

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2012

The June monthly meeting of the Delaware Human Relations Commission was held by video-conference at the Cannon Building, 861 Silver Lake Boulevard, 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 7:13 p.m., followed by a period of silent meditation.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson Calvin Christopher, Vice-Chairperson Gail Launay and Commissioners Jamaal Bivens, Diaz Bonville, Whittona Burrell, Erika Caesar, Chok-Fun Chui, Wallace Dixon, Bernice Edwards, Earnest Gulab, Prameela Kaza, Wayne Keller, and Jamie Wolfe were present.

COMMISSION MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Commissioners Mashoor Awad, Nathan Barnett, Stephen Elkins, Marian Harris, Doug James, Nancy Maihoff, Lorenzo Murdaugh, Lois Myers, Olga Ramirez, Eli Ramos, Peter Schott, Robert Watson, Jr., Rosemarie Williams were excused. Deputy Attorney General Barbara Gadbois was not present at the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chairperson Christopher and Vice-Chairperson Launay were both present; Chairperson Christopher asked for approval of the June minutes. Commissioner Burrell made a motion to accept the June minutes and Commissioner Dixon seconded the motion. All were in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

None

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Christopher gave congrats to Sheryl for her new position that she will be stating on July 2, 2012. She will be greatly missed.

Committee assignments and reassignments:

New Commissioners have joined the committee. Commissioner Christopher said that he will take a look at committee assignments and perhaps reorganize some assignments. He plans to dialog with each Chair of the committees asking them to look at the Composition of the committees and then make recommendations as it relates to the compositions. Commissioner Christopher has asked committee members to observe the interactions of some of the committees and see which one they would be interested in. There will be a balance of the assignments. There will be 7 to 8 members on each committee. Commissioner Christopher will balance between the Counties as well. Everyone's feedback will be solicited.

We must be a little more diligent making sure that we post the meetings as well as document the subject matter of those particular meetings. Please make sure minutes are documented of each meeting, so that the Division Office is kept abreast.

The summer Committee Meetings (July and August) are only designated for the Executive Committee, however all Commissioners are invited and encouraged to attend those particular meetings.

An impediment study was conducted and recommendations were made. There is a need for training various constituents as it related to Fair Housing. The Division Office has already begun conducting Fair Housing Training. I received emails and feedback in regards to a Fair Housing Training that Ines conducted externally. Ines did an excellent job conducting the Training. A Publication was in one of the Newspaper down South about that Training, so my hat goes off to Ines. Make sure you wear your tee-shirts proudly.

Commissioner Christopher solicited feedback from the Committee:

Commissioner's Feedback Summary:

Very Good; the training was down to earth and easily understood; I learned a lot; it was eye opening for me; some appointed and/or elected officials, as well as some of the public were shocked to see the types of things that the Commission handles dealing with Fair Housing issues; there is a continuous need for this type of outreach and education for Fair Housing training.

Federal Dollars from HUD:

Federal Dollars come with strict guidelines. State, City and Counties agencies that are awarded Federal \$'s from HUD must be affirmatively furthering Fair Housing, if not, those funds will be in jeopardy. To receive these Federal \$'s, a Certification is required. These governmental entities certify that they are affirmatively furthering Fair Housing. This is to minimize the fraud cases, which is what the West Chester case was about.

If Federal \$'s come into an Agency, everything in that Agency has to be inclusive. The Division has committed to doing the training and is developing Fair Housing courses to meet the needs.

In regards to Training, there are some challenges; Staff are doing both training and investigating; however, finding time and resources is a challenge. The jurisdictions in that case and the groups that did the trainings are the City of Dover, the New Castle County, State of Delaware through the Delaware Housing Authority and the City of Wilmington. The recommendations are explicit, so part of how its gets done is that the Commissioners can go to the zoning board meetings. You know the Law and know what is allowed and what is disallowed. You also hear statements that indicate feelings of exclusion; we don't want this that is what you do.

Another area clearly identified in the analysis of impediments, is the lack of community awareness for voting and being registered to vote. The committee has all gone through the voter registration training; however, we bear the responsibility to make sure our communities are educated. This upcoming election is extremely important and whatever your political party, I think it is incumbent upon us to make sure we make residents know the importance of getting out and vote. Those who are not registered, we must get them registered to vote. We as a committee, need to take the opportunity whether it's through community groups or churches, folks registered to vote, particularly some of our younger voters. Let's make sure we do our part in getting them out.

