

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING – ROOM 1E
HARTFORD, CT 06106
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011
2:00 P.M.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Andrew Norton, Chairperson
Cheryl Lynn Clarke (on phone)
Edward Mambruno, Secretary
Edith Pestana
Patricia Wrice
Dawn Niles
Tracey Gove

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Robert J. Brothers, Jr., Executive Director
David Teed, Assistant Attorney General
James O'Neill, Legislative Liaison
Cheryl Sharp, Human Rights Attorney III
Margaret Peters, Secretary II

I. CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson Andrew Norton convened the October 12, 2011 regular monthly meeting of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities to order at 2:07 p.m.

II. SECRETARY

Chairperson Andrew Norton requested approval of the minutes of Tuesday September 13, 2011 Commission meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Pestana to approve the September 13, 2011 minutes as presented and seconded by Commissioner Gove. The motion includes an amendment to the minutes which was made by Executive Director Robert Brothers, that Cheryl Sharp was not present at the September 13, 2011 Commission meeting. Her absence is also noted on page two. The motion passed. Minutes are approved as presented. Chairperson Norton did not vote on the motion.

GUEST SPEAKER

None

IV. OUTREACH REPORT - Attorney Cheryl Sharp from the Legal Division

Attorney Cheryl Sharp from the Legal Division noted that there are several upcoming outreach events. There is a civil rights conference on Public Act #11-237 which has generated a lot of attention. There will be attorneys from the Complainant's side as well as from the Respondent's side to discuss implementation of 11-237 along with CHRO attorneys. Staff has put a panel together to discuss streamlining of the Commission's complaint process. This conference is on October 20, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. through 12:00 p.m. in the Old Judiciary Room in the State Capitol.

There is also an upcoming Employer Workshop called Civil Rights is Good for Business. This is an outreach to businesses and employers, because part of our mission is to eliminate discrimination through enforcement advocacy and education. Staff feels that we have a duty to educate both sides and to prevent discrimination from happening. One way to do this is to reach out to employers and provide our services to them free as well. This conference is on October 26, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the State Capitol in room 310. Staff has flyers available for interested parties today.

V. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS – VOTE REQUIRED

- A. Staff Recommendations: ***Approvals***
1. Eastern Connecticut State University
 2. Police Officer Standards and Training Council
 3. Western Connecticut State University
 4. Secretary of the State
 5. Department of Public Health
 6. Office of the Attorney General

Chairperson Norton asked for a motion to accept staff recommendations for approval of the six Affirmative Action Plans: Eastern Connecticut State University, Police Officer Standards and Training Council, Western Connecticut State University, Secretary of the State (biannual), Department of Public Health and the Office of the Attorney General and that the motion includes the retention of their annual filing status. A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno seconded by Commissioner Niles.

1. Eastern Connecticut State University

The Connecticut State University System plan is recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required; the workforce is not in parity; the agency has met all program goals; the agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve its goals; and the agency had no deficiencies in the prior plan reviews.

2. Police Officer Standards and Training Council

Police Officer Standards and Training Council plan is recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required; the workforce, considered as a whole and by occupational category, is not in parity with the relevant labor market area; the agency had no hires; there were no promotion goals during this reporting period; the agency had no deficiencies noted by the Commission in the previous plan reviews. This agency is being consolidated with another agency.

3. Western Connecticut State University

Western Connecticut State University plan is recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required; the agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve its goals and the agency had substantially addressed deficiencies noted by the commission in prior plan reviews.

4. Secretary of the State

Secretary of the State plan is recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required; the agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve its goals and the agency had no deficiencies in the prior plan review.

5. Dept of Public Health

Dept of Public Health plan is recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required; the agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve such goals and the agency has substantially addressed deficiencies noted by the commission in prior plan reviews.

6. Office of the Attorney General

Office of the Attorney General plan is recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: the plan contains all elements required; the

agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve such goals and the agency had no deficient elements in the previous plan.

Chairperson Norton asked for a motion to withdraw previous motion which was made by Commissioner Pestana and seconded by Commissioner Gove. They agreed to withdraw their previous motion. No motion is on the floor.

Chairperson Norton asked for a motion to accept staff recommendations for approval of Police Officer Standards and Training Council. A motion was made by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Pestana. Commissioner Gove rescued himself from the discussion and the vote. The motion was approved. Chairperson Norton did not vote on the motion.

Chairperson Norton asked for a motion to accept staff recommendations for approval of five Affirmative Action Plans: Eastern Connecticut State University, Western Connecticut State University, Secretary of the State (biannual), Department of Public Health and the Office of the Attorney General and that the motion includes the retention of their annual or biannual filing status. Such a motion was made by Commissioner Gove seconded by Commissioner Pestana. The motion was approved unanimously. Chairperson Norton did not vote on the motion.

Chairperson Norton thanked Deputy Attorney General Nora Dannehy at length for the excellent representation that Assistant Attorney General David Teed has provided to CHRO during the many years that he has represented CHRO.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

None

VII. DIVISION REPORTS

A. Legislative Report

Jim O'Neill provided the Commissioners with an updated legislative report. There is a Section 75 Public Act 11-51 which requires CHRO to re-examine our Affirmative Action Regulations. A committee has been formed which is headed up by Executive Director Robert Brothers, Jr. (Chairman). The committee will meet on October 25. CHRO is looking at a number of issues, and the commission will be given an update at a later date.

On October 26 Governor Malloy is holding a Business Special Session.

CHRO has received a lot of press coverage on Breast Feeding. Attorney Kimberly Jacobson has done a lot of work on this and she deserves credit.

B. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Brothers commented on the rewrite of Affirmative Action regulations, and he is looking to simplify it as much as possible without compromising it.

The Executive Director is in the process of moving OPH from 450 Capitol Avenue to 25 Sigourney Street. It is a matter of finding space and having a build out for a hearing room.

As of this date, the Executive Director has not received a response to the letter that went out from the Commissioner's to the Governor's office regarding the appointment of Hearing Referees. As a result of not having referees, our cases continue to back up and be suspended.

CHRO has been given funding for new computers for the entire agency. The Executive Director is hoping that DOIT will give us a proposal for computer software for our tracking system. The system we have is antiquated and no longer used.

With the New Public Act #11-237 the cases should be moved along quickly. Agency training has started, which will produce more closures with less people.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

X. RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

None

IX. VOTE ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS

(Requires a Vote by Commissioners on the Record)

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, it was moved by Commissioner Mambruno and seconded by Commissioner Niles to adjourn the meeting at 3:04 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Chairperson Norton did not vote.