**State of Connecticut**

**Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**

**Regular Commission Meeting**

**Legislative Office Building – Rm 1A**

**Hartford, CT 06106**

**Wednesday, September 9, 2015**

**2:00 p.m.**

**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Commissioners Present** **Commissioners Absent**

Edward Mambruno Edith Pestana

Dawn Niles Shuana Tucker

Andrew Norton Joseph Suggs

**STAFF PRESENT**

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Emily Melendez, Assistant Attorney General

Jim Flynn, Regional Manager Donna Wilkerson- Brillant, Regional Manager

Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary         Jim O’Neill, Legislative Liaison

Alix Simonetti, Commission Counsell III Kim Jacobsen, Commission Counsel III

1. Acting Chairperson: Dawn Niles, Presiding

Commissioner Niles convened the meeting at 2:14 p.m.

II.                Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to

approve the Minutes of the August 12, 2015 Regular Commission Meeting. The vote was

unanimous. The motion carried.

III.          Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required

Commissioner Niles asked that the plans be voted on separately – 3 were recommended for

approval and 2 were recommended for disapproval.

The plans were presented by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp.

1. Staff Recommendations: **Approved**
2. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Representing the agency were Dr. James Gill, the Chief ME, Nicole Norman, HR, and Terry Seger, AA specialist.

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals; the agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring goals (25%), there were no promotion goals, and the program goals were met at 100% for this filing period.   There were no deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2013, the plans were approved. **They will retain their biennial filing status**.

2.  Department of Education

Representing the Agency were Commissioner, Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Levy Gillespie, EEO Director, and several others.

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals; the agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring goals (48.2%), the promotion goals were met at 33.3% and no program goals were set for this filing period.   There were no deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2010, 2011 and 2012, the plans were disapproved and 2013 and 2014 they were approved. **They will retain their annual filing status**.

3. Office of the State Comptroller

Representing the agency were Natalie Brasswell, Assistant Comptroller and Johnette Tolliver.

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals; the agency did not meet all of its hiring goals (71.4%). They met promotion goals at 60% and its program goals were met at 100%. There were no deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: In 2010 and 2011, they were approved; in 2012, conditionally approved, and in 2013 and 2014 they were approved. **They will retain their annual filing status**.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to

approve the plans and retain their filing status of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the

Department of Education and the Office of the State Comptroller. The vote was unanimous. The

motion carried.

1. Staff Recommendations: **Disapproved**

4. Department of Economic and Community Development

Representing the agency were Commissioner Catherine Smith, Lisa Bakanas, EEO designee, Cordula Diamond, EEO Consultant, and Irene Baj-Wright of HR.

The plan was recommended for **disapproval** and to retain its **annual filing status**. This recommendation was based on the following; the agency did not demonstrate good faith efforts to achieve its goals; the agency has not substantially met all of its hiring goals at 20%. The promotion goals were met 100%. The program goals were met at 66.7%. The five year filing history is as follows: 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 were all approved and 2014 the agency was granted a conditional approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton to recommend DECD for a **conditional** **approval** and retain its **annual filing status**. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried for a conditional approval of the plan and to retain annual filing status.

5. Office of the Attorney General

Representing the agency was Perry Zinn-Hawthorn, the Deputy Attorney General, Diana Comeau, the CAO and Susan Cavanaugh of HR and the AA Officer.

Assistant Attorney General Emily Melendez recused herself and all legal questions will be addressed to Attorney Alix Simonetti, CHRO.

The plan for this agency was recommended for **disapproval** and to **retain annual filing status**. This recommendation was based on the following; it contained all elements required; the agency did not demonstrate good faith efforts to achieve its goals: the agency has not met all or substantially all of its hiring goals at 42.9%. The promotion goals were at 42.9% and there were no program goals. The five year filing history was as follows: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014, all approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ed Norton, to grant a **conditional approval** and maintain their **annual filing status**. It was seconded by Commissioner Norton. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried.

IV. Contract Compliance: Request for Exemption

1. CARFAX

CHRO, Alix Simonetti, Attorney III

They withdrew the request. They will adhere to the rules of Diversity.

V. Division Reports:

Executive Director’s Report, Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Director Hughes thanked Commissioner Niles for chairing the meeting. She reported that CHRO is still filing more cases than they are closing but that the aged inventory is managed largely due to efforts by the Legal Unit in assisting with the regions, as sort of the 5th region. Our EEOC contract has been modified upwards to $3,100,600.00; our HUD contract has also increased. We were able to hire a new referee in OPH. One referee is out on medical leave. Currently there are 156 cases pending at Public Hearing, which is troubling. West Central region has 0% aged cases under Manager Donna Wilkerson-Brillant. ED attended several events this summer, Wash DC walking tour where she met with the National Director of HUD; Martha’s Vineyard in MA was another successful venture. Tanya Hughes, Cheryl Sharp, will be attending IOARHA in Alabama. Cheryl Sharp to receive an award. Legislative Liaison, Jim O’Neill will be retiring. CHRO will be looking to fill this vacancy in the near future.

Outreach Report, Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Deputy Director Sharp gave an abbreviated report on the many successful outreach activities: Coalition building with True Colors is the next step to strengthening laws related to sexual orientation in CT; CHRO will participate in Stand Down to address the needs of disabled veterans; CHRO and DOJ will have a round table discussion focusing on Civil Rights in CT on Sept 9, 2015; The School to Prison Pipeline forum was well attended, which included remarks from Governor Malloy. Dr. Bill Howe, Mike Lawlor and Dawn Niles were some who attended on Aug 11. More details can be obtained in the Outreach Activity report provided.

VII. Executive Session:

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

There was no Executive Session

VIII. Vote on Executive Session items:

*(Action May Be Required)*

No motions were taken during Executive Session.

IX. New Business

X. Old Business

XI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Norton. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 3:26 p.m.