

Prince George's County Human Relations Commission

Monday, March 22, 2021

Zoom Meeting of the
Prince George's County
Human Relations Commission

ATTENDEES:

Commissioners:

Nora Eidelman, Chairperson
Charlene Proctor, Vice-Chair
Wade Woolfolk, Secretary
Nathaniel Bryant
Llamilet Gutierrez
Wendi Howard
Sylvia Johnson
Ademola Oduyebo
Andrea Price-Carter
Joseph Reed
Felicia Lasley Sadler

Kim Kendrick, Counsel to the Commission
Keisha Garner, Counsel to the Commission

Excused:

Adonna Green

Staff:

Renée Battle-Brooks
Executive Director

Kyla Hanington
Clerk to the Commission

Jose Villegas
Senior Investigator

Guests:

Keith Merkey – MCCR
N. Gordon

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:43 pm.
2. Adopt Agenda – Commissioner Reed– Motion to adopt with noted changes; Commissioner Johnson– Seconded the Motion. By unanimous vote, the agenda was adopted as written with noted change.
3. Approval of Minutes of the **February 22, 2021** meeting. Commissioner Reed – Motion to adopt with noted changes. Commissioner Gutierrez– Seconded the Motion. By unanimous vote, the minutes were adopted with noted changes.
4. **REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

The Chair announced that this was the last meeting joined by Counsel Kendrick. New Counsel retained – Keisha Garner. The Chair shared that Ms. Kendrick has been working pro bono since February 1, 2021. The Chair noted all the efforts that Kim Kendrick provided to the Commission and her efforts to ensure the work of the Commission continued uninterrupted and that it has been an extremely generous use of time and skills to the Commission. She noted Counsel Kendrick is honest and full of integrity and thanked her for all of her work. Ms. Kendrick thanked everyone and said it was a pleasure serving the Commission the last five years. The Chair extended a warm welcome to the new Counsel joining the Commission going forward, Keisha Garner, sharing Ms. Garner’s biography and introducing her to the Commissioners. Ms. Garner thanked the Chair and stated she looked forward to meeting and working with everyone on the Commission. The Chair also discussed a stipend for the Commissioners and stated she had talked to the County’s Commission Liaison, Miriam Brewer, about these. She said that the Vice-Chair and the Secretary of the Commission would also be working with her on this initiative.

5. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director thanked Kim Kendrick for all of her diligence and efforts on behalf of the Commission and welcomed new Counsel Garner. The Executive Director provided a highlight of some of the events over the last month, including labor and sex trafficking awareness education; the Diversity Dialogue series; two Community Conversations as guest hosts of the library’s program including one with Prince George’s County’s own junior bull-riding champion and one with the County Executive’s new African Diaspora liaison; a noon time event with a Scottish professor about Martin Luther King Jr and the Poor People’s Campaign of 1968; and another wonderful discussion in our Women in Faith discussion.

She thanked Secretary Woolfolk for his call today raising concerns about rising incidents of hate and bias against Asian and Pacific Islanders and she shared that the agency has been planning an event that is coming soon and that HRC functions as part of the government’s response to hate crimes.

The Chair asked if there were any updates to Division 12 updates. The Executive Director shared that the County Council held the second reading was on Thursday, and the next review will be Thursday the 25th of March. It is CB11-2021 and CB12-2021; CB11 focuses on the Executive Order to uncouple the agency from the Office of Community Relations while CB12 is the legislation. She outlined what CB12 aims to do: update language; to clarify in reading what functions are HRC and what are Commissioners; to change the name from the Human Relations Commission to the Office of Human Rights, and the Commissioners will be referred to as the Commission with the hopes that this clarifies function; to update protected classes to capture three that were previously added under housing discrimination and adding gender identity as a protected class.

6. CASES SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

HRC Charge No.: HRC17-1102

EEOC Charge No.: 12H-2018-00006

Delannie Spriggs v Board of Education of Prince George's County

(Investigator Langston Clay)

Panel Members: Commissioner Reed as Panel Chair, Commissioner Bryant, Commissioner Johnson; Secretary Woolfolk as alternate.

