

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**



**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 11, 2022
2:00 pm
Via Microsoft TEAMS**

Commissioners Present

Lisa Giliberto, Secretary Pro Tem
Nicholas Kapoor,
Andrew Norton
Edith Pestana
Joseph Suggs
Edward Mambruno

Staff Present

Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director	
Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director	
Neva E. Vigezzi, AA Supervisor	Gary Madison, AA Reviewer
Kimberly Jacobsen, HRO Attorney	Michelle Dumas Keuler, HRO Attorney
Darcy Strand, Legislative Analyst	Catherine Spain, HRO Attorney
Kristen Daniels, Executive Secretary	Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary
Jamie Rubin, Manager, SW Region	Shawn Burns, Manager, WC Region
Asst. Attorney General Laura Thurston	Holly Wonneberger, HRO Attorney
Zachary Cobb, HRO Trainee, Eastern	Gabriela Sandoval, HRO Attorney (D)

I. Call to Order: Secretary Pro Tem Commissioner Lisa Giliberto
The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

II. Election of Chairperson Pro Tem

Commissioner Giliberto requested a motion to elect a Chairman Pro Tempore for the May 11, 2022 meeting, and Commissioner Pestana made a motion to nominate Nick Kapoor to act in this capacity. Commissioner Suggs seconded the motion. The vote was: Yes (3) No (0), and Abstentions (1). Commissioner Kapoor abstained. Commissioner Giliberto did not vote as the Presiding Officer. The motion carried.

*** Commissioner Norton arrived at 2:01 pm.*

III. Chairperson's Report

Commissioner Kapoor congratulated Commissioner Andrew Norton on being confirmed by the General Assembly for another term. He congratulated former Commissioner Neeta Vatti

who was confirmed as a Superior Court Judge and thanked her for her service to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. Commissioner Kapoor stated that there are currently two Gubernatorial vacancies and one Senate Pro Tem vacancy on the CHRO. Commissioner Kapoor recognized that a quorum was intact for the meeting.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Giliberto moved to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2022, Regular Commission meeting and Commissioner Suggs seconded it. The vote to approve the minutes was: Yes (4) No (0), and Abstentions (0) The motion carried.

V. Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required

Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp presented the following plans:

1. Department of Consumer Protection

Representing the agency were Michelle Seagull, Commissioner, Andrea Comer, Deputy Commissioner, Catherine Blinder, Chief of Education and Outreach and Jennifer Taplin, Equal Employment Opportunity Manager.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency met or substantially met all its hiring goals at 43%. The promotion goals met were 75% and the program goals were not established in the prior filing.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2020/2021 showed 72% achievement for the SBE and 39% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Mambruno to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of Department of Consumer Protection and retain biennial filing status. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

2. Department of Veteran's Affairs

Representing the agency were Thomas Saadi, Commissioner, Bethanne Watts, Human Resources Business Partner, Jennifer Taplin, Equal Employment Opportunity Manager, Briana Mitchell, Fiscal Administrative Manager 2 and Jane Siegel, Staff Attorney 2.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

There were no prior filings for hiring goals, promotion goals, or program goals.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2020/2021 for the SBE was 120.9% and MBE was 184.0%.

The filing history is as follows: 2014, 2016, 2018, Approved and 2020, Disapproved and 2021, Disapproved for Failure to file.

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

3. Office of the State Treasurer

Representing the agency were Alex Marcellino, Assistant Treasurer for Strategic Planning, Johnette Tolliver, Director of Human Resources and Ginny Kim, Assistant General Counsel, Chief Compliance and Diversity Officer.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency met or substantially met all its hiring goals at 58.8%. The promotion goals were 0% and the program goals were not established in the prior filing.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2018 showed 245% achievement for the SBE and 678% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2014, Approved by Default, 2016, Disapproved 2018, and 2017, 2018, 2020 Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Suggs to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of Office of the State Treasurer and retain biennial filing status. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

4. Department of Social Services

Representing the agency were Deidre Gifford, Commissioner, Astread Ferron-Poole, EEO Administrator, and Matthew Fazzino, EEO Specialist 1.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency met or substantially met all its hiring goals at 46.0%. The promotion goals were 47% and the program goals were established 100% (2 out of 2).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2018 showed 245% achievement for the SBE and 678% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2014, Approved by Default, 2016, Disapproved 2018, and 2017, 2018, 2020 Approved.

