

**State of Connecticut
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
Regular Commission Meeting
Legislative Office Building – Rm 1A
Hartford, CT 06106
Wednesday, April 9, 2014
2:00 P.M.**



**Minutes
Regular Commission Meeting**

Commissioners Present

Gary H. Collins, Chairman
Edward Mambruno, Secretary
Tracey Gove
Andrew Norton

Commissioners Absent

Edith Pestana
Dawn Niles

STAFF PRESENT

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Charles Krich, Principal Attorney	Patrick Kilby
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary	Sue Hom, HRO Rep
David Teed, Assistant Attorney General	Jim O'Neill, Legislative Liaison
Alvin Bingham, AA/CC Supervisor	Neva Vigezzi, HRO Rep
Donna Wilkerson- Brilliant, Regional Mgr.	

- I. **Chairperson:** Gary H. Collins, Presiding
Chairman Collins convened the meeting at 2 p.m. He acknowledged that this year is the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, and placed emphasis on the importance of the great work done at the Commission on Human Rights and its impact, especially the past six months.
- II. **Secretary:** Edward Mambruno
A motion was made by Commissioner Gove to approve the minutes from the March 12, regular commission meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously.
- III. **Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required**

A. Staff Recommendations : Approved

1. Office of the Governor

Representing the agency were Luke Bronin, Eleanor Michael, Christopher Drake, and Alicia Nunez.

The Affirmative Action plan of the Office of the Governor was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith effort to achieve its goals; the agency has not met all of its hiring goals. There are no promotion or program goals. There were no deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, the plans were all approved.

There was a statement from Commissioner Norton regarding meeting the 5 out of 11 hiring goals. He credited the Office of the Governor for the hiring of Blacks and Hispanics within upper management, even though their goals weren't met and it is not shown in the numbers. Attorney Luke Bronin thanked CHRO on behalf of Governor Malloy and the staff.

2. Department of Revenue Services

Representing the agency were Commissioner Kevin Sullivan and Penny Potter.

The plan for the Department of Revenue Services was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following; It contained all elements required; the Agency demonstrated good faith effort to achieve its goals; it has met or substantially met all of its hiring and promotion goals. There were no deficiencies in prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013, the plans were all approved.

A comment was made by Commissioner Mambruno stating that DRS continues to set the bar a for all other agencies because they set a good example due to various items such as hiring persons with intellectual disabilities, and the existence of a computer lab for their employees, and an outstanding program for those with disabilities.

Commissioner Norton also noted that even though hiring goals weren't met there were good numbers in hiring Blacks and Hispanics in the higher levels of this Agency. Unfortunately, this is not reflected in the percentages of the report.

3. University of Connecticut

Representing the University were Associate Vice President, Elizabeth Conklin and Jeffrey Ogbar.

The plan for UCONN was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following; it contained all elements required; the work force is not at parity with the relevant labor market; though it did not meet all of its hiring, promotion, and program goals, UCONN demonstrated good faith effort to achieve its goals. There were no deficiencies in its prior plan. The five year filing history is as follows 2009, approved, 2010 and 11, conditionally approved and 2012 and 13 were approved.

There was a question from Commissioner Norton regarding the hiring of more minorities (Hispanic and African Americas) on the faculty in the future. Chairman Collins asked if you could look from within the University. The answer from Ms. Conklin and Mr. Ogbar was there is a search committee being utilized to help diversify the faculty and there is a working model known as HERC (New England & New York) to aid in the search. The Chair also asked what percentage of the faculty is tenured and what colleges have you used to look for Hispanics/African Americans. A follow-up from UCONN with this data is expected.

4. Department of Correction

Representing the Agency were Commissioner James Dzurenda, Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak and Christian Moore and Holley Darin.

The Affirmative Action plan for the Department of Correction was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: it contained all elements required; the work force as a whole is not considered at parity with the relevant labor market; the agency had not met all or substantially all of its long term hiring and promotion goals; program goals have been substantially met; the agency demonstrated good faith effort to achieve its goals; there were no deficiencies in its prior plan. The five year filing history is as follows: 2009 and 2010 were approved, 2011 was disapproved, and 2012, 2013 were approved.

A comment was made by Commissioner Norton commending DOC for a 37% hiring margin within the staff. That number has remained consistent for the past 10 years.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno to accept the recommendation to approve all four affirmative action plans – Office of the Governor, Department of Revenue Services, University of CT and Department of Correction. It was seconded by Commissioner Norton. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Declaratory Ruling

There were three petitions for declaratory rulings to be heard. Attorney Charles Krich of CHRO presented and Attorney Sandra Staub of the ACLU was there to represent, the Complainant, Isa Mujahid. The three cases were issues of public accommodation and recommendations made by CHRO as follows; the recommendation for Isa

Mujahid vs. City of Bridgeport, CHRO No. 132018332 was at public hearing and to continue. The recommendation of Lakeisha McCormick vs. city of Bridgeport, CHRO No. 1220185 was to set down for investigation and to continue. The recommendation for Dawn Alston vs City of Bridgeport, CHRO No. 1220077, was set for ELI and will continue in Early Legal Intervention.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tracey Gove to set all three cases down for a specified proceeding as recommended . It was seconded by Commissioner Norton. The motion carried unanimously.

V. **Division Reports:**

A. Executive Director's Report

This report was presented by Executive Director Tanya Hughes. She thanked former Commissioner Noble and present Commissioner Gove for their service to CHRO. She reported on the anticipated move to 450 Columbus Ave regarding spacing needs, etc. A CTS update was given by James Flynn. Statistics were presented on CHRO case closures. A matrix was provided to view these numbers. A Deputy Director Search committee is in place and the Legislative Review Committee is in process of reorganizing for next year.

B. Outreach Report

This report was presented by Attorney Cheryl Sharp. There will be an inaugural Black and Latino EXPO consisting of a panel with CHRO for the development of more recruitment of Black and Latinos in the state. Attorney Sharp and Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler were requested to write an article for the International Law Review; its spring issue is the expected time frame. KidSpeak will be at UCONN School of Law on May 22 and a Civil Rights discussion will take place on May 7 in The Mayor of Hartford's Green Room.

C. Legislative Report

This report was given by Jim O'Neill. Senate Bill 385 died.

Chair Collins asked what we could have done to save Bill 385. Per Jim O'Neill, there was not much to be done to save it due to the timeliness of when it was presented and the amount of discussion on the floor.

At 3:07 p.m. a motion was made by Commissioner Gove to go into Executive Session to discuss items listed on the agenda. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. **Executive Session:**

(Requires a two-thirds vote of Commissioners Present and Voting – Staff and Guests Invited to attend Must Be Noted)

The meeting resumed at 3:25 p.m.

A. Reopening Request

A motion was made by Commissioner Gove to reopen Sarah Nichols v. AXA, CHRO No. 1320279, only for the purpose of issuing a release. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Deputy Director Search Committee

Commissioner Norton made a motion to appoint all currently serving commissioners, as well as, those Commissioners who may be appointed to fill vacancies as the Deputy Director Search committee. Commissioner Gove seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Commissioner Gove to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.
The meeting ended at 3:30 p.m.