

STATE OF CONNECTICUT COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 8, 2023
2:00 p.m.
Via Microsoft TEAMS

Commissioners Present

Lisa Giliberto
Nick Kapoor
Andrew Norton
Edith Pestana
Joseph Suggs

Commissioners Absent

Edward Mambruno

Staff Present

Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director
Kimberly Jacobsen, Managing, Director, Legal
Jaime Rubin, Regional Manager
Robin Trepanier, HRO Attorney
Neva Vigezzi, Supervisor, AA (TWR)
Darcy Strand, Legislative Analyst
Kristen Parker, Executive Secretary
Aubri Petersen, Secretary, Legal

Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director
Shawn Burns, Regional Manager
Catherine Spain, HRO Attorney
Spencer Hill, HRO Attorney
Gary Madison, HRO Representative
Ana Mitchell, HRO Representative
Darian Pitts, Executive Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Nick Kapoor called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON PRO TEMPORE

Commissioner Kapoor entertained a motion to elect the Chair Pro Tempore. Commissioner Giliberto moved to elect Commissioner Kapoor as Chairperson Pro Tempore for the February 8, 2023, Commission meeting. Commissioner Suggs seconded the motion. The motion carried. Yes (2); No (0); Abstentions (0).

III. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Commissioner Kapoor noted there was no Chairperson's report at this time and added quorum status confirmed by the three Commissioners present.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kapoor asked if there was any discussion on the Minutes. Seeing none he called for a motion to accept the 2023-1-11 Commission meeting minutes as written. Commissioner

Suggs moved to accept the minutes. Commissioner Giliberto seconded. The motion carried. Yes (2); No (0); Abstentions (0).

*Commissioner Pestana joined the meeting at 2:04 PM.

*Commissioner Norton joined the meeting at 2:08 PM.

V. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS – VOTE REQUIRED

Presented by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp

Central Connecticut State University

Staff representing Central Connecticut State University were Dr. Zulma Toro, President, Dr. Craig Wright, VP for Equity, and Inclusion.

This plan was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all the elements required by sections 46a-68-78 through 46a-68-94, inclusive.

The agency has not met all or substantially all its hiring goals. Promotion, and program goals were met. The agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve goals and despite these efforts have been unable to do so. The agency had no deficiencies in the prior plan reviews and therefore is in compliance with the (b)(4) standard.

The Goal Achievement is as follows:

- Hiring Goal Achievement: 15 out of 38 or 40%
- Promotional Goal Achievement: 12 out of 17 or 71%
- Program Goal Achievement 2 out of 2 or 100%

This agency has a five-year approval history from 2017-2021.

Commissioner Suggs moved to approve the Central Connecticut State University Affirmative Action Plan and for them to retain annual filing status; Commissioner Giliberto seconded. The motion carried. Yes (4); No (0); Abstentions (0).

Prior to the presentation of Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Affirmative Action Plan Commissioner Pestana recused herself from voting and/or having an opinion.

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Staff representing the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection were Katie Dykes, Commissioner, Andrew Hoskins, Chief of Staff, Renee Lombard, DAS EEO Specialist 2, Katya Hunt, DAS EEO Leadership Associate/EEO Specialist 1, John Hedges, HR Generalist 3, Richard Madden, HR Generalist 3.

This plan was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required by sections 46a-68-78 through 46a-68-94. The agency has not met all or substantially all its hiring, and promotion goals. The program goals were not established in the prior filing. The agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve its goals but despite these efforts were unable to do so. The agency had no deficiencies in the prior plan review and is in compliance with the (b)(4) standard.

The goal achievement is the following:

- Hiring Goal Achievement: 20 out of 48 or 42%

- Promotional Goal Achievement: 11 out of 16 or 69%
- Programmable Goal Achievement: no program goals were set in the prior plan.

The agency has a five-year approval history from 2017-2021.

Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Affirmative Action Plan for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and to have them retain annual filing status. Commissioner Giliberto seconded. The motion carried. Yes (3); No (0); Abstentions (0).

*Commissioner Pestana recused herself from participating in this vote and discussion.

VI. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION

Request for Contract Compliance and Certification - Contract between Office of the Probate Court Administrator and Paychex, Inc.

Presented by HRO Attorney Spencer Hill

Staff representing the Office of the Probate Court Administrator were Beverly K. Streit-Kefalas, Probate Court Administrator, Eric Rothausser, Staff Attorney, and Lisa Hanson, Director of Financial Services.

There was no representation from Paychex, Inc.

This request is for the provision of payroll benefits, human resources, and insurance services. The total contract value is a one-time charge of \$2,500, and an annual charge of \$42,646. The request is to exempt the requirement that contractors provide notice advising labor union or workers' representatives of the contractor's commitments of non-discrimination and to post such notice in conspicuous places. The request falls within the regulatory permissible exemptions, specifically that the work to be performed on the contract is or has been performed outside the state and that the number of workers employed by the contractor totals less than 25 and that these services are not readily available. The recommendation is that the request is granted.

Commissioner Giliberto moved to approve the request for exemption to the contract with Office of the Probate Court Administrator and Paychex, Inc. in addition to the conditions of the January 18, 2023, letter. Commissioner Suggs seconded. The motion carried. Yes (4); No (0); Abstentions (0)

DIVISION REPORTS

Executive Director's Report, Executive Director Tanya Hughes.

Administration

- Computer Refresh has been initiated; Items have started to come in.
- The Executive Team continues meeting regularly.
- Managers and Unit Heads are hosting the Legal Department at their staff meeting to ensure everyone is trained and updated on the law as it applies to CHRO.

Miscellaneous

- A meeting with CBIA was held this morning. Tanya and Kimberly Jacobsen attended. They were very interested in the case processing activities.
- A SEE Grant totaling close to \$30K has been approved by HUD. Receipt is still pending.
- The Housing Unit, headed by Diane Carter, is seeing some significant activity with regards to settlements

Outreach Report, Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp

- MLK Children's March on January 16, 2023, was a great success. Children of all ages and school districts were in attendance. There was also representation from several news outlets, to include channels 3 and 61, and several newspaper articles. Deputy Director Sharp also took a moment to acknowledge Ana Mitchell, Outreach Coordinator for her help with organizing the Children's March.
- The third year of Kids Court Academy begins on February 21, 2023. The focus will be on the legislative process.
- Work continues on the Civil Rights Museum. Letters have gone out to the Governor's office, the Governor's Council, and OPM.

Legislative Update, Legislative and Administrative Advisor, Darcy Strand

Legislative Update

- The Governor's State Budget was also released today. CHRO's funding continues to hold steady.
- Public Hearings started around February 1st. Testimony has been submitted on several Bills. Tracking of these bills will be provided at a future date.
- The legislative session began on January 4. The Judiciary Committee voted to raise the CHRO's agency bill on January 25. CHRO is still waiting on the bill number and for the language to be released. The language provided to the committee focuses on electronic or certified mail service of housing election cases, modernizing the definition of sexual orientation, and added age as a protected class.

Disparity Study Update

- Griffin & Strong continue to work on the data assessment and information gathering. Its policy team is also conducting policy interviews across a variety of state agencies. Notifications have gone out to the state agencies.

Equity Study Update

- Faulkner Consulting Group has finalized its work plan and is currently working with CHRO to finalize dates for a series of public meetings. They are also working, in conjunction with CHRO to set up interviews with a set of executive branch agencies to begin analysis of state programs and policies.

*Commissioner Norton left the meeting at 3:00 PM.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Commission Meeting will occur on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2:00 PM via Microsoft Teams.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to adjourn the Meeting. The vote was: Yes (3); No (0); Abstentions (0). The motion carried. The Meeting was adjourned at 3:08 PM.