

**State of Connecticut  
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities  
Regular Commission Meeting  
Legislative Office Building – Rm 1A  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Wednesday, March 9, 2016  
2:00 p.m.**



**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Commissioners Present**

Cherron Payne  
Edward Mambruno  
Edith Pestana  
Joseph Suggs  
Dawn Niles  
Lisa Giliberto  
Andrew Norton

**Commissioners Absent**

Shuana Tucker

**Staff Present**

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director  
Emily Melendez, Assistant Attorney General  
Michelle Dumas Keuler, Attorney III

Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director  
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary  
Donna W. Brilliant, Regional Manager

I. **Secretary**

The meeting was convened at 2:04 p.m. by Chair Cherron Payne.

II. **Approval of the Minutes**

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to **approve** the Minutes of the February 10, 2016 Regular Commission Meeting with the following correction to the exemption regarding the Department of Housing. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried.

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

The three plans, the Department of Aging, the Department of Housing, and the Department of Developmental Services were presented by Deputy Director Sharp.

A. Staff Recommendations: Approved

1. Department of Aging

Representing the agency were Commissioner Betsy Ritter, Astread Ferron Poole, Margie Gerundo Murkette, Terri-Lynn Johnson.

The plan was recommended for **approval** based on compliance with the following: It contained all elements required; the agency has had no opportunity to meet its hiring, promotional or program goals for this filing period. There were no deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2014 approved. This was their first filing. **They were recommended to move to biennial filing status.**

2. Department of Housing

Representing the Agency were Commissioner Klein, Nick Lundgren, Jamila Goolgar, Dimple Desai, Irena Baj-Wright and Theresa Judge.

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 50%. The promotion goals were met at 100% and the program goals were met 50% for this filing period. They substantially addressed the deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history was 2015, approved. This was their first filing. **They were recommended to retain their biennial filing status.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Niles to accept staff recommendation to **approve** the Department of Aging and the Department of Housing plans and **retain their biennial filing status.** The vote was unanimous. The motion carried.

3. Department of Developmental Services

Representing the Agency were Commissioner Morna Murray and Carl Jordan

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 at 37.4% and the promotion goals were met at 42.4%. The program goals were met at 100% for this filing period. The agency substantially addressed deficiencies in the prior plan review. The five year filing history is as follows: 2010 approved, 2011, conditionally approved, and 2012, 2013, and 2014 approved. **They are recommended to retain their annual filing status.**

Commissioner Mambruno recused himself from the vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Niles and seconded by Commissioner Norton for staff recommendation to **approve** the Department of Developmental Services plan and to retain their **annual filing status.** The vote was 5 (in favor) and 0 (opposed). The motion carried.

[Commissioner Dawn Niles left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.]

#### IV. Division Reports

##### Executive Director's Report, Tanya Hughes, Executive Director

Director Hughes noted that in the Commissioner's folders was the testimony that she and Cheryl Sharp would be giving to the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus that day, as well as the ED production report and some attachments indicating where the CHRO stands regarding current pending legislation. Michelle Dumas Keuler supplemented the Executive Director's report with a legislative update.

The Executive Director's production report outlines the filed cases, the closed cases, settlements, and aged cases to date. The Commission has been working closely with the Norwich Regional office and the other regional offices to eliminate the aged inventory by June 30.

Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler began the Legislative update by answering a question regarding the Veterans Bill, - SB 197 posed by Commissioner Norton. She reported that Tanya, Cheryl, herself, and other staff have been spending a lot of time and effort at the Capitol to show a strong and meaningful presence for CHRO. The pending budget cuts and possibly cutting the municipal set aside program, and the eleven positions that go along with it have caused CHRO to spend a lot of time with the Appropriations Committee and legislators.

The bills listed on the update are bills for which CHRO has submitted testimony. They are:

- HB - 5237 An Act Concerning Fair Chance Employment
- HB - 5342 An Act Concerning Appeal to Fair Housing Procedures – (CHRO wants this to pass)
- HB - 5049 An Act implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations
- HB - 5541 An Act Concerning Incentive for Businesses that Exceed Accessibility Requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- HB - 5501 An Act Concerning Executive Sessions of Public Agencies
- RB - 5400 An Act Concerning Disclosure of Certain Education Personnel Records
- SB - 197 An Act Concerning Veterans, Discriminatory Practices and the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
- SB - 21 An Act Concerning Military Departments Non-Discrimination Laws
- SB - 152 An Act Concerning the Disclosure of Housing Discrimination and Fair Housing Laws
- SB - 381 An Act Establishing A Task Force to Study School Climate
- SB - 393 An Act Concerning Domestic Workers

##### Outreach Report, Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Deputy Director Sharp gave a report on the many successful outreach activities:

##### **Future:**

- What the Faith: Women Debunking Religious Stereotypes, March 10
- CT Kids Speak, May 24
- Testimony on Bills, continuous for CHRO staff
- 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Amistad, March 9

**Successes:**

School to Prison Pipeline, Feb 17  
Racial Justice Conference, Feb 22  
AKA Sorority Day at the Capitol, March 3

The full listing of events is found in the March Outreach Report.

Chair Payne invited Director Hughes, Deputy Director Sharp, and AAG Emily Melendez to attend Executive Session. A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to go into Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Executive Session:

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

Pending Claim(s) Litigation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to return from Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. Vote on Executive Session items:

*(Action May Be Required)*

VII. New Business

Commissioner Giliberto asked if the Reviewers of the CHRO Affirmative Action plans could be present at the Commission meetings when a plan has been recommended for disapproval. ED Hughes and DD Sharp indicated that they would take the request under consideration.

Commissioner Payne tabled the discussion for the next meeting.

VIII. Old Business

IX. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

The meeting ended at 3:28 p.m.