

**State of Connecticut  
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities  
Regular Commission Meeting  
Legislative Office Building, Room 1A  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Wednesday, May 16, 2018  
2:00 p.m.**



**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Commissioners Present**

**Cherron Payne, Chair**  
Edward Mambruno, Secretary  
Andrew Norton  
Lisa Giliberto  
Nicholas Kapoor  
Edith Pestana  
Joseph Suggs

**Commissioners Absent**

Shuana Tucker

**Staff Present**

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director  
Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director  
Emily Melendez, Assistant Attorney General

Michelle Dumas Keuler, Commission Counsel  
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary  
Kristen Daniels, Executive Secretary  
Darcy Jones, Legislative Analyst  
Jody Walker Smith, Commission Counsel  
Neva Elaine Vigezzi, AA HRO Representative

David Kent, Commission Counsel  
Margaret Nurse Goodison Commission Counsel  
Ronald Simpson, Regional Manager  
Lynda Rizzo Stowe, Regional Manager  
Muriel Carpentier, AA HRO Representative

I. **Chairperson:** Cherron Payne, Presiding

The meeting was convened at 2:06 p.m.

II. **Secretary:** Edward Mambruno

A motion was made by Commissioner Suggs to approve the Minutes of the April 11, 2018 Regular Commission Meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Giliberto. The vote was: Yes (5), No (0), and Abstentions (1). The motion carried.

III. **Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required**

The following plans were presented by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp:

Department of Consumer Protection  
Department of Veteran's Affairs  
Department of Social Services

A. Staff Recommendations: **Approved**

1. Department of Consumer Protection

Representing the agency was Commissioner Michelle Seagull, Catherine Blinder, Chief Education and Outreach Officer and Alicia Nunez, Director, Equal Employment Opportunity.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet or substantially meet all of its hiring goals at 53.9%. The promotion goals were met at 50% for this filing period. The program goals were met at 100%.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY2016/2017 showed 193.7% goal achievement for the SBE and 20.8% for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to accept staff recommendation and **approve** the plan of the Department of Consumer Protection and retain biennial filing status. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

2. Department of Veteran's Affairs

Representing the agency was Commissioner Thomas J. Saadi, and Noreen Sinclair, HR.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet or substantially meet all of its hiring goals at 53.3%. The promotion goals were met at 0% for this filing period. The program goals were met at 100%.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY2016/2017 showed 127.2% goal achievement for the SBE and 30.6% for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2010, Approved, 2011, Conditionally Approved, 2012, 2014, and 2016 approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Giliberto to accept staff recommendation and **approve** the plan of the Department of Veteran's Affairs and retain biennial filing status. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

3. Department of Social Services

Representing the agency was Deputy Commissioner Kathleen M. Brennan, Astread Ferron-Poole, Affirmative Action Administrator and Terri-Lynn Johnston, Manager Affirmative Action.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet or substantially meet all of its hiring goals at 81.3%. The promotion goals were met at 59.6% for this filing period. The program goals were met at 100%.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY2016/2017 represented 27% goal achievement for the SBE and 15% for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to accept staff recommendation and **approve** the plan of the Department of Social Services and retain annual filing status. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

#### IV. Division Reports

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

- Donna Wilkerson-Brilliant, regional Manager appointed to Superior Court
- Increased case filings overall; significant numbers in West Central region
- Closings – significant increase in closings in Fair Housing
- DPW- Eastern region security updates
- Served on Sexual Harassment panel – New Haven City Hall
- Neva Vigezzi – Celebrated 40th Anniversary with CHRO
- Norwich Chamber Breakfast/ Eastern region
- International Woman's Day, hosted by Toni Harp, New Haven Mayor

A detailed production report was provided. Please see attached.

