

**State of Connecticut
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
Regular Commission Meeting
Legislative Office Building – Rm 1A
Hartford, CT 06106
Wednesday, January 11, 2017
2:00 p.m.**



Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present

Cherron Payne, Chair
Ed Mambruno, Secretary
Lisa Giliberto
Andrew Norton
Joseph Suggs
Shuana Tucker

Commissioners Absent

Edith Pestana
Dawn Niles

Staff Present

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director
Emily Melendez, Asst. Attorney General
Michelle Dumas Keuler, Commission Counsel III
Donna W. Brilliant, Regional Manager
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary

Lynda Rizzo Stowe, Regional Manager

I. Chairperson, Cherron Payne, Presiding

The meeting convened at 2:07 p.m.

II. Secretary, Edward Mambruno

A motion was made by Commissioner Suggs to approve the Minutes of the December 14, 2016 Regular Commission Meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Tucker. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required

The following plans were presented by Deputy Director, Cheryl Sharp: CT Agricultural Experiment Station, UCONN Health Center, Department of Banking, and Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

A. Staff Recommendations: **Approval**

1. CT Agricultural Experiment Station

Representing the agency were Jason C. White, Ph.D. and Michael Cavadini

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 had not met or substantially met all of its hiring goals at 0%. There were no promotion goals and no program goals for this filing period. They had substantially addressed the deficiencies in the prior plan review.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2015/2016 showed 237.4% for the SBE Goal achievement and 236% for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2009, approved, 2010, conditionally approved, 2011 and 2013 approved, and 2015, conditionally approved. The current plan is recommended for approval and to retain annual filing status.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Suggs to **approve** the plan and to retain annual filing status of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station. The motion carried unanimously.

2. CONN Health Center

Chair Cherron Payne recused herself from the meeting chamber and appointed Commissioner Tucker to head the proceedings in her absence.

Representing the agency was CEO, Dr. Andrew Agwunobi, Chief Administrative Officer, Carolle Andrews, John Peebles of HR, Joelle Murchison, Chief Diversity Officer, Elizabeth Conklin, AAO, Terry Segar, AA Specialist, and Hannah Prytko, EEO Manager.

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 all of its hiring goals at 45.2%. The promotion goals were met at 40.7% and the program goals were 80% met for this filing period.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY2015/2016 showed 126.5% goal achievement for the SBE and 158.1% for the MBE.

The five year filing history is as follows: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 were approved. They were recommended to retain their annual filing status.

A motion was made by Commissioner Suggs and seconded by Commissioner Norton to **approve** the plan and retain the annual filing status of the UCONN Health Center. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Department of Banking

Representing the agency were Commissioner Jorge Perez, Bonnie Schlechtweg, Marcia Bonitto, and Victoria Soucy

The plan was recommended for **approval**.

The agency did demonstrate good faith efforts to achieve its goals: the agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring goals with hiring goals of 33.3%; promotion goals were met at 100% as well as 100% of program goals were met for this filing period.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2014/2015 showed 26% goal achievement for the SBE and 55.5% for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2014, approved. They are recommended for approval and to retain biennial filing status.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tucker and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno for approval of the proposed affirmative action plan for the Department of Banking and to retain biennial filing status. The motion for **approval** was carried by unanimous vote.

B. Staff recommendation: **Disapproval**

4. Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

Representing the Agency were Commissioner Dora Schriro, Daphne Lewis, EEO and Antoinette Webster, Counsel for DESPP.

The plan was recommended for **disapproval**.

The agency had not demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals: the agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring and promotion goals with 1 out of 2 possible hiring goals or 50%, in addition, 39 out of 92 possible goals or 42%; one of the of program goals was deficient in the prior plan and achievement is not possible to assess.

There were deficiencies in the prior plan review that were not substantially addressed.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2015/2016 showed 31% goal achievement for the SBE and 40% for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2012- approved - first year filing, 2013- conditionally approved, 2014-disapproved, and 2015- conditionally approved. They are recommended for disapproval and to retain annual filing status.

