

State of Connecticut
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
Regular Commission Meeting
Legislative Office Building – Rm 1A
Hartford, CT 06106
Wednesday, March 11, 2015
2:00 P.M.



Minutes
Regular Commission Meeting

Commissioners Present

Gary H. Collins, Chairman
Edward Mambruno, Secretary
Edith Pestana
Dawn Niles
Andrew Norton

STAFF PRESENT

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director
Charles Krich, Principal Attorney
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary
Emily Melendez, AAG
Alvin Bingham, AA/CC Supervisor
Donna Wilkerson- Brilliant, Regional Mgr.

Jim Flynn, Regional Manager
Neva Vigezzi, HRO Rep
Sue Hom, HRO Rep
Jim O'Neill, Legislative Liaison
Danielle Caron, Intern
Valerie Kennedy, HRO Rep

- I. **Chairperson:** Gary H. Collins
Chairman Collins convened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. He recognized the 50th Anniversary commemorating "Bloody Sunday," the March on Selma. The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities has prepared a Resolution to commemorate this event. A motion was made to amend the Agenda and add the Resolution as Item 1B by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The motion carried unanimously. The Resolution was read in its entirety by Chair Collins. A motion was made to adopt and approve the Resolution by Commissioner Niles and seconded by Commissioner Norton. The motion carried unanimously.
- II. **Secretary:** Edward Mambruno
A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2015 Regular Commission meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The motion carried unanimously.
- III. **Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required**
- All plans were presented to the Commissioners by Alvin Bingham.
- A. **Staff Recommendations : Approved**
1. **Department on Aging**
- Commissioner Norton recused himself.

Representing the agency were Commissioner Elizabeth Ritter, Program Administrator, Margaret Gerundo-Murkette, AA Officer, Astread Ferron-Poole and Terri-Lynn Johnston.

The Affirmative Action plan of the Department of Aging was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; this is the agency's first filing for the Department on Aging so there was no goal achievement to analyze, no hiring goals, and no promotional goals. It was also exempt from the S/MBE reporting process by DAS. There is no five year history.

There were no questions or comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Niles made a motion to accept the staff recommendation to approve the Department of Aging plan. It was seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Ritter made a statement acknowledging the outstanding work on the AA plan by Margaret Gerundo-Murkette.

2. UCONN Health Center

Representing the agency were several staff including Andrew Agwunnobi ,Interim Executive VP for Health Affairs and Arnold Lizana, Associate VP of the Office of Diversity and Equity.

The plan for UCONN Health Center was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following; It contained all elements required; the agency demonstrated good faith effort to achieve its goals; it has not met or substantially met all of its hiring (41.6%), promotion (37.6%), and program goals (100%). There were no deficiencies in prior plan reviews. The five year filing history is as follows 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 they were all approved. `

Commissioner Pestana commended UCONN on all of their enrichment programs such as the Junior High programs, Jumpstart, Summer Academy, mentoring program and many more.

Chair Collins, asked if there were concerns about the agency's vision on professionals of color and their tenure. Arnold Lizana responded that it is a concern. "Underrepresented minorities (African American and Hispanic) are at 9% and the number is going up but there is a great amount of work to do in those regards."

Dr. Andy Agwunnobi thanked CHRO's staff, especially Neva Vigezzi and UCONN's Diversity and Equity department.

3. Insurance Department

Representing the Insurance Department were Anne M. Downing, Acting CFA, Patricia Tiberio, and Leah Glende.

The plan was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: it contained all elements required; the work force is not at parity with the relevant labor market. They met hiring goals at 61.5%. Promotion goals were met at 60.0%, and program goals were met 100%. The Insurance Department demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals. There were no deficiencies in its prior plan. The filing history is as follows: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013 were all approved.

There were no questions for the Insurance Department.

Commissioner Pestana made a motion to approve staff recommendation for approval for both the Insurance plan and the UCONN Health Center plan. It was seconded by Commissioner Niles. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

Commissioner Edith Pestana recused herself from this plan review.

Representing the Agency were Commissioner Robert Klee, and Barbara Vidalia, EEO Manager.

The Affirmative Action plan for the Department of Education was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: it contained all elements required; the work force as a whole is not considered at parity with the relevant labor market; the agency had not met all or substantially all of its long term hiring goals (38.7%) and promotion goals (25%) and its program goals(100%); the agency demonstrated good faith efforts to achieve its goals; there were no deficiencies in its prior plan. The filing history is as follows: 2012 and 2013 approved. Their first filing was 2012.

Chair Collins asked how this agency came into being. Commissioner Klee answered that all the energy agencies (DEP, DPUC) were merged in 2011 and they became the Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection; the plan changed accordingly.