Outreach Report: presented by Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Future Outreach Activities

- DMHAS Training, April 19;
- Cheryl Sharp - James W. Cooper Fellow with the CT Bar Foundation;
- Kid's Court, June 12, 5-7 at State Capitol
- DOJ Working Group
- Legislative Group for Affirmative Action;

Outreach Successes

- Kids Speak, May 22, *825 attendees*
- Trans- Lives conference
- # Me Too Campaign Update;
- Westerly Radio Program, April 17
- Press conference for Veterans "Bad paper", April 19, *50 Attendees*

A detailed report was provided. See attached.

Legislative Report: presented by Darcy Jones, Legislative Analyst and Commission Counsel

Several bills CHRO supported passed during this legislative session, SB 256, SB 284, SB 5149, and SB 132

A detailed report was provided. See attached

#### V. New Business: N/A

VI. Executive Session

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

Commissioner Pestana moved to go into Executive session and was seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion was carried at 3:10 pm.

*Invited into Executive Session **Part 1** were the Commissioners and AAG Emily Melendez.*

*Invited into Executive Session **Part 2** were the Commissioners, Tanya Hughes, Cheryl Sharp, Michelle Dumas Keuler, David Kent, Jody Walker-Smith and AAG Emily Melendez.*

**Part 1**

1. Informal Legal Advice Regarding the Commission's Authority

Pending Litigation:

**Part 2**

2. Housing Election Cases

Presented by Michelle Dumas Keuler, Commission Counsel

Presented by Jody Walker Smith, Commission Counsel

CHRO ex rel. Tracy McLeod v. The Mansions at Canyon Ridge, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1850038

CHRO ex rel. Tracy McLeod v. Chapman Apartment Homes LLC, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1850039

CHRO ex rel. Jeff Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750196

CHRO ex rel. Jennifer Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750198

CHRO ex rel. Jeff Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750211

CHRO ex rel. Jennifer Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750212

3. DHMAS Update :

Presented by Attorneys Michelle Dumas Keuler and David Kent

VII. Return from Executive Session

Commissioner Suggs made a motion to resume the meeting following Executive Session and it was seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously at 4:25 pm.

VIII. Vote on Executive Session Items: (Action May Be Required)

CHRO ex rel. Tracy McLeod v. The Mansions at Canyon Ridge, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1850038

CHRO ex rel. Tracy McLeod v. Chapman Apartment Homes LLC, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1850039

Commissioner Kapoor made a motion to have commission legal counsel file cases 1850038 and 1850039 in Superior Court and seek injunctive relief to the extent necessary, punitive damages, and a civil penalty and it was seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

CHRO ex rel. Jeff Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750196

CHRO ex rel. Jennifer Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750198

CHRO ex rel. Jeff Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750211

CHRO ex rel. Jennifer Hodge v. Casagmo Condo Association, et al.

CHRO Case No. 1750212

Commissioner Giliberto made a motion to have commission legal counsel file cases 1750196, 1750198, 175021, and 1750212 in Superior Court and seek injunctive relief to the extent necessary, punitive damages, and a civil penalty and it was seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

#### IX. Old Business:

##### **Waterbury Board of Education, 1 year update**

Presented by Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler, CHRO, Attorney Linda Wihbey, City of Waterbury, Karen Harvey, Chair of the Advisory Committee, Cicero Booker, NAACP, Johanna Hayes, Director of Recruitment, George D'Agostino, Mayoral Aid, and Representative Larry Butler.

It was reported that there have been 110 new hires, of which 43% are persons of color and 39.3% of those were teachers. Many were at the elementary levels (K-5) because that is where the most openings were and historically, it is where the biggest gaps are.

Additionally, Ms. Hayes stated that support programs/mentors have been put in place to help achieve success for the new hires in the form of funding and every new hire will have a mentor. In the future, there is a plan to add series of training about unconscious bias in the workplace. According to Karen Harvey, recruitment and retainage efforts will continue and a plan is in place to do this.

#### X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Suggs to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously. The vote was Yes (6), No (0), and Abstentions (0). The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

*Deputy Director Sharp signed the two Housing Election Affidavits for Attorneys Michelle Dumas Keuler and Jody Walker-Smith because they exited the meeting after Executive session was over.*