A motion was made by Commissioner Suggs and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno for disapproval of the proposed affirmative action plan for the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and to retain annual filing status. The motion for **disapproval** was carried by unanimous vote.

IV. Division Reports

Executive Director's Report: presented by Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

The Director offered condolences to Chair Payne on the loss of her father and to Commissioner Norton on the loss of his sister. The agency suffered many losses this Holiday season including our own Dr. Valerie Kennedy. She was the reviewer of Affirmative Action plans for CHRO. There was a great outpouring of condolences from around the state and attendance at her funeral. This was a testament to her character and the type of person she was. This was an extreme loss to our agency.

Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp has stepped in and began the process of working on the AA plans. The agency will be submitting paperwork to OPM to refill the position next week. We are also looking to refill other vacancies such as the regional manager's position in Bridgeport and the legislative liaison position. Conversations have been had with the Governor's office and with Ben Barnes office.

We are under a new audit for the years 2013-16. We welcome them.

We are currently working on our own affirmative action plan with Marla Shiller. We hope to accomplish that goal by the end of the month.

We are in the midst of a computer upgrade and a complaint tracking system upgrade, and we are trying to help develop the pipeline of talent and diversity. This is part of the committee we are seated on that Commissioner Norton chairs.

The Executive Director's production report shows that we are forging ahead in eliminating our aged inventory.

A detailed Production report was provided.

Outreach Report: presented by Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Deputy Director Sharp offered her condolences to everyone and all colleagues that worked on a daily basis with Dr. Kennedy. It is a profound loss to the Agency and in the field of Affirmative Action.

Future events included

- Sexual Harassment Training – Jan 25
- MLK Bell ringing Ceremony, Jan 16, 2017
- Yale Peabody MLK Event. Jan 15-16 at 10am -4pm
- Junior Apprentice Program Start
Two new interns started this week and they stood and introduced themselves, Nikolas Wagner and Shaerele Barnes
- New York University Law School Public Interest Fair, Jan 23
- Kids Speak and Kids Court, May 24
- Legislative Breakfast , LOB, Feb 8 at 8:00a.m.

Outreach Successes

- CT Equality Meeting, Dec 14
- Technical Assistance Training
- PLUS Presentation: Discrimination Claim Trends and the CHRO, Jan 5
- Department of Rehabilitation Services Minority Hiring Event, Dec 12

A detailed report was provided.

Legislative Report: presented by Michelle Dumas Keuler, Commission Counsel

The Program Review Committee (officially disbanded) submitted their final draft on Dec 30, and CHRO made comments to be entered as part of the final report.

The Legislative session has begun. CHRO is fully involved and has several items on the agenda:

The first bill has to do with the Office of Public hearing regarding an election made to have an agency lawyer file to have an employment case in court. This is to help relieve some of the case load on OPH.

The second bill has to do with the Housing unit regarding notarizing certain documents for the Complainants and the Respondents.

Finally, the CHRO is trying to have our agency put in a “Lockbox” This is to try and keep our agency from having any more of our Budget removed by the State.

The Legislative Breakfast will be Feb 8, at 8:00am in the LOB dining room.

V. New Business: Dawn Niles resigned as Commissioner of the CHRO
Effective Jan 11, 2017

VI. Executive Session

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

IX. Old Business: Waterbury Public Schools, Michelle Dumas Keuler, Commission Counsel

The legal staff assigned to the above fact finding have concluded their investigation of the Waterbury Board of Education. The staff compiled a document regarding the fact finding which is legal in nature and subject to attorney/client privilege. Accordingly, it cannot be discussed until the February 2017 Commission meeting during Executive Session. The staff is currently working on bringing finality to the fact finding, including but not limited to drafting a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission on Human Rights and the Waterbury Board of Education. This too will be discussed during the Executive Session of the February 2017 Commission meeting.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Tucker to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 3:42 p.m.