

**REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES
THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2006, 2:00 P.M.
21 GRAND STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06106
4th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Andrew M. Norton, Chair
Edward Mambruno, Secretary
Lillian H. Brown
Cheryl Lynn Clarke
Larry Conaway
James L. Griffin
John Lobon
George Marshall (via phone)
Gloria Mengual

STAFF PRESENT

R. Hamisi Ingram, Executive Director
Raymond P. Pech, Assistant Director
Robert Brothers, Jr., Managing Director & Commission Attorney
Donald Newton, Field Operations Manager
Michael Fryar, Curriculum Manager
Pekah Wallace, HRO Regional Manager
James Flynn, HRO Regional Manager
Epifanio Carrasquillo, HRO Regional Manager
Lena Ferguson, Legislative Regulations Specialist
Alvin Bingham, Contract Compliance Supervisor
Neva Vigezzi, Affirmative Action Program Analyst
Valerie Kennedy, Affirmative Action Program Analyst
Paula Ross, Affirmative Action Program Analyst

I. A. CONVENE MEETING:

Chairman Norton convened the meeting at 2:03 p.m. and welcomed all guests. Due to the current vacancy of the Commission Secretary Chairman Norton handled some of the secretarial functions.

B. Review and Approval of Minutes of June 8, 2006 Regular Commission Meeting:

It was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Marshall to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2006 Regular Commission meeting as presented. The motion carried with Commissioners Marshall, Lobon, Griffin, Brown, Mengual, Mambruno, Clarke and Conaway voting in the affirmative. Chairman Norton did not vote on the motion.

C. Review and Approval of Minutes of June 16, 2006 Special Commission Meeting:

It was moved by Commissioner Griffin and seconded by Commissioner Brown to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2006 Special Commission meeting as presented. The motion carried with Commissioners Marshall, Lobon, Mengual, Clarke, Griffin, Brown, Mambruno and Conaway voting in the affirmative. Chairman Norton did not vote on the motion.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: R. Hamisi Ingram

A. Agencies Proposed Affirmative Action Plans:

Staff Recommendation: ***Approval***

1. Middlesex Community College
2. Naugatuck Valley Community College
3. Quinebaug Valley Community College
4. Tunxis Community College
5. Three Rivers Community College
6. Capitol Region Mental Health Center

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Executive Director Ingram congratulated Commissioner Clarke on her recent appointment and announced Gloria Sparveri, Affirmative Action Program Manager's absence.

The Chairman reiterated a discussion from the June Commission meeting reminding the commissioners that the affirmative action plans would be discussed and voted on, one at a time.

1. Middlesex Community College

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from the college. It was moved by Commissioner Griffin and seconded by Commissioner Marshall to accept the staff recommendation to approve the affirmative action plan. The Chair asked for discussion. A discussion took place between Commissioner Lobon and officers from Middlesex Community College. A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to approve Middlesex Community College's affirmative action plan, the Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with the Chairman not voting.

2. Naugatuck Valley Community College

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from the college. It was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to accept the staff recommendation to approve the affirmative action plan. The Chairman asked for discussion. A discussion took place between the Commissioners, staff and Ronald Clymer, Affirmative Action Officer from Naugatuck Valley Community College.

Ken Armstrong from the Systems Office Community College expounded on the importance of all entities forwarding their information regarding sexual harassment prevention training to all parties to ensure the accuracy of all affirmative action plans. A brief discussion continued between Mr. Armstrong and the Commissioners regarding the flow of this process.

Ms. Kennedy informed the Commissioners that it is a new practice to have agencies report sexual harassment prevention training. To date all agencies have not been notified that it is a requirement to state this

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information in the plan.

Ms. Ross indicated that the majority of the plans were submitted and written prior to the new requirement and that the required information has not been disseminated to all agencies yet.

A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to approve the College's affirmative action plan, the Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with the Chairman not voting.

3. Quinebaug Valley Community College

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from the college. It was moved by Commissioner Lobon and seconded by Commissioner Conaway to accept the staff recommendation to approve the affirmative action plan. Commissioner Lobon expounded on the exceptional work the college exhibited in achieving their goals. Commissioner Brown elaborated on the challenges some colleges may face in accomplishing certain goals due to their location. However, she applauded Quinebaug Valley Community College for their great achievement as well as did several of the other Commissioners.

