

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING
450 Columbus Blvd – North Plaza Conference Room C
HARTFORD, CT 06103
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
2:00 p.m.



Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present

Cherron Payne, Chair
Joseph Suggs
Andrew Norton
Lisa Giliberto
Neeta Vatti
Nicholas Kapoor

Commissioners Absent

Edward Mambruno, Secretary
Edith Pestana

Staff Present

Tanya Hughes, Executive Director
Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Darcy Jones, Legislative Analyst	Alix Simonetti, HRO Attorney
Michelle Dumas Keuler, HRO Attorney	Ronald Simpson, Regional Manager
Shawn Burns, Regional Manager	Muriel Carpentier, HRO Representative
Neva Vigezzi, AA Supervisor	Laura Roxbury, HRO Representative
Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary	Kristen Daniels, Executive Secretary
Brian Festa, HRO Attorney	Emily Melendez, AAG

I. Chairperson: Cherron Payne, Presiding
Chair Payne convened the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

II. Secretary

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton to approve the minutes of the February, 2020 regular meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Kapoor. The vote: Yes (4), No (0), and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

III. Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required

The following plans were presented by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp:

Staff Recommendations: **Approval**

1. Department of Developmental Services

Representing the agency were EEO Director Renee LaBarge, and EEO Specialists Jennifer Borenski and Khalid Ellis. They explained that Commissioner Jordan Scheff and Deputy Commissioner Peter Mason were not present because they were called to an emergency Covid 19 meeting.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring goals at 56.5%. The promotion goals were met at 56.7% and the program goals were not met, 0% (0 out of 1).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2017/2018 showed 349% achievement for the SBE and 342% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2014, Approved, 2015, Approved, 2016, Approved, 2017 and 2018, Conditional Approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Suggs and seconded by Commissioner Kapoor to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of the Department of Developmental Services and **retain annual** filing status. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion was carried unanimously.

2. Department of Housing

Representing the agency were Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno and Deputy Commissioner Shanté Hanks.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet all or substantially meet all of its hiring goals at 0% (0 out of 5). The promotion goals were not set for this filing period and the program goals were met, 100% (2 out of 2).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2018/2019 showed 11% achievement for the SBE and 4% achievement for the MBE.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Kapoor and seconded by Commissioner Suggs to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of the Department of Developmental Services and **biennial** filing status. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Request for Reopening

1. Barbara Rose v. Hartford Lodging LLC d/b/a Red Roof Inn
CHRO Case No 1810033

2. Barbara Rose v. Red Roof Inn
CHRO Case No 1910045

Presented by Alix Simonetti, Commission Counsel

Following a presentation made by the agency, a motion was made by Commissioner Suggs and seconded by Commissioner Kapoor to accept the staff recommendation that the Commissioners **grant** the reopening of case no. **1810033**.

The vote was: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion was unanimous.

Following a presentation made by the agency, a motion was made by Commissioner Suggs and seconded by Commissioner Kapoor to accept the staff recommendation that the Commissioners **deny** the reopening of case no. **1910045**.

The vote was: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion was carried unanimously.

V. Division Reports

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

The Executive Director reported on Covid 19 protocols being established to maintain operations via teleworking; ongoing budget review, position refills and completed preparation for use of a magistrate in OPH; the production report was reviewed; An update of the agency's website is in progress and Microsoft Office 365 training was initiated. Speaking engagements include DAS black heritage event/Gwen Ifill stamp, a Hartford HS, and AKA public meeting.

Outreach Report: by Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

See detailed report.

- Sexual Harassment Training for Alan Barbarino Real Estate , Mar 4
- Sexual Harassment Training for 360 Federal Credit Union, Mar 10
- Sexual Harassment Trainings for Northwest Hills
- Fair Housing Training, Mar 30 – to be conducted via webinar
- Kid's Speak, UConn Law School, May 19, *cancelled*

Legislative update: by Darcy Jones, Legislative Analyst

Darcy Jones reported on the following:

The State of Connecticut is halfway through the public hearing phase; Bill tracker was sent; the LOB will be closed to the public though meetings may still take place. The Legislators are trying to get the budget done as early as possible; disparity study is still ongoing.

*** Commissioner Norton asked about the plans for next month's meeting. A discussion ensued.

VI. New Business:

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Kapoor to **amend** the Agenda to discuss plans for next month's meeting pending government shutdown due to COVID 19 under New Business. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Kapoor to **give the authority** to Chair Payne and Executive Director Hughes to act on behalf of the Commissioners regarding plans for next month's meeting pending a government shutdown due to COVID 19 through June 11, 2020. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion was carried unanimously.

VII. Executive Session

(Requires a two-thirds vote of commissioners present and voting – staff and guests invited to attend must be noted)

Commissioner Kapoor moved to go into Executive session and was seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The vote was: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

Invited into Executive Session for Agenda items 1-8, and item 11, Mica Notz including the commissioners were Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp, AAG Melendez and Attorney Dumas Keuler.

Pending Litigation:

1. CHRO ex rel. Old Lane Digs, LLC v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1750110
2. CHRO ex rel. Willow Retreat, LLC v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1750111
3. CHRO ex rel. Dawn Perry v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1750157
4. CHRO ex rel. 20 Booth Terrace, LLC v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1750190
5. CHRO ex rel. Margaret Kramer v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1850002
6. CHRO ex rel. Margaret Kramer v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1850003
7. CHRO ex rel. Margaret Kramer v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1850004
8. CHRO ex rel. General Guaranty, LLC v. Town of Hamden
CHRO No. 1850005

Presented by Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler, Commission Counsel

9. *Wallace v. Sharp, et al.*
10. *Johnson v. Hughes, et al*
11. *Mica Notz v. CHRO*

VIII. Return from Executive Session, (Action May Be Required)

Commissioner Kapoor moved to return from executive session at 4:10 pm and Commissioner Suggs seconded. The vote was: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

CHRO ex rel. Old Lane Digs, LLC v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 175010

CHRO ex rel. Willow Retreat, LLC v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1750111

CHRO ex rel. Dawn Perry v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1750157

CHRO ex rel. 20 Booth Terrace, LLC v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1750190

CHRO ex rel. Margaret Kramer v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1850002

CHRO ex rel. Margaret Kramer v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1850003

CHRO ex rel. Margaret Kramer v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1850004

CHRO ex rel. General Guaranty, LLC v. Town of Hamden

CHRO No. 1850005

A motion was made by Commissioner Kapoor to accept staff recommendation to have the commission legal counsel file the eight cases in the Complex Litigation docket in Waterbury judicial district and seek injunctive relief, punitive damages, and a civil penalty. Commissioner Giliberto seconded. The vote was: Yes (3), No (1, A. Norton), and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

IX. Old Business - N/A

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Kapoor to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Commissioner Suggs. The vote was: Yes (4), No (0), and Abstentions (0). The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:13 p.m.