

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE
HARTFORD, CT 06106
WEDNESDAY, November 27, 2013
1:00 P.M.**



MINUTES

Special Commission Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Gary Collins, Chairperson
Edward Mambruno, Secretary
Tracey Gove
Cesar A. Noble
Andrew Norton
Edith Pestana

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Dawn Niles
Patricia Wrice
Cheryl Clarke

STAFF PRESENT

Tanya A. Hughes, Interim Executive Director
David Teed, Assistant Attorney General
Alvin Bingham, AA/CC Supervisor
Valerie Kennedy, HRO Representative
Monica Hammie-Richardson, Executive Secretary

I. CHAIRPERSON: Gary H. Collins, Presiding

Chairperson Gary Collins convened the Wednesday, November 27, 2013, Special Commission meeting of the Human Rights and Opportunities to order at 1:02 p.m.

Chairperson Collins conducted a roll call and thanked everyone for attending this meeting on such short notice. The meeting was confirmed and timely posted to the Secretary of State web page on Tuesday, November 26, 2013. The call-in information was confirmed on Wednesday morning and forwarded to SCSU contemporaneously with notice to CHRO commissioners and staff. SCSU declined to join the meeting due to late notice. Commissioner Collins apologized

for the late notice and explained the necessity of meeting to avoid approval by operation of law.

II. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS – VOTE REQUIRED:

Staff Recommendations: **Disapproved**

1) Southern CT State University

Dr. Valerie Kennedy presented the agency's summary and overview of why the commission recommended disapproval of the plan. Dr. Kennedy indicated that SCSU achieved 19 out of 46 short-term goals met; no long-term goals were set. This reflects 41% of total goal achievement in hiring. With respect to promotion goals, 10 out of 18 were met at 55.6%; regarding program goals, 1 out of 2 goals were met at 50% program goal achievement. The recommendation for disapproval is because:

- SCSU did not meet any of the Regulations, Section 46a-68-59 b(1),(2) or (3) standards;
- The SCSU workforce is not in parity with the relevant labor market area;
- SCSU did not provide adequate demonstration of good faith efforts analysis;
- SCSU did not substantially address previous deficiencies noted in prior plans (goals analysis).

Dr. Kennedy stated that the primary reason for disapproval was because they never explained the 4 'Other' females (non-goal candidates) who were hired in the professional faculty/ associate professor category, and even after being contacted by the reviewer, still only addressed one of the four hires. When given the opportunity to re-submit, they still did not explain. Every goal candidate must be discussed who has been eliminated from consideration as well as the searches and who was available as the result of the searches.

Paula Rice, AA officer from SCSU was contacted and asked to join the call to answer some questions from the Commissioners.

Q: **Commissioner Noble** – Did you ever fill the position of Director of Diversity and equity?

A: P. Rice. Yes. She was hired in August, 2013

Q: **Commissioner Pestana** – Did not attain goal achievement or explain. Please elaborate.

A: P. Rice: Suggested that they be contacted if the information is written incorrectly or misinterpreted. She stated that the reviewer believed that they had not reported on goal candidates. She explained that they did report on this

information, however, did not fully explain the criteria that was listed in the contract but merely referred to the contract where the criteria is explained fully. She also indicated there was reliance on a typographical error that skewed the results. She explained that the information was there and that she believed they did an incredible job of meeting goal hires and diversity. She also stated that she worked hard to clean up the errors in the prior plans.

Q: Commissioner Norton – Did they hire 4 Asian females?

A: P. Rice – There was 1 hired at the associate professor level. There were 4 hired at the assistant professor level and only one met a goal. She stated that they did explain those searches. The unexplained searches were due to a minor typographical error. The misunderstanding is because it was incorrectly categorized in the original as well as follow-up documentation.

Q: Commissioner Mambruno – Was one white male and two white females omitted?

A: P. Rice – Yes. This was explained in the follow up information and seemingly accepted by the reviewer.

Q: Commissioner Pestana – Congratulations on diversifying your staff. However, do you understand that if you do not meet the goals and the goals are not explained in the plan that this is problematic and can result in a recommendation for disapproval?

A: P. Rice – yes. This was addressed and fully explained. The only goals not hit were in the Black male and Hispanic male categories and they were fully explained.

Q: Commissioner Pestana: - Was the Hispanic female in the associate professor discussed? No Hispanic females applied?

A: P. Rice – Hispanic female was the goal. One white male and one Hispanic female was not considered and it was explained why they did not meet the criteria.

An opportunity was given to Dr. Kennedy to follow up with a rebuttal response. Dr. Kennedy maintained there were three candidates who were not discussed. Ms. Rice explained that there was a typographical error that led the CHRO reviewer to believe that there were 4 candidates that were not explained when in reality there was only one relevant candidate who was in fact explained.

Commissioner Mambruno: Moved for conditional approval

Commissioner Noble: seconded the motion.

Vote: 4 Yes 1 No

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Noble and seconded by Commissioner Norton. The vote was unanimous.