Chairman Norton welcomed Commissioner Clarke on her recent appointment as Commissioner Clarke requested an explanation on goal setting. A short dialogue continued regarding goal setting between Mr. Bingham and Commissioner Clarke. Commissioner Clarke recommended the Commissioners take a look at the process of goal setting at a later date. Chairman Norton asked the Executive Director to make a note to discuss the setting of goals with perhaps the Department of Administrative Services or a regulatory consideration. Jerry Blazek, Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action Officer for the college attributed their accomplishments to Deb Gutner who focuses with DAS and the Minority Owned Businesses that DAS supports. The Chairman acknowledged Deborah Gutner, Financial Administrative Assistant's accomplishments and recommended she teach a class.

A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to approve the College's affirmative action plan, the Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with the Chairman not

voting.

4. Tunxis Community College

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from the college. It was moved by Commissioner Conaway and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to accept the staff recommendation to approve the affirmative action plan. Commissioner Lobon made some brief remarks regarding their SBE goals. Mr. Bingham indicated that they are only reporting two quarters. Kathryn Addy, President of Tunxis attributed their accomplishments to many of the college's major expansion projects; therefore, there is currently quite a bit of money flowing through the system. A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to approve the College's affirmative action plan, the Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with the Chairman not voting.

5. Three Rivers Community College

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from the college. It was moved by Commissioner Griffin and seconded by Commissioner Marshall to accept the staff recommendation to approve the affirmative action plan.

Mr. Bingham gave an overview of his conversation with Meg Yetishefsky today regarding the agency numerical reporting. Currently if an agency does not meet 75% of their goals by the end of the third quarter, they are requested to write a justification. He was told that to date 31 agencies have not responded. Mr. Bingham recommended that in the beginning of the upcoming training in September each agency be required to explain why they haven't met their goals and responded to the letter. A discussion continued regarding the best way to handle agencies that do not comply with requests.

Commissioner Mambruno asked for clarification regarding the agency's negligence in submitting their required contract compliance and diversity forms. George Rezendes, Director of Institutional Research said that in the affirmative action plan there is a copy of the small contractor minority business enterprise utilization report dated 12/31/2005, which is the end of the second quarter, listing the totals and the SBE and the MBE goals. In the

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affirmative action plan, on page 193, diversity training is noted in the summary of training under the Faculty category. Diversity training is also noted within the plan. Ms. Vigezzi said that the required SBE and MBE information for 2005 & 2006 was missing from the DAS website. Ms. Vigezzi called Three Rivers regarding the missing diversity training information and did not receive a return phone call. A discussion continued regarding the missing information, Commissioner Mambruno requested Three Rivers to contact CHRO's staff with all necessary information. Commissioner Conaway thanked Ms. Vigezzi for being thorough.

A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to approve the College's affirmative action plan, the Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with the Chairman not voting.

6. Capitol Region Mental Health Center

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from CRMHC. It was moved by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Clarke to accept the staff recommendation to approve the affirmative action plan. A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to approve CRMHC's affirmative action plan, the Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with the Chairman not voting.

Staff Recommendation: ***Disapproval***

Capital Community College

Mr. Bingham gave a brief overview of the affirmative action plan and introduced the staff present from the college. It was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to accept the staff recommendation to disapprove the affirmative action plan.

Commissioner Brown was disturbed by their affirmative action plan. Calvin Woodland, President of Capital Community College read an extensive statement regarding all of the issues surrounding their disapproval. There were numerous reasons why he believes the plan should at least be conditionally approved due to their achievements. He requested an explanation as to why their plan was changed from an annual filing status to a semi-annual filing status. A dialogue continued between Commissioner

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Brown and Mr. Woodland.

Chairman Norton requested clarification on many areas of their affirmative action plan including the hiring of Mr. Woodland and various other employees.

Commissioner Griffin acknowledged the inconsistency of the many recommendations the college has had in the last five-years and asked for an explanation. Mr. Woodland reiterated the reasons the plan has been recommended for various approvals over the last five-years, was due to the transition of employees and the hiring of goal candidates. Mr. Woodland does not believe the college has systemic problems. Mr. Woodland feels that the college has the ability to move forward and is on the right track.

Commissioner Clarke gave a brief overview of page 6 of 7, which mentions the deficiencies and weaknesses that led to a semi annual filing status. Commissioner Clarke asked Mr. Woodland if all of the issues had been addressed and all of the missing documentation presented. Mr. Woodland indicated that the director of human resources was reaching out for technical assistance and that the timing was not the best. A dialogue continued until Commissioner Clarke's questions had been satisfied.

Commissioner Brown indicated that she believes the staff made the correct recommendation for their plan and that perhaps his staff would pay closer attention to their affirmative action plan. Commissioner Brown said that she does not believe they should get a conditional approval.

Chairman Norton asked if the other commissioners would like to change the affirmative action plans recommendation from disapproval to a conditional approval. There was no reply by the commissioners.

Chairman Norton asked if Middlesex Community College's plan was approved with a semi-annual filing status.