Addition, we must be aware of what the State Laws are in terms of identification that is required to vote, so that we can make sure people are aware of the proper identification that will be asked for when they go to vote. In November, they will be asked for the appropriate identification that goes with their voter registration Identification. If they don't have the proper identification required by the State, they will be rejected and turned away and not be allowed to vote. Delaware requires a Driver's License or a Birth Certificate and proof of residence. In addition, a State ID is also accepted, which can be obtained at the DMV for \$5.00, a Birth Certificate and 2 proofs of residence. Federal ID's such as Pass Ports are not normally accepted as the required identification for people in the State of DE, PA and NJ. The State issued identification with an expiration date, will be preferred over the Federal ID. It cost \$5.00; you must have a Birth Certificate and 2 proofs of address.

The older population groups will be affected by the requirements of the State. Some are not able to drive, and do not have proper identification such as a birth record. The State is not obligated to accept their documents if they are not the appropriate documents that's required.

There is a new Delaware Bill (Bill 284) that designates the population who are incarcerated to use their last address of records. The last residence in which the prisoner lived when they went to prison is where they will be counted at. So, if their address is from another State, DE will count their address as being that State in which they lived prior to incarceration. Bill 284 was signed into Law September, 2010.

Our 50 years Anniversary

To be held September or October. A planning document was prepared indicating action items and will be given to Diaz and Erica.

Director's Report: (Linda stepped out)

Some additional training will be conducted. The more training you do, the better you get. A suggestion was made to let each of the committee go through the training so that all Commissioners are able to provide the training in addition to the staff in order to train both the individuals that might be discriminated against and those who might be unintentionally discriminating. With the voter registration training, a recommendation was made for someone on the committee to be assigned to coordinate the training. Please identify which communities are low with voter registrations. We should target certain communities and local churches to get our communities registered to vote.

Mediation training; anyone interested, please let me know within the week, so that we can budget it. We want anyone who desires to take this training to be able to. When police calls, we should be present and know what to do; we need to have the skills. The training is four days; the dates are on the Director's report. It is a costly training, but we will find the resources for some people to attend if they want to. We want to have a capable, competent and highly skilled Commission that is able to fully fulfill its responsibility.

Jamie brought to our attention a Bill amendment, which requires State employees who are activity a part of Legislator to register. I need the Commissioners to make a decision about HB9, that will allow convicted felons to be eligible to vote after they finish their sentence and have paid all fines.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Awareness: (Doug James, Chairperson)

- Delaware Beach Life magazine will be doing an article on former Commissioner Bill Johnston for the June issue.
- Commissioner James said the documentary on the Commission continues to move forward.

Legislative Committee: (Chairperson, Jamie Wolfe)

- SB185 has passed the Senate and is now in the House. This bill states that any State representative or employee that has direct contact with a legislator has to be a registered lobbyist. There were questions whether or not this affected the Commission (or anyone representing the State Human Relations Commission, such as the Director or Division staff), so the committee will look into it. Director Fullman said a copy of the bill can be sent to the Commission for review.
- Director Fullman said the issue of voting rights came up at the February Black History Month forum that was held by the Division in Wilmington. Because of this the Division has now committed to

partnering with the ACLU, the Department of Justice and other organizations to hold a dialog about the issue. She said HB9 “eliminates the existing five-year waiting period before eligible felons who have fully discharged their sentences may have their voting right restored.” Director Fullman said she will let everyone know when the dialog is scheduled.

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

No report given.

Equal Employment Opportunity Committee: (Gail Launay, Chairperson)

- Commissioner Schott said the Committee participated in a workshop on May 8th regarding ‘Unconscious Bias’. He said Director Fullman was one of the presenters and he felt it was an incredible learning experience. Commissioner Dixon agreed.

The Commission thanked Investigator Hungria and commended her on the training she gave this evening. Director Fullman said there will be a continuing effort to have more training in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Dixon said his conference is scheduled for June. He welcomed the Commission’s attendance and said he will forward information about the conference to them through email.

Commissioner James recommended a speech he saw on you-tube given by Reverend Dr. William Barber, A North Carolina minister. He said the speech was regarding an amendment proposed towards the constitution.

Commissioner Ramirez encouraged the Commissioners to call their congressional representatives regarding the reauthorization of the VAWA (Violence Against Women Act).

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved at 9:05 p.m.