

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



**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 13, 2022
2:00 pm
Via Microsoft TEAMS**

Commissioners Present

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

Staff Present

Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director	
Cheryl A. Sharp, Deputy Director, HRO Attorney	
Neva E. Vigezzi, AA Supervisor	Michelle Dumas Keuler, Managing Attorney
Dean Spence, AA/CC Reviewer	Darcy Strand, Legislative Analyst
Jody Walker Smith, HRO Attorney	Catherine Spain, HRO Attorney
Michael Roberts, HRO Attorney	Shawn Burns, Manager, Regional Manager
Kristen Daniels, Executive Secretary	Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary
Laura Thurston, Asst. Attorney General	Summer Interns

I. Call to Order: Commissioner Edward Mambruno, Secretary
The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

II. Election of Chairperson Pro Tem

Commissioner Edith Pestana moved to nominate Nicholas Kapoor to act in this capacity. Commissioner Giliberto seconded the motion. The vote was: Yes (4) No (0), and Abstentions (0). Commissioner Mambruno did not vote as the Presiding Officer. The motion carried.

III. Chairperson's Report

Commissioner Kapoor recognized that a quorum was intact for the meeting with 5/6 Commissioners present and noted it was time for the preparation of the evaluation of the Executive Director and indicated that he would forward the evaluation form to be completed and returned.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Mambruno requested a motion to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2022, Regular Commission meeting. Commissioner Pestana made the motion and Commissioner Giliberto seconded it. The vote to approve the minutes was: Yes (4) No (0), and Abstentions (0) The motion carried. Presiding officer Commissioner Kapoor did not vote as will be for the remaining votes unless there is a tie.

**Commissioner Norton arrived at 2:05 pm.

V. Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required

Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp presented the following plan:

1. CT Military Department

Representing the agency were Francis Evon, Major General, Ralph F. Hedenberg, Asst, Adjutant General, Ulrick G Brice, Executive assistant, Timothy J. Tomcho, Attorney-Advisor, Maria Morales-Diaz., Designated EEO Officer, and Michael Carragher, Fiscal Administrative Officer.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency has not met or substantially met all its hiring goals at 0%. The promotion goals were met at 100% and the program goals were met 0% (0 out of 2).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2020/2021 showed 882% achievement for the SBE and 665% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2015, 2017, Approved, 2019 and 2020, Disapproved and 2021, Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Norton to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of CT Military Dept and move to biennial filing status. The vote: Yes (5), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

2. Department of Aging and Disability Services

Representing the agency were Amy Porter, Commissioner, Mildred Verdejo, EEO Specialist and Jennifer Napiello, HR Business Partner.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency has not met or substantially met all its hiring goals at 26.1%. The promotion goals were met at 42.9% and the program goals were met 100% (1 out of 1).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2020/2021 showed 122% achievement for the SBE and 151% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021, Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of Department of Aging and Disability Services and move to biennial filing status. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). Commissioner Norton recused himself during the discussion and the vote. The motion carried.

3. Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

Representing the agency were Colleen Harrington, Deputy Commissioner, Shannon Wegele, Director of Administration, Barbara K. Viadella, EEO Manager, Jennifer Gambacorta, EEO Specialist 1, Jeniaya Pettaway, Leadership Associate, Lorraine Collazo and DeLeon, EEO Assistant.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency has met or substantially met all its hiring goals at 51.2%. The promotion goals were met at 40.6% and the program goals were met 100% (3 out of 3).

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

The filing history is as follows: 2017, 2018, Approved, 2019,2020, Disapproved and 2021, Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Norton to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and move to biennial filing status. The vote: Yes (5), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

VI. Contract Compliance: Request for Exemption

Request for Exemption for Municipal Street Paving Contracts for 2021-2022

Presented by HRO Attorney Spencer Hill

A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Giliberto to **grant** the Commission staff recommendation that the municipal street paving exemption be renewed for a period of one year in accordance with the current exemption requirements. The vote: Yes (5), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

VI. Request to Reopen

William J. Powers v. State of Connecticut Judicial Branch

CHRO No. 2020348. Presented by HRO Attorney Michael E. Roberts

Commissioner Kapoor recognized all those wishing to speak on the matter including the Complainant, William Powers, Commission Counsel Michael Roberts, and Respondent, CT Judicial Branch, represented by Attorney Steven Bidwell.

**Commissioner Suggs left the meeting at 3:00.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Pestana to **grant** the reopening of CHRO 2020348, William J. Powers v. State of Connecticut Judicial Branch. The vote: Yes (3), No (1) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried. Commissioner Ed Mambruno voted no.

VII. Executive Session

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Giliberto to enter Executive Session and to invite in: Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Deputy Director

Cheryl Sharp, AAG Laura Thurston and HRO Attorney Jody Walker Smith. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). Two-thirds of the Commissioners present and voting, the motion carried. Executive session commenced at 3:54 pm.

The Chairman Pro Tem declared Executive Session ended at 4:03 pm. and the meeting resumed in Public Session. The Chairman Pro Tem noted the Commission took no action in Executive Session.

VIII. Vote on Executive Session Items

CHRO ex rel. Ianne Hudgins v. Trinity Towers LLC and Centrix Property Management LLC, CHRO 2150165

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Pestana for the Commission to file CHRO ex rel. Ianne Hudgins v. Trinity Towers LLC and Centrix Property in the Judicial District of New Britain and seek injunctive relief, punitive damages, and a civil penalty. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

** Commissioner Mambruno voted verbally via conference call through the phone with Commissioner Pestana.

IX. Division Reports

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

- Ongoing Responses to Audit Review
- Meetings with AAG: Litigation activity
- Meetings with OPH/DAS/OPM
- Disparity Study Launch: 3 Presentations
- Analysis of Proposals for Equity Study
- OPH Board Vacancies/Commission Board Vacancies
- Recruitment
- Executive Director's Production report
- Summer Symposium: featuring a panel including Comptroller Natalie Braswell
- WICC Radio slot; every Monday 8:08 am <https://www.wicc600.com>

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

- Kid's Court Competition, June 2
- CHRO/OPM/DAS/DEC Kickoff Meeting 1, June 1
- Summer Interns
- AWARE Tool, CHRO/DAS/OSC
- Ana Mitchell, Outreach coordinator is continuing extended outreach
- D & I committee – daily activities

3. Legislative update: by Attorney Darcy Strand

Attorney Strand updated the Commissioners on the Disparity Study.

X. Old Business

XI. New Business – Personnel matters

XII. Announcement of Time and Date of Next Meeting

Chairman Pro Tem Nicholas Kapoor noted that the next regular meeting of the CHRO will be held at 2 pm on August 10, 2022, via Microsoft Teams.

XIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Norton moved to adjourn the meeting followed by a second from Commissioner Pestana. The vote: Yes (4), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried and the Chairman Pro Tem declared the meeting adjourned at 4:09 pm.