

**STATE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
DOVER, DELAWARE**

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2012

The September monthly meeting of the Delaware Human Relations Commission was held by video-conference at the Cannon Building, 861 Silver Lake Boulevard, in Conference Room A, in Dover, Delaware; and the Carvel Building, 820 N. French Street, 4th Floor Executive Conference Room, Wilmington, Delaware. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Calvin Christopher at 7:11 p.m., followed by a period of silent meditation.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson Calvin Christopher, Commissioners Mashoor Awad, Jamaal Bivens, Diaz Bonville, Whittona Burrell, Erika Caesar, Chok-fun Chui, Wallace Dixon, Steve Elkins, Earnest Gulab, Doug James, Prameela Kaza, Wayne Keller, Gail Launay, Olga Ramirez, Eli Ramos, Peter Schott, Robert Watson, Jamie Wolfe and Deputy Attorney General Barbara Gadbois was present at the meeting.

COMMISSION MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Commissioners Nathan Barnett, Bernice Edwards, Marian Harris, Nancy Maihoff, Lorenzo Murdaugh, Lois Myers, Rosemarie Williams, were excused.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The June, July & August, 2012 minutes were submitted and approved at the Full Commission Meeting.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

No members of the public were present

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Executive Committee Appointments, Assignments and Reassignments for sub-committees

- Chairperson Christopher reached out to most of the Chairs of the subcommittees to look at the composition of the various committees as per the Bylaws which indicates that the Chairs as well as the composition of the committees should be reviewed once a year to:
 - see if the Chairs of the Committees would want to resume their roles.
 - solicit feedback as it relates to the membership of the committees.

- Chairperson Christopher distributed the current assignments and the purpose of each committee to everyone. In making the decisions of reappointing and realigning, there needs to be a reasonable amount of members on each committee to maintain a balance. However, there is an exception with the EEOC because there should be 4 members on that committee at all times. All other committees will focus on having a balance. This will include a diversity of memberships, a diversity of Counties, as well as the various backgrounds and interests that members bring to the committees. Because of this, it is virtually impossible to have each Commissioner assigned to their first choice of a particular committee they want to serve on.

- As I go through the process, I certainly welcome any feedback from all Chairpersons and individual Commissioners as to what committee they would add the most value. Even with that process, Chairperson Christopher states that he cannot guarantee anyone their first choice.

- By the December meeting or before, Chairperson Christopher will be coming out with the recommendations on what the new committee heads and committee memberships will be.

- We will be charging each committee to function uniformly.
- Advance notices must go out before each committee meeting; meeting minutes should be recorded for each meeting, distributed and then updated as it relates to the transactions that have occurred.
- Chairperson Christopher is also asking each committee to come up with a priority and/or project to tackle. As an example, the Legislative Committee came up with some different Legislative issues they felt that the committee should address and/or focus on, which fit the mission of their committee.
- We currently have 3 vacancies, assuming that Commissioner Barnett has resigned his position due to medical issues, as well as not attending any meetings this year so far.
- Richard Senato contacted me and expressed interest in coming back to the Commission. I had an extensive conversation with him and plan to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissions to allow him to return. Mr. Senato was a very valuable member of the Commission in the past. I suggested to Mr. Senato that he complete an application and go through the process. We recognize that the final decision is up the Governor.

Analysis of Impediment

- The document has been published and we should move forward with the recommendations. Please read the document or at least the summary.
- Romona is in agreement with adding a focused ADHOC Committee to focus solely on AI matters. Chairperson Christopher agrees with Romona and suggests that the new committee get a plan of attack and move forward.
- Romona had the opportunity to participate as a moderator for 3 debates; Mayor of Wilmington, County Council President, and County Executive.