This case was scheduled for public hearing on March 3, 2020 and March 5, 2020. A motion for continuance was granted. Due to the health crisis, hearing dates were postponed. New hearing dates were set for December 9th and December 10th, 2020. Those hearing dates were postponed as the parties were undergoing settlement discussions. The case remains pending. A Motion for Dismissal was expected on or before February 5, 2021 and is yet to be received.

HRC Charge No.: HRC19-0306

EEOC Charge No.: 531-2018-01416

Carisia Dyson v Staffing Etc.

(Investigator V'Hesspa Glenn)

Panel Members: Commissioner Sadler as Panel Chair, Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Oduyebo; Commissioner Johnson as alternate.

A scheduling order was issued setting hearing dates for March 9 and 11, 2021. A Motion for Continuance was received from the Executive Director. An order for that matter was issued and the new dates are April 8, 2021 and April 13, 2021.

FEPA Charge No.: HRC20-0322

EEOC Case No.: 531-2020-00697

Reddick v DC Tours & Transportation

Panel members: Secretary Woolfolk as Chair, Commissioner Oduyebo, Vice-Chair Proctor.

A scheduling order for this matter has been issued with hearing dates set for April 7th and 12th. Panel member Green is no longer able to serve on this panel so alternate Vice-Chair Proctor has assumed that position on the panel.

FEPA Charge No.: HRC19-0605

EEOC Case No.: 531-2019-00914

Dizhann Smith v DPI Specialty Foods

(Investigator Caitlin Mohler)

Panel Members: Commissioner Price-Carter as Panel Chair, Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Bryant; Commissioner Johnson as alternate.

A scheduling order in this matter has been issued with hearing dates for May 12 and May 13, 2021. A motion of dismissal is before the Commission. This matter was discussed in close session to confer with counsel. On return from the Closed Session, the Commissioners reported that the Motion would be granted and the matter dismissed with prejudice.

HRC Case No.: HRC20-0304

EEOC Charge No.: 531-2019-02276

Kheni Wells v Board of Education of Prince George's County
(Investigator V'Hesspa Glenn)

Panel members: Commissioner Howard as Panel Chair, Commissioner Bryant, Commissioner Johnson; Commissioner Gutierrez as alternate.

A scheduling order in this matter has been issued with hearing dates of April 20 and 22nd. A motion for continuance was received and an order was issued with new hearing dates of June 22nd and June 23rd, 2021.

7. CASES READY FOR DECISION - NONE

8. HEARING PANEL UPDATES

HRC Case No.: HRC17-0809

EEOC Case No.: 531-2017-00390

Henry Lewis V Board of Education of Prince George's County
(Investigator Langston Clay)

Panel Members: Vice-Chair Proctor as Panel Chair, Commissioner Price-Carter, Commissioner Green; Commissioner Bryant as alternate.

Five evenings of public hearing in this matter were held January 28, December 15th, December 16th, 2020, January 27th, 2021, and February 3rd, 2021. The Panel has provided a recommendation.

9. CASE UPDATE – NONE

10. ATTENDANCE RECORD – Attached

11. NEW BUSINESS - NONE

12. OLD BUSINESS

- a. SOPs review – Commissioner Reed. Commissioner Reed provided updated SOPs and thanked everyone who has been involved with the project. Commissioner Reed – Moved that the Commission accept the SOPs.
Commissioner Sadler – Seconded the Motion
By unanimous vote, the SOPs are approved.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2021.

14. CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Proctor - Moved to go to closed session, seconded by Commissioner Reed, by unanimous vote moved to close session to consult with counsel to obtain legal

advice and to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

Return from closed session 7:08 pm

Motion of Dismissal

FEPA Charge No. HRC19-0605

EEOC Case No. 531-2019-00914

The Commission recommends adopting Motion of Dismissal and case dismissed with prejudice by unanimous vote.

Appeal

HRC Case No. HRC20-1102

By unanimous vote, the Executive Director's decision is upheld and the case shall stand as dismissed.

15. **ADJOURNMENT** –7: 11 pm

Wade A. Woolfolk

Commissioner Woolfolk
Secretary