

**Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations
Minutes of Meeting
January 14, 2019**

Attendance:

Liddy Barlow, secretary	Gabriel McMorland (by phone)
Winford Craig	Richard Morris, acting chair
Helen Gerhardt	Lori Roth
Eric Horwith	Gwendolyn Young

Absent: Sharyn Henry, Eric Holmes, Wasiullah Mohamed, Mariana Padias (chair)

Staff: Emily Costello, Mark Hamilton, Candace Ragin, Rachel Salem, Megan Stanley

Guests: Jay Dworin

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Morris called the meeting to order.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Adoption of Minutes

MSP (unanimous): that the minutes be adopted.

IV. Committee and Staff Reports

A. Deputy Director's Report

Deputy Director Stanley reported:

- The Human Rights Day press conference on December 10 was very successful.
- She has been participating in the Corporate Equity and Inclusion Roundtable and has started a subcommittee helping job seekers with criminal records understand resources available to them, such as expungement.
- She also attended the Racial Justice Summit town hall meeting; the summit will take place on January 26.
- Commissioner Roth assisted with a lengthy conciliation meeting.
- The Commission has started biweekly meetings with the Fair Housing Partnership.
- The final AFFH task force regional meeting in the West End at Sheraden Healthy Active Living Center had 20 people in attendance. The

recommendations are being finalized and will be presented to the commission by April.

- The FBI will offer a training on hate crimes and ethnic intimidation on Jan 24 for staff and commissioners.
- She conducted a Fair Housing training at Urban League for 30 staff.
- She met with Councilwoman Strassburger on Jan 3. Director Torres had started process of enacting legislation including pregnancy as a protected class. (Pregnancy had previously been covered under sex.) New legislation will be introduced to clarify the rights and responsibilities of pregnant employees. Guidance will be offered on various scenarios. She will have a follow-up meeting with Strassburger on the 18th.
- Upcoming events include a Section 8 Homeowners workshop at the Urban League on Jan 19; a training at the women's center regarding rights for immigrants, refugees and limited English speakers; training for Americorps; and a panel at the Immigrants and Internationals advisory council on the 30th.

Commissioner Morris thanked Megan and staff for their work and the support they have been providing.

B. Finance Committee

Commissioner Young had no report.

C. Community Relations Committee

There was no report.

D. Housing Committee

Commissioner Roth said she will report at next meeting.

E. Personnel Committee

Commissioner Young tried to schedule an exit interview with Kyle Novak. He cancelled today's scheduled meeting at the last minute. Deputy Director Stanley said Mr. Novak, elected to return to his prior position at Permits, Licensing, and Inspection, as was his right as a member of the AFSCME union. The position has now been posted.

F. Public Hearing Section

Commissioner Barlow had no report.

G. Bylaws Committee

Commissioner Morris said the committee has met and prepared some documents for the Executive Committee's review; they will then go to the Solicitor for review, and then will provide to Commissioners for consideration at next meeting.

V. Outreach and Education Discussion

Deputy Director Stanley introduced Jay Dworin, CEO of the Fair Housing Partnership. Since both FHP and CHR work with HUD, she explained the importance of both agencies working together.

Mr. Dworin explained that in Fair Housing enforcement there are two separate programs: one that takes initiative in advocating on behalf of people who have faced discrimination (FHIPs, Fair Housing Initiative Programs), and one that arbitrates cases of discrimination (FHAPs, Fair Housing Assistance Programs). Fair Housing Partnership is a FHIP; the Commission is a FHAP.

Around the country there is often tension between FHIPs and FHAPs. FHP felt as if there had to be a better way. They met with the mayor's office and city planning about how FHP could work proactively with the city, rather than only reacting to the city's actions. This agreement became part of the consolidated plan for the city. The city of Pittsburgh is one of the only places in the country to have reached this kind of agreement. In time, responsibility for the agreement moved from the city planning department to the Commission on Human Relations.

The work of FHP is first and foremost is to provide testing and analysis; no other organization in the city provides that. They do fair housing testing to provide evidence to victims of housing discrimination, such as the type of evidence that the Commission uses in cases we review. FHP also does advocacy work, assisting people who are making complaints. They also file their own complaints, giving them to HUD; these sometimes come to CHR. They also do education and outreach; they have a dedicated staff person to do that, who works from an advocacy lens: people are asking not only where to file a complaint, but who can fight for them. While CHR is neutral in adjudicating cases, FHP can advocate, bringing people off the sidelines to get a complaint, helping people handle it, and taking some of the worry away.

Mr. Dworin said we need to best work together to maximize our limited resources so people feel comfortable coming forward and know where and how to make that claim. There are places where our roles overlap, as defined by HUD: CHR will act as a neutral body, FHP will act as an advocate, but both have responsibilities for education. Deputy Director Stanley said that information about FHP is included in referral packets given to complainants.

Mr. Dworin added that he been in conversation with HUD regarding the training of the commission itself. HUD has requested that we provide such training to you all, to come out of our budget not ours.

Mr. Dworin concluded, We need to get clarity on everyone's roles and on what we are trying to do, both organizationally and how we are using our funds. We can have further discussion on that.

Commissioner Morris thanked Mr. Dworin for coming and encouraged having more dialogue in the future.

VI. Executive Session

Staff and guests departed; the Commission and Counsel entered executive session.

VII. New Business

Commissioner Morris announced that the Commission has received the resignation of Commissioner Allyce Pinchback.

Commissioner Horwith has invited the Commission and staff for an informal social gathering at his home to better get to know one another. Deputy Director Stanley will reach out to him to find a suitable date and time

Commissioner Craig will be moderating a panel at the Racial Justice Summit. It will include former commissioner Lien, a representative from the state commission, possibly a representative from the FBI, and a rabbi to talk about how violence and intimidation affect various communities and how communities have responded after the shooting at Tree of Life.

Commissioner Morris said that the planned mini-training on the funding sources should happen in conjunction with the finance committee's report on the FHP contract; it will be important for us to understand where the difference sources of revenue are from before we make a decision about FHP.

Commissioner Gerhart said the Allegheny County Commission on Human Relations will be celebrating its 10th anniversary on Feb 19 from 12-1 p.m.

MSP: that the meeting be adjourned.