Commissioner Niles made a motion to accept the staff recommendation to approve the DEEP plan. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously with one abstention from Commissioner Pestana.

B. Staff Recommendation: Conditional Approval

1. Department of Developmental Services

Commissioner Mambruno recused himself.

Representing the agency were Carl Jordan, EEO Director and Jordan Sheff, Deputy Commissioner.

The Affirmative Action plan for the Central CT State University was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: it contained all elements required; the work force as a whole is not considered at parity with the relevant labor market; the agency did not meet all or substantially all of its hiring goals (44.1%) and promotion goals (39.3%) Its program goals were 100% met; the agency did not demonstrate good faith efforts to achieve all of its goals; there were no deficiencies in its prior plan. The five year filing history is as follows: 2009 and 2010 were approved; 2011 conditional approval, 2012 and 2013 approved.

Chair Collins asked why was the plan recommended for conditional approval? Dr. Kennedy answered the goal candidates were not met, availability analysis and good faith effort not attained for the plan.

Commissioner Pestana made a motion to approve the plan and retain annual filing status. It was seconded by Commissioner Niles. The motion carried with one abstention by Commissioner Mambruno.

IV. Contract Compliance Requirements

Exemption: UCONN: NCS Pearson
Alix Simonetti, CHRO Attorney III

UCONN representative was Andrew Zaner

Attorney Alix Simonetti presented the staff recommendation on a request for exemption received from UCONN. Commissioner Mambruno made a motion to accept the staff recommendation as outlined in the Memo. It was seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Division Reports

A. Executive Director's Report: Director Tanya Hughes

Director Hughes presented the production report which revealed that the numbers are great. Chair Collins suggested it be publicized. She reported about a recent EAP training with the executive staff/managers. She further reported on a meeting with the new AAG designee for CHRO, Emily Melendez to clarify our processes at CHRO.

Outreach Report: Deputy Director Sharp

Deputy Director Sharp reported how great CHRO is doing with our outreach efforts. CHRO is getting lots of publications, newspapers, and panel speaking invitations which we are attending regularly. She reminded the commissioners that Kid's Speak is coming up in May. CHRO will be recognizing leaders in civil rights at the end of this year.

B. Legislative Report: Jim O'Neill

Jim O'Neill reported that a number of legislative meetings were held with several legislators pertaining to our legislative agenda including Senator Coleman, Rep. Tong, the Black and Latino Caucus, and other representatives. The CHRO priorities and agenda are being widely distributed.

VI. Executive Session:

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

Chair Collins called for the meeting to go into executive session at 3:15pm. He asked that Director Hughes, Deputy Sharp, Attorney Alix Simonetti and Assistant Attorney General Emily Melendez attend that session. A motion to go into Executive session was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously.

At 3:23 pm the meeting resumed and a motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to go back into Executive session for personnel and litigation discussion related to the QVCC issues and seeking advice from the AAG. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. That motion carried unanimously.

Executive session resumed at 3:24p.m.

VII. Vote on Executive Session Items

The regular commission meeting resumed at 3:39 p.m.
There were no Litigation reports.

VIII. Old Business

Attorney Alix Simonetti reported that QVCC, LPRAC, and representatives from CHRO met on February 17, 2015. The outcome of the meeting was outlined in a memo to the Commissioners. It was publically read by Chair Collins. The CHRO representatives' summarized the agreement that was reached between QVCC and Windham School District at the meeting as follows:

1. To acknowledge the confusion and concerns about the September 2014 Calculus 1 class cancellation, QVCC will invite the 11 Windham School students who attended the summer pre-calculus class along with their families and community leaders to a reception or event at QVCC. QVCC will at the event acknowledge the students and identify efforts to try to improve community relations to prevent the problem from recurring.

2. QVCC will inform the Windham School District Superintendent of the various QVCC programs available each semester and the respective program class slots available to Windham School District students in each program for each semester and authorize the Windham School District Superintendent to identify those Windham School District students who will attend QVCC each semester in the QVCC program course slots.

3. QVCC will send staff to the Windham Schools community once a month to the Windham Schools to provide access to representatives from QVCC's Office of Admissions and access to representatives from QVCC's Financial Aid Office. QVCC will also provide information to students about high school student opportunities to take college courses with college credit at QVCC. CVCC will also provide information about college courses and programs of study opportunities at QVCC and about other programs of study available at QVCC.

4. QVCC will hold a financial aid night in a Willimantic Community Center room. Windham Schools will advertise the event.

The meeting schedule for Commission meetings was updated to reflect a new November date: November 4, 2015. A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to approve this schedule change. It was seconded by Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Norton. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 3:49 p.m.