliminary notices of witnesses to appear, compel through court authorization the attendance of witnesses and the production for examination of books, papers, or other records relating to matters before the commission, take testimony of a person under oath, and issue appropriate orders;

AND

Whereas,

Based on the opinion of multiple experts across the State of Michigan who unanimously assert that Michigan's education system is in crisis. And based on reports that show that minority and special needs students are the most vulnerable based on inequities as documented in the MCRC Flint Water Crisis Report published in February 2017.

THEREFORE,

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission shall utilize the powers granted to it by the Michigan Constitution, the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and related Acts to convene a series of at least three (3) public hearings to accept and/or compel testimony to address the question of whether the Civil Rights of underserved students in Michigan have been violated or abridged.

Subject to the approval by a majority of its members present at a properly convened meeting, the commission also directs the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to allocate the resources necessary to enable the commission to convene the first of a series of public hearings to be held on or before May 31, 2018.

After discussion, the following Motion was brought forth:

MOTION: On Motion duly made (Commissioner Combs) and supported (Commissioner Sakwa), the Motion to Adopt the Resolution to conduct hearings regarding alleged issues of discrimination in the Educational System in Michigan was Approved. Motion carried unanimously.

- UPDATE: 2017 Commission Annual Report, Vicki Levengood
Ms. Levengood provided a status update of the 2017 Annual Report.
- UPDATE: Administrative Rules Changes, Marcelina Trevino
Ms. Trevino provided a status update on the Administrative Rules changes.
- UPDATE: 2017 MCRC Flint Water Crisis Report, One Year Later, Dan Levy
Mr. Levy provided a status update on the Flint Water Crisis Report, One Year Later.

NEW BUSINESS

- **CITY OF JACKSON, RECENT EVENTS – COMMISSIONER COMBS**

Commissioner Combs brought concerns regarding the call for removal of Sheriff Steven Rand in Jackson, Michigan. After discussion, the following Motion was brought forth:

MOTION: The Commission directs the Department to prepare a letter to the Attorney General's Office requesting the status of the investigation of Sheriff Rand. On Motion duly made (Commissioner Demashkieh) and supported (Commissioner Smith). Motion carried by majority vote. Yea – 5, Nay – 1, Abstain - 1

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Commissioner Smith requested that future meetings have a U-shape configuration for the dais. Kudos were also given to Mary Engelman, Annie Urasky, Vicki Levengood and Lisa Collins for their work on various presentations and projects.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On Motion duly made (Commissioner Combs) and supported (Commissioner Sakwa), the meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission at 6:51 p.m. was Adjourned. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Secretary

Executive Director