Commissioner Brown said yes.

Chairman Norton continued to dialogue and obtain clarification about which plans had a semi-annual filing status and which did not.

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Ms. Kennedy expounded on the reason Middlesex had been placed on a semi-annual filing status a year ago and their accomplishments since then as well as when they can petition to regain their annual filing status. An extensive discussion ensued regarding Capital Community College's affirmative action plan, in general, and the recommended filing status between the Commissioners, the Executive Director and Staff.

Chairman Norton asked for clarification regarding the name and number of agencies that currently have a semiannual filing status and what the process is for retaining an annual filing status, being put on a six-month filing status as well as what the law has to say about it.

Executive Director Ingram expounded on the Chairman's questions along with the Assistant Attorney General, David Teed.

A motion having been made and properly seconded to accept the staff recommendation to disapprove the College's affirmative action plan and accept the six-month filing status, the Chairperson called for a vote. Commissioner Brown, Mambruno, Lobon and Conaway voted to accept the motion. Thereafter upon clarification Commissioner Marshall changed his vote and agreed that the college should retain their annual filing status. The motion failed with the Chairman not voting.

Commissioner Griffin made a motion to allow the college to retain their annual filing status and accept the staff recommendation to disapprove the College's affirmative action plan. The Chairman called for a vote. The motion carried with Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Lobon and Commissioner Conaway opposing. The Chairman did not vote.

A. Fiscal Report

Nandi Colon, Fiscal Administrative Supervisor was absent, however her report was included.

B. Field Operations Report

Donald Newton, Field Operations Manager gave a brief synopsis of his written report. He expounded on the change between the current reported month and the prior month for the number of cases, backlogged cases and the monetary settlements. Mr. Newton explained the first half of the EEOC

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contract money, which was received in June. The money will be deposited back into the general fund and the legislature takes the money into account when the budget is set. Office of Policy and Management has signed off on all necessary documentation for the relocation of the Bridgeport office. We have approval for a “hold-over lease” allowing the office to remain in its present location until February 1, 2007 and then moving into a larger space after that date.

C. Legislative Report

Lena Ferguson, Regulations & Legislative Specialist gave a very brief report regarding the status of our regulation. On June 27th, the regulation review committee approved with technical corrections our proposed amendments to the affirmative action plan-filing schedule. Those technical corrections have been made and the amendments have been filed with the Secretary of the State’s Office on July 7th, which is the date the regulations become effective. Once that is published the Commissioners will receive a copy.

D. Managing Director Report

Robert Brothers, Jr., Managing Director & Commission Attorney, gave a brief report regarding the legal department beginning its second round of Regional Office field visits/legal updates, which takes place three or four times a year. Currently, the legal department has received one declaratory ruling request and has two remaining reopening requests which should be completed and will be on next month’s agenda.

E. Curriculum Manager’s Report

Michael Fryar, Curriculum Manager expounded on the completion of the Personnel manual, which was converted to a PDF file and disseminated to staff. The Commissioners manual is with the David Teed for his review who will then return it with any changes and or additions. The training manual for trainees will be available very soon along with the manual for intake officers. The next investigation training will take place during the month of August with the State Police and the second week in September. CHRO will be going to Six-Flags for a summer outing on Friday, July 21st.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Election of a Secretary

Commissioner Griffin nominated Commissioner Mambruno to be the next elected Secretary for the Commission. A motion having been made and properly seconded by Commissioner Brown to accept the Commissioner Griffin's recommendation, the Chairperson called for a vote. The motion carried with Chair not voting.

Commissioner Mambruno read Commissioner Clarke's appointment letter from the Governor.

B. Request from Central Connecticut State University for a Contract Compliance Exemption Regarding a Proposed Agreement with Université Laval in Québec, Canada

Raymond Pech, Assistant Director gave an extensive overview of the University's request answering numerous questions from Commissioner Brown regarding many particulars. Mr. Pech agreed to gather additional information to satisfy some of the unanswered questions. Chairman Norton asked for a motion to grant the exemption. It was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Griffin. The motion carried. Chairman Norton did not vote.

C. Commendation for former Commissioner Benjamin R. Rhodes, Jr.

Chairman Norton asked Commissioner Griffin to read the resolution honoring Benjamin F. Rhodes, Jr. for his service as a member of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities from 1995 to 2006, having been appointed by Governor John G. Rowland. Each of the members of the Commission extended best wishes for Mr. Rhodes future endeavors and contributions.

Chairman Norton accepted the reading of the resolution as a motion to accept the resolution. It was moved by Commissioner Griffin and seconded by Commissioner Marshall. The motion carried. Chairman Norton did not vote.

