State of Connecticut
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
Regular Commission Meeting
Legislative Office Building – Rm 1A
Hartford, CT 06106
Wednesday, March 9, 2016
2:00 p.m.

Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present	Commissioners Absent
Cherron Payne	Shuana Tucker
Edward Mambruno	
Edith Pestana	
Joseph Suggs	
Dawn Niles	
Lisa Giliberto	
Andrew Norton	

Staff Present

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director
Emily Melendez, Assistant Attorney General
Michelle Dumas Keuler, Attorney III
Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary
Donna W. Brillant, Regional Manager

I. Secretary

The meeting convened at 2:04 p.m.
Commissioner Norton moved to elect Commissioner Ed Mambruno as chair for the meeting. Commissioner Pestana seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried.

II. Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to **not approve** the Minutes of the February 10, 2016 Regular Commission Meeting due to an omission under the Exemption regarding the Department of Housing. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried.

III. Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required

The three plans, the Department of Aging, the Department of Housing, and the Department of Developmental Services were presented by Deputy Director Sharp.

A. Staff Recommendations: Approved

1. Department of Aging

Representing the agency were Commissioner Betsy Ritter, Astread Ferron Poole, Margie Gerundo Murkette, Terri-Lynn Johnson.

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency has had no opportunity to meet its hiring, promotional or program goals for this filing period. There were no deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2014 approved. This was their first filing. **They were recommended to move to biennial filing status**.

2. Department of Housing

Representing the Agency were Commissioner Klein, Nick Lundgren, Jamila Goolgar, Dimple Desai, Irena Baj-Wright and Theresa Judge.

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals; the agency did not meet all or substantially all of its hiring goals at 50%. The promotion goals were met at 100% and the program goals were met 50% for this filing period. They substantially addressed the deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history was 2015, approved. This was their first filing. **They were recommended to retain their biennial filing status.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Niles to accept staff recommendation to **approve** the Department of Aging and the Department of Housing plans and **retain their biennial filing status**. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried.

3. Department of Developmental Services

Representing the Agency were Commissioner Morna Murray and Carl Jordan

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals; the agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring goals at 37.4% and the promotion goals were met at 42.4%. The program goals were met at 100% for this filing period. The agency substantially addressed deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2010 approved, 2011, conditionally approved, and 2012, 2013, approved and 2014, conditionally approved. **They are recommended to retain their annual filing status.**

Commissioner Mambruno recused himself from the vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Niles and seconded by Commissioner Norton for staff recommendation to **approve** the Department of Developmental Services plan and to retain their **annual filing status**. The vote was 5 in favor and O- opposed. The motion carried.

[Commissioner Dawn Niles left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.]

IV. Division Reports

Executive Director's Report, Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Director Hughes noted that in the Commissioners folders was the testimony that she and Cheryl Sharp would be giving to the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus that day, as well as the ED production report and some attachments of where the CHRO stands regarding current legislation. Michelle Dumas Keuler will be supplementing the Executive Director's report with a legislative update.

The Executive Director's production report outlines the filed cases, the closed cases, settlements, and aged cases to date. The Commission has been working closely with the Norwich Regional office and the other regional offices to eliminate the aged inventory by June 30.
It has been mentioned to refill some vacancies in the CHRO pertaining to the lifting of the municipal set aside. It is now understood that there are budget concerns for the coming fiscal year..

Michelle Dumas Keuler began the Legislative update by answering a question regarding the Veterans Bill, - SB 197 posed by Commissioner Norton.
She stated to the Commissioners how Tanya, Cheryl, herself, and other staff have been spending a lot of time and effort at the Capitol to show a strong and meaningful presence for CHRO. The pending budget cuts and possibly cutting the municipal set aside program, and the eleven positions that go along with it have caused CHRO to spend a lot of time with the Appropriations Committee and legislatures.
The bills listed on the update are bills that CHRO has submitted testimony for. They are:

HB - 5237 An Act Concerning Fair Chance Employment
HB - 5342 An Act Concerning Appeal to Fair Housing Procedures – (CHRO wants this to pass)
HB - 5049 An Act implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations
HB - 5541 An Act Concerning Incentive for Businesses that Exceed Accessibility Requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act
HB - 5501 An Act Concerning Executive Sessions of Public Agencies
RB - 5400 An Act Concerning Disclosure of Certain Education Personnel Records
SB - 197 An Act Concerning Veterans, Discriminatory Practices and the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
SB - 21 An Act Concerning Military Departments Non-Discrimination Laws
SB - 152 An Act Concerning the Disclosure of Housing Discrimination and Fair Housing Laws
SB - 381 An Act Establishing A Task Force to Study School Climate
SB - 393 An Act Concerning Domestic Workers

Outreach Report, Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Deputy Director Sharp gave a report on the many successful outreach activities:

Future:

What the Faith: Women Debunking Religious Stereotypes, March 10
CT Kids Speak, May 24
Testimony on Bills, continuous for CHRO staff
175th Anniversary of the Amistad, March 9

Successes:

School to Prison Pipeline, Feb 17
Racial Justice Conference, Feb 22
AKA Sorority Day at the Capitol, March

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Events are listed on four pages of the March Outreach Report.

Chair Payne invited Director Hughes, Deputy Director Sharp, and AAG Emily Melendez to attend Executive Session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to go into Executive Session**.**

V. Executive Session:
(Requires a two-thirds vote of Commissioners Present and Voting – Staff and Guests Invited to Attend Must Be Noted)

Pending Claim(s) Litigation.

VI. Vote on Executive Session items:
(Action May Be Required)

VII. New Business

Commissioner Giliberto asked if the Reviewers of the CHRO Affirmative Action plans could be present at the Commission meetings when a plan has been disapproved.

Commissioner Payne tabled the discussion for the next meeting and decide if it would be on the Agenda or brought into Executive Session.

VIII. Old Business

IX. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 3:28 p.m.