

Prince George's County Human Rights Commission

Monday, June 28, 2021

Zoom Meeting of the
Prince George's County
Human Rights Commission

ATTENDEES:

Commissioners:

Nora Eidelman, Chairperson
Charlene Proctor, Vice-Chair
Wade Woolfolk, Secretary
Nathaniel Bryant
Adonna Bannister Green
Llamilet Gutierrez
Wendi Howard
Sylvia Johnson
Ademola Oduyebo
Andrea Price-Carter
Joseph Reed
Felicia Lasley Sadler

Keisha Garner, Counsel to the Commission

Staff:

Renée Battle-Brooks
Executive Director

Kyla Hanington
Clerk to the Commission

Jose Villegas
Senior Investigator

Guests:

Keith Merkey – MCCR
Merrill Smith
Janelle Johnson
Kim Kendrick

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.
2. Adopt Agenda – Vice-Chair Proctor asked about updating title of agenda; agenda title will be updated to reflect new name of Human Rights Commission – Vice-Chair Proctor – Motion to adopt the agenda with noted name change; Commissioner Sadler – Seconded the Motion. By unanimous vote, the agenda was adopted with noted change.
3. Approval of Minutes of the **May 24, 2021** meeting. Commissioner Bryant– Motion to adopt to minutes of the May 24 meeting. Commissioner Gutierrez – Seconded the Motion. By unanimous vote, the minutes were adopted as written.
4. **REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

It was Chair Eidelman's last meeting with the Commission. She expressed her gratitude to former County Executive Rushern Baker for appointing her in November 2012 and

thanked County Executive Alsobrooks for appointing her Chair. She said she was grateful to have served alongside each and every Commissioner. She was happy to see former Chair Merrill Smith, former Vice-Chair Janelle Johnson, and former Counsel Kendrick. She expressed her respect and thanks to all of them and expressed how pleased and touched she was to see them. She had also received emails from some other former Commissioners and expressed her thanks for those words.

5. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director thanked Chair Eidelman for her service and dedication. She noted her service as Commissioner and her work on the executive board as both secretary and Chair, and recognized how much time and dedication it took to serve in those roles. The Executive Director said the office had sent a plaque that would be arriving shortly. A gift had arrived from the Commissioners which Chair Eidelman opened at the meeting – a dedication award that noted her years of service and the roles she played over the years.

The Executive Director said she will take the Chair out for lunch once the pandemic makes it safe to do so. She invited guests to speak should they like to.

Former Commissioner and Vice-Chair Johnson expressed how touched she was to have been invited to the meeting. She thinks the world of Chair Nora Eidelman, and was incredibly honored to serve with her. She expressed her gratitude of their friendship, her leadership, and said the Commission is better for Chair Eidelman having served and led. She expressed her ongoing belief in the mission of the Commission, and thanked the Commissioners for all their work and service. She congratulated the Chair and wished her the best.

Former Chair Smith shared that he would not have missed the opportunity to speak to Chair Eidelman for the world. He noted she had joined the Commission at a point when it was re-energizing the mission. He thanked her for joining and said he appreciated all that she had done. He wished her much success and thanked her for all that she brought to the Commission.

Former Counsel Kendrick thanked her for her work, her contributions, and expressed how much she enjoyed working with her. She indicated she would like to join in the lunch out to celebrate Nora.

The Chair thanked everyone. She said she had decided not to seek reappointment as she had served for a long time and she knows the Commission is in great hands. The Clerk thanked the Chair for her years of support and kindness. Keith Merkey extended thanks on behalf of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. Jose Villegas from the Office of Human Rights thanked her and expressed what a pleasure it was to work with her and spend time with her at conferences. Vice-Chair Proctor thanked her and said that, on behalf of all the Commissioners, a lot of their success they have to attribute to her leadership. The Vice-Chair hoped that the Commissioners gift to Chair Eidelman will

remind her of her tenure and everything that she contributed to the Commission and the Commissioners.