Voter Registration

- Marie Payne will assume the responsibilities of the Voter Registration Coordinator. She will be attending training with the Board of Elections, along with Commissioner Watson on September 20, 2012. Elections will be in November. The Commission should continue to develop plans to get people educated and registered. Please be aware of the fact that you have the training and can register people to vote. Please keep forms in your bag and be aware and ready to register people as opportunities come up.

50th SHRC Anniversary

- Chairperson Christopher gives kudos to Ericka, Diaz, Olga, Prameela, Rosemarie, and Romona for their much time and effort planning the 50th event. The sub-committee continues to meet weekly.
- Chairperson Christopher is asking Commissioners to have all hands on deck to make sure this Anniversary is successful. ***“Remember, this is not their anniversary, but ours!”***
- He is asking everyone to contact and invite as many people as possible and to sell at least 10 tickets.
- The 50th Anniversary Luncheon will be held at Dover Downs, on November 3rd, 12-2pm. The cost is \$25.00 per person with a possibility of a supplement being available.
- If Commissioners want invites printed and mailed to their invitees, please contact Marie Payne or Romona Fullman.
- We are having a Program with 5 Award Honorees; Harold L. Truxon, Drewry N. Fennell, Daniese McMullin-Powell, Louis L. Redding and James H. Sills, Jr.
- We will have music at our event, including Doug James who will be performing an original. Please advertise this event in your church bulletins if possible, **please get the word out.**

DIRECTORS REPORT

- Romona is asking everyone to look at the calendars in their own community and attend at least one City Council, County Council, Zoning Board, or a Planning Council meeting between now and the next Commission meeting. The meetings can be Googled, however, if you are not able to find a meeting, please contact Marie or Romona.
- Ines, Vince and Romona attended a Planning Commission meeting and conducted a Fair Housing training. One of the staff persons said to the Chair; “you know we have had specific language about those people here in our meetings”. They have no idea what is disallowed, for example; the statement “those people” is not allowed. We need to hear for ourselves the language that is inappropriately used, and educate the Council as to their responsibilities.
- It’s important that we the Commission observe this, and provide education if the behavior continues and Barbara G, from the AG’s Office can initiate a complaint if you observe a legitimate complaint.
- Eli talked about the members of the Hispanic Community in lower Delaware. The Hispanic Community can be intimidated with process of filing complaints. As Commissioners, we should have the investigators go down there and initiate the complaints and seek remedy for them, if necessary.
- Everyone should fully understand both the duty and the opportunity that exists.

Budget Cycle 2014:

- We are in the 2014 Budget Cycle. Our budget has been cut and is shared with the DCW. We have work to do as it relates to EA and educating people. Romona states that we are here to educate and enforce the Laws. We should be delivering tools and resources as well as partnering with the Department of Labor and/or other agencies to educate our communities.
- We want to raise the interest of adding source of income as a protected class. Romona asked Jamie to consider looking at bringing some people around the table to address this issue.
- Congratulations to Commissioner Marion Harris on the receipt of your Award.
- Delaware State Housing Authority is having a Housing Summit on Thursday, October 11th, at the Sheraton Conference Center. The keynote speaker is Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Shawn Donovan. He will be talking about best practices in areas of affordable housing. If anyone is interested in attending, please contact Romona.
- The budget hearings are open to the public.

Mediation Training

- Thanks to those of you who signed up the Mediation training.
- Gail Launey, Whittona Burrell and Romona Fullman will be attending the University of Delaware’s Basic Mediation Course.
- We want to be competent when we go out and investigate issues as it pertains to hate crimes, etc. The training will give us that tool.

Legislation

- Romona recommends setting up a structure for how we will express to the public our support, (write letters, testify and/or inform the public by having public discussions.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Response Committee: (Chok-Fun Chui, Chairperson)

Commissioner Chok-Fun Chui is requesting to have a meeting with Romona to get ideas.

