

Prince George's County Human Rights Commission

Monday, July 25, 2022 Zoom
Meeting of the
Prince George's County
Human Rights Commission

Attendees:

Commissioners:

Charlene Proctor, Chair
Llamilet Gutierrez
Sylvia Johnson
Ademola Oduyebo
Wendi Howard
Joseph Reed

Staff:

Renée Battle-Brooks
Executive Director

Jose Villegas
Senior Investigator

Jacqueline Cochran
Clerk to the Commission

Excused:

Brindisi Chan

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm and conducted the roll call for this Commission Meeting in the absence of a Commission Secretary. The Chair noted Commissioner Chan's excused absence from the meeting.
2. Adopt Agenda – The Chair called for a review of the agenda. The agenda was adopted as distributed.
3. Approval of Minutes of the **June 27, 2022** meeting. The minutes were adopted as distributed.
4. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

The Chair informed attendees that the July meeting was the first meeting for the Prince George's County's Fiscal Year. The Chair congratulated the reappointed Commissioners to the Human Rights Commission and the initial appointee Brindisi Chan as their newest Commissioner.

The Chair stated that Miriam Brewer, the County's Appointments Liaison, confirmed that additions to the Commission are currently in the works. The Chair expressed that although they are only seven Commissioners until additional appointments are made, the Commissioners will continue on the course of excellence in adjudicating matters in a fair and competent matter.

The Chair shared that Commissioner Reed had accepted the appointment as Acting Vice Chair in light of the vacancy created by the departure of former Vice-Chair Felicia Sadler. The Chair noted that there is a vacancy in the position of Commission Secretary and that Commissioners can volunteer to serve in an acting capacity. She thanked Clerk Cochran for capturing the meeting minutes until the vacancy for the position of Secretary is filled. The Chair stated that elections for the positions of Vice Chair of the Commission and Secretary of the Commission are scheduled to take place sometime in September-October.

5. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director expressed her congratulations to the newly reappointed Commissioners and thanked those who are continuing into this new Fiscal Year. She also thanked the two members of the public who were of attendance to the meeting.

The Executive Director reported that the Housing Discrimination Campaign was successful in placing campaign advertisement posters in 75 different bus shelters throughout Prince George's County. She noted that the posters are currently available in English, Spanish and French although they are limited in French posters. The Executive Director thanked Charles Floyd, Fatima Mahmood and intern Noah Wright for their involvement in the creation of these posters and for leading the team for this project.

Our World Human Trafficking Day is Saturday, July 30th, 2022. This event was initially noted to be a live streamed event. The Executive Director did note, however, that if the event is unable to be streamed live, a program video regarding human tracking will be provided to those interested.

The Office of Human Rights will have a new Counsel soon. All contracts regarding obtaining new Counsel are currently in the Procurement Speed System to retain all pending County signatures. Once contracts are finalized further information regarding new Counsel will be provided.

The Executive Director informed the Commission that August 2nd is National Night Out, a Law Enforcement community outreach event. She noted that the Office of Human Rights will have an information table at the Bowie, Maryland National Night Out location.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Conference concluded after being held virtually on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The Executive Director noted the conference was informational and many good issues were discussed.

The Executive Director informed the Commission that due to the Fiscal Year ending soon their EEOC contract is due on September 30th, 2022. She noted that at the next two Commission meetings, the Office of Human Rights will notify the Commission about any appeals received for the remaining fiscal year.

6. **CASES SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING - None**

7. **CASE STATUS UPDATE**

FEPA Charge No.: HRC21-0202

EEOC Case No.: 531-2020-02614

Teonna Marshall v Seafood Fusions, Inc (aka Hook and Reel, Inc.)

Investigator Langston Clay

Panel Members: Commissioner Bryant as Panel Chair, Commissioner Johnson, Vice-Chair Sadler; Secretary Woolfolk as the alternate.

Four nights of public hearing were held in this matter on May 11th, May 16th, 2022, June 15th, June 16th, and June 23, 2022. The panel is now deliberating.

8. **APPEAL HEARING**

Below is an update on the petitions for judicial review of Commission decisions before the Circuit Court of Prince George's County.

Henry Lewis v Board of Education of Prince George's County HRC

Case No.: HRC17-0809

Lois Aba Kwakyewaa Yankah v Gateway Hall, LLC

OHR Case No.: HRC20-1203

9. **ATTENDANCE RECORD – Attached**

The Chair invited the Commissioners to review the attendance record and, if noting any issue, to contact the Clerk for the Commission for corrections.

10. **NEW BUSINESS - None**

11. OLD BUSINESS

Division 12, Subdivision 5, Prohibited Acts in Housing and Residential Real Estate has been noted to be within the Commission's jurisdiction. The Chair noted that an individual being denied access or membership in selling, brooking, or appraising the property itself would be able to come to the Commission under Division 12, to have a case heard. The Chair expressed that a further discussion should be held with the Executive Director to fully understand the applicability of Division 12 to public concerns about lower home appraisals in the county being discriminatory. Chair Proctor appointed an Ad Hoc Committee led by Acting Vice Chair Reed to assist the Commission with understanding Division 12 and this issue and to further explore an approach for holding a public hearing on the issue of lower home appraisals in the county.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2022.
- b. Ngeri Azuewah from Maryland Commission on Civil Rights informed the Commission of the MCCR's Civil Rights and Fair Housing Gala on August 20th, 2022.

13. CLOSED SESSION

There were no matters for Closed Session.

14. ADJOURNMENT – 5:57 pm

Jacqueline Cochran

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Clerk to the Commission