The Executive Director announced that the new Chair of the Commission will be Vice-Chair Proctor effective July 1, 2021.

The Executive Director shared some upcoming programs, including the Diversity Dialogue on June 29th; the July 13th event with father and daughter, the Lamberts, on Segregated Schools with the Blind; the July 14th author conversation with Ken Woodley on *The Road to Healing*; on July 20th Kendra Allen will be in conversation about *The Collection Plate*; and on July 26th on the anniversary of the ADA we will welcome Findley Holland, a young disability activist. That event is on the same night as the July Commission meeting and will begin at 7 pm; if meeting is done early all are welcome to attend.

6. CASES SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

HRC Charge No.: HRC19-0306
EEOC Charge No.: 531-2018-01416

Carisia Dyson v Staffing Etc.
(Investigator V'Hesspa Glenn)

Panel Members: Commissioner Sadler as Panel Chair, Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Oduyebo; Commissioner Johnson as alternate.

Two nights of public hearing have been held in this matter: May 20, 2021 and June 14, 2021. Three additional nights have been scheduled for August 16, 17, and 18, 2021.

FEPA Charge No.: HRC20-0322
EEOC Case No.: 531-2020-00697

Reddick v DC Tours & Transportation

Panel members: Secretary Woolfolk as Panel Chair, Commissioner Oduyebo, Commissioner Green; Vice-Chair Proctor as alternate.

Four nights of public hearing were held on this matter: April 29, 2021, May 6, 2021, May 10, 2021, and June 8, 2021. The panel is now deliberating.

HRC Case No.: HRC20-0304
EEOC Charge No.: 531-2019-02276

Kheni Wells v Board of Education of Prince George's County
(Investigator V'Hesspa Glenn)

Panel members: Commissioner Howard as Panel Chair, Commissioner Bryant, Commissioner Johnson; Commissioner Gutierrez as alternate.

A motion to stay was received and an order was granted. This case is no longer scheduled for public hearing.

7. CASES READY FOR DECISION

HRC Case No.: HRC17-0809

EEOC Case No.: 531-2017-00390

Henry Lewis V Board of Education of Prince George's County

(Investigator Langston Clay)

Panel Members: Vice-Chair Proctor as Panel Chair, Commissioner Price-Carter, Commissioner Green; Commissioner Bryant as alternate.

Five evenings of public hearing in this matter were held January 28, December 15th, December 16th, 2020, January 27th, 2021, and February 3rd, 2021. The decision and draft order were before the Commission in closed session. Upon return from closed session, the Commission announced their decision, finding in favor of the respondent. An order will be issued to the parties.

8. HEARING PANEL UPDATES - NONE

9. CASE UPDATE – NONE

10. ATTENDANCE RECORD – Attached

11. NEW BUSINESS - NONE

12. OLD BUSINESS - NONE

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2021.
- b. A list of Commission meetings for the Fiscal Year 2022 was given to Commissioners. Note that all Commission meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month, with the exception of December when there no meeting is held.

14. CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Reed - Moved to go to Closed session

Commissioner Oduyebo – Seconded the Motion

By unanimous vote, the Commission moved to closed session to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice and to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

On return from closed session, Secretary Woolfolk reported:

HRC Case No.: HRC20-0401

EEOC Charge No.: 12H-2020-00017

Commissioner Johnson abstained and recused herself from the matter.

Commission approved the Executive Director's certification for public hearing by unanimous vote, less abstention.

Panel members are: Commissioner Price-Carter as Panel Chair, Commission Bryant, Commissioner Howard; alternate Commissioner Reed.

Two proposed dates are September 21 and September 22, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

A scheduling order on this matter will be forthcoming.

HRC Case No.: HRC17-0809
EEOC Case No.: 531-2017-00390

As noted above, the Commission found the respondent did not discriminate against the Complainant. The case is dismissed with prejudice on the 28th day of June, 2021.

15. **ADJOURNMENT** – 7:05 pm

Wade A. Woolfolk

Commissioner Woolfolk
Secretary