Public Awareness: (Chairperson, Doug James)

- Doug received a call from the Publisher of Delaware Beach Life, regarding the article on Bill Johnston who is going to be featured in the October issue. It is a good magazine and they are excited about the article. He contacted other Commissioners in the County as well.
- The film project seems to be moving ahead. The Vanishing Voices of World War II film is an excellent film, Doug recommends that the Commissioners watch it to get ideas. We could name our moving Vanishing Voices of Delaware. Marilyn Whittington, head of DE Humanity Forum, is very interested in seeing this project happen, but she is focused on her husband who is in the hospital. Her father James Deal, is in the hospital as well. He is also excited about this project and wants to be a part of it. If we can get the Humanities Forum to come on board, we could make this thing happen. Please take a look at the DVD, it is a good one. Doug feels very strong about getting this movie made.

Legislative Committee: (Chairperson, Jamie Wolfe)

- Thanks to Jamie who gets articles and reports back what is happening in the community.
- We are attempting to find a meeting date that works for everyone. We are looking at having a conference call on Tuesdays before the Commission meeting.
- Jamie presented a list of Bills that were introduced and is asking everyone to go through the list before the next meeting to see if there are burning issues the Commission can address.
- Coming January, there will be a lot of new Legislators whom will need to be educated. Romona had a thought of having a reception/session possibly in January, with Legislators to educate them. There are a few places in Dover that the Commission could have this event. We could also partner with the disability community as well.
- Jamie suggested having Commissioners do some advocacy training and introduce people to themselves.
- Jamie can arrange Tours of Legislative Hall for interested parties.

Equal Employment Opportunity Committee: (Gail Launay, Chairperson)

- The GCEEO met in August. We received an email from Sandy Reyes telling us that our September 20th meeting has been canceled. As it appears, we are scheduled to have a meeting on October 25, at 1pm and will be reviewing the Delaware State Police, the Department of Homeland Security and DE State Housing Authority.
- The November 15th meeting will be at 9:30am at the Hazlet Armory in Dover, all of our meetings are held at this location.
- This is the time of year for the Governors Council Employment Opportunity Committee to roll up their sleeves and get to work. The report rating part of our process is very demanding of time and energy.
- In preparation for each of these meetings, we will be reading the affirmative action reports and will be deciding on what questions to ask, so be prepared.
- Gail states that: “The DE State Police and Homeland Security have been in front of the GCEO the entire 16 years that I’ve been doing this and I can say that they have never come and had parity in any of their categories.” The exchange in the dialog is interesting and we have seen some growth but not enough. The meetings are open to the public, so if Commissioners are interested, please attend and observe.
- The selection process for getting on the Governor’s Council is different than other committee work that the commission does, as it requires the Governors to confirm your Appointment to that Council. By its Laws, 8 members are allowed on that Council and by its composition 4 of those are members of the Commission and all 4 of those slots are currently full, we are not recruiting right now.
- October 27th is Make-A-Difference Day. In honor this day, I have decided to have a party for Senator Carper here in Dover. The party will be a brunch to be held on a Saturday, invitation only. Please let me know if you are interested in attending. Hopefully Doug will play for this event as well.

- I've been part of the National Head Count, registering people all around the Country to vote in elections. I have registered over 5,000 people.
- We are in the process of doing our Annual Reports. We want to include in our reports, we are discussing our Global recommendations. What we are going to recommend for each agency, the culture within the agency. Is it a good place to work? What can be done to change it? We want to start doing exit surveys for the people who leave their jobs to find out why they left.
- We are also sponsoring ADA Training on the September 19, 2012.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

GOOD NEWS

Erica and her Husband are expecting their first child in January. "It's A Boy" Today is their anniversary as well.

Commissioner Dixon is celebrating 49 years of Marriage.

Jamie has been asked to become a part of the National Speaker's list and is speaking Sunday.

Marie will be speaking at University of Maryland in November; the topic is "Balancing Work and the Family."

Camp Rehoboth's largest annual fund raising event called Sundance. They cleared \$131,000 after expenses.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved at 8:51 p.m.