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

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Requires a two-thirds vote of Commissioners Present and Voting; Staff and Guests Invited to Attend Must Be Noted

**Invited into Executive session with the Commissioners were AAG Laura Thurston, Executive Director Tanya Hughes, and Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Norton to enter Executive Session. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

Executive session began at 2:40 pm.

The item discussed in Executive Session was a Personnel Item: Brian Festa Matter.

The Chairman Pro Tem declared Executive Session ended at 3:21 pm. The Commission resumed the meeting in Public Session.

The Chairman Pro Tem noted that no action was taken by the Commission in Executive Session.

Commissioner Suggs left the meeting at the end of Executive Session and did not return to the Public Session.

VII. VOTE ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS – No action needed.

VIII. Request to Reopen

1. Angel Collazo v. Milford Transit
CHRO No. 2130341

Presented by HRO Attorney Holly Wonneberger

Commissioner Kapoor recognized all those wishing to speak on the matter including Commission Counsel Holly Wonneberger, Complainant Angel Collazo, and Respondent, Milford Transit represented by Attorney Lisa Lazerek.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Norton to accept the staff recommendation to **deny** reopening CHRO Case No. 2130341 Angel Collazo v. Milford Transit. The vote: Yes (3), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

2. Christina LaGace v. Traumatic Stress Institute of Klingberg Family Centers
CHRO No. 2110438

Presented by HRO Attorney Catherine Spain

The Chairman Pro Tem recognized all those wishing to speak on the matter including Commission Counsel Catherine Spain, Complainant Christina LaGace, and Respondent, Traumatic Stress Institute of Klingberg Family Centers represented by Attorney Phyllis Pari.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to not accept the staff recommendation and, therefore, to **grant** the request to reopen CHRO Case No. 211438, Christina LaGace v. Traumatic Stress Institute of Klingberg Family Centers. The vote: Yes (3), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

IX. Division Reports

1. Executive Director Report: Tanya Hughes, Executive Director reported on the following matters:

- Meetings with AAG
- Litigation activity
- Meetings with OPH/DAS/OPM
- Preparation for the Disparity Study Launch
- Analysis of Proposals for Equity Study

- Technology Upgrades
- Ongoing Recruitment activities
- WICC Radio slot; every Monday 8:08 am <https://www.wicc600.com>
- Executive Director's Production report
- NHSO/ CT Women's Hall of Fame, Friday, May 6, 2022
- Glastonbury MLK & Probus Intellectual Disabilities Community Conversation

2. Outreach Report: Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director reported on the following highlighted activities. Please see full report for details.

- Kid's court Academy, Second session resumed March 1
- CHRO KCA brown lunch bag webinar presentation to CT Afterschool Network
- Hartford, YWCA, In the company of Women
- Ambassador program
- Yard Goats video outline with RAW Housing and Sexual Harassment Training
- Ana Mitchell, Outreach coordinator is continuing extended outreach
- D & I committee – daily activities
- Holocaust Symposium/Webinar

3. Legislative update: by Attorney Darcy Strand
Attorney Strand updated the Commissioners on the Bills from the 2021-22 Legislative Session, which ended May 9.

X. Old Business

XI. New Business

XII. Announcement of Time and Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman Pro Tem noted that the next regular meeting of the CHRO would be held at 2 pm on June 8, 2022, via Microsoft Teams.

XIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Giliberto moved to adjourn the meeting followed by a second from Commissioner Norton. The vote: Yes (3), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried and the Chairman Pro Tem declared the meeting adjourned at 4:49 pm.

The minutes of the Regular Commission meeting dated **May 11, 2022**, were approved on **June 8, 2022**.

Prepared by:



Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director