Mr. Pech thanked Lena Ferguson for writing the resolution.

Commissioner Brown alluded to the fact that there is a timeline and does not want other commissioners who have left in the past to feel slighted that they did not receive something as nice as the resolution and make note that this is the first resolution. Other Commissioners are deserving of it as well however, this began under your administration.

Commissioner Norton feels that this would be a nice token. Commissioner Mambruno reiterated that a previous motion had been made to name the conference room after Amalia Vazquez Bzdyra for all of her hard work and it has not been completed to date. Mr. Ingram noted that Amalia Bzdyra Vazquez received an award at the Gala that was held last year along with Esther Armmand.

Commissioner Griffin requested the Commission formulate a letter of condolence in honor Kay Wyrick from Waterbury. Commissioner Norton requested Commissioner Griffin work along with Mr. Ingram to create a letter of condolence from the Commission to her family and loved ones.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

It was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Griffin that the Commission go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing pending litigation and personnel matters. The motion carried with Chairman Norton not voting on the motion. All members of the public were excused from Executive Session.

A. Report on Pending Claims or Pending Litigation:

1. Leonyer Richardson v. CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, Docket No. 3:02CV625AVC
2. Jewel E. Brown v. CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, Docket No. 3:02CV223CFD
3. Femi Bogle Assegai v. CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, Docket No. 3:02CV2292JCH

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B. Reopening Request:

1. Gaines v. City of Hartford, (Tax Collector); City of Hartford (Housing Authority; Imagineers, LLC, Elizabeth A. Cipriano, Esq./Mayo Crowe, LLC and Capitol Housing Finance Corp. No. 0350021
2. French v. CIMA Group, Inc., No. 0530147 & 0530432

C. Personnel Matters: Annual Evaluation of Executive Director

V. RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION:

It was moved by Commissioner Griffin and seconded by Commissioner Brown to return to Regular Session. The motion carried unanimously. Chairperson Norton did not vote on the motion. The Chairperson noted for the record that Assistant Attorney General David Teed, Executive Director R. Hamisi Ingram, Assistant Director Raymond Pech and Managing Director & Commission Attorney Robert Brothers, Jr., participated in a portion of Executive Session. No votes were taken in Executive Session.

VI. VOTE ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

A. Pending Litigation:

Report on Pending Federal Court Litigation: No Discussion, No vote.

1. Leonyer Richardson v. CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, Docket No. 3:02CV625AVC
2. Jewel E. Brown v. CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, Docket No. 3:02CV223CFD
3. Femi Bogle Assegai v. CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, Docket No. 3:02CV2292JCH

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B. Reopening Request:

1. Gaines v. City of Hartford, (Tax Collector); City of Hartford (Housing Authority; Imagineers, LLC, Elizabeth A. Cipriano, Esq./Mayo Crowe, LLC and Capitol Housing Finance Corp. No. 0350021

With regard to item VI. B1. it was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Mengual to accept staff's recommendation to deny the reopening request in the matter of Gaines v. City of Hartford, (Tax Collector); City of Hartford (Housing Authority; Imagineers, LLC, Elizabeth A. Cipriano, Esq./Mayo Crowe, LLC and Capitol Housing Finance Corp.. The motion carried unanimously. Chairperson Norton did not vote on the motion.

2. French v. CIMA Group, Inc., No. 0530147 & 0530432

With regard to item VI. B2 it was moved by Commissioner Griffin and seconded by Commissioner Marshall to accept staff's recommendation to deny the reopening request in the matter of French v. CIMA Group, Inc. The motion carried unanimously. Chairperson Norton did not vote on the motion

C. Personnel Matters:

With regard to item VI. C Annual Evaluation of Executive Director it was moved by Commissioner Clarke effective immediately and for the next 90 days the Executive Director shall not take any of the following actions without advanced approval from the Chairman: Any disciplinary actions against employees; 2. Any organizational changes within CHRO; 3. Any transfers, promotions, reassignments of personnel and 4. Any changes in policies or procedures, which might impact the rights of personnel. Commissioner Griffin seconded the motion. The motion carried, Commissioner Lobon abstained and Chairman Norton did not vote on the motion.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Marshall to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:48 p.m. The motion carried with Commissioners Marshall, Brown, Conaway, Clarke, Mengual, Mambruno, Griffin and Lobon voting in the affirmative. Chairman Norton did not vote on the motion.

IX. CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is the official record of the Commission's July 13, 2006 Regular Commission Meeting, and that these minutes were adopted as true, accurate, and authentic by majority vote of the Commissioners present and voting at the August 10, 2006 Regular Meeting of the Commission.

Attest: _____
Edward Mambruno
Secretary

_____ Date