

**State of Connecticut**  
**Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**  
**Special Telephonic Commission Meeting**  
**Hartford, CT 06106**  
**Wednesday, March 25, 2015**  
**2:30 P.M.**



**Minutes**  
**Special Telephonic Commission Meeting**

**Commissioners Present**

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

**STAFF PRESENT**

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director  
Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director  
Charles Krich, Principal Attorney  
Emily Melendez, Assistant Attorney General  
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary

**Public Present**

Pamela Johnson, Complainant  
Betsey Ingram, Attorney, City of Bridgeport, Respondent

Chairperson: Gary H. Collins Presiding

I. Chairman Collins convened the meeting at 2:31 p.m. The attendance was taken. He stated there was a quorum with Commissioners Niles, Pestana and Norton present. Commissioner Mambruno joined the conference call shortly thereafter. This telephonic meeting was being held to entertain a request for a declaratory ruling in CHRO case no.1520279, Pamela Johnson v City of Bridgeport, Police Department.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes, March 11, 2015 Regular Commission Meeting.

Chair Collins asked for an approval of the minutes from March 11, 2015. A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Norton. A roll call vote was taken:  
Yes Votes: Commissioner Pestana , Commissioner Niles, Commissioner Norton  
No Votes: None; Abstentions: None  
The motion carried unanimously.

### III. Request for Declaratory Ruling– Vote Required

Chair Collins stated that we are taking up a request for a Declaratory ruling in the case of Pamela Johnson v. City of Bridgeport. The Commission has the following options:

1. Issue a Declaratory Ruling,
2. Set the matter down for specified proceedings,
3. Agree to issue a Declaratory ruling within a specified date and time,
4. Not issue a declaratory Ruling and initiate regulation making proceedings, or
5. Decide not to issue a ruling at all.

Chair Collins announced he would hear the parties – Respondent, Complainant, and Charles Krich.

Attorney Betsy Ingram stated she may want to challenge the issue of whether we had a quorum at a later date and asked if this meeting was considered as a hearing in accordance with Statute 4-176 (g). Attorney Melendez answered that it was not. She also explained it was the for the Commission to decide their course of action specifically the five actions mentioned previously by Chair Collins, but all parties will have the opportunity to be heard as a courtesy.

The Complainant, Pamela Johnson said her rights were still being violated and the police were not responding to her calls.

Commissioner Norton had a question for Charlie Krich. Is the police dept. a place of Public Accommodation? Yes, answered Attorney Krich and gave the example of the Claude Young case. Attorney Melendez redirected the conversation to stay on the path of the issue at hand and Chair Collins asked that the Commissioners be able to discuss relevant legal matter directly pertaining to this case.

Commissioner Pestana asked to hear from the staff of CHRO. What is their recommendation and why.

Attorney Charlie Krich stated for the record the three specific points that were being challenged by Attorney Ingram:

1. A quorum is 50% or more of the Commissioners serving at the time. There are 5 commissioners now and four were present (not including Chair Collins). It is well in excess of the quorum.
2. Regarding an absolute right to a hearing, as stated in Sec 46a54126, the Commission may hold a hearing to receive public comment. There is no requirement of a hearing...and

finally,

3. The recommendation in the matter of Pamela Johnson v City of Bridgeport, Police Dept. is to set this matter down for specified proceeding – an investigation. This was recommended similarly with this same Respondent in a case year earlier.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to set the matter down for specified proceeding. It was seconded by Commissioner Niles. A roll call vote was taken. Yes Votes: Commissioner Pestana, Commissioner Niles, Commissioner Norton, and Commissioner Mambruno. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Commissioner Niles to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Pestana. A roll call vote was taken, Commissioner Mambruno – Aye, Pestana – Aye, Niles –Aye, and Norton – Aye.

No Votes: None; Abstentions: None

The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

The meeting ended at 3:03 p.m.