

Prince George's County Human Relations Commission

Monday, November 23, 2020

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
Adonna Green
Wendi Howard
Sylvia Johnson
Ademola Oduyebo
Andrea Price-Carter
Joseph Reed
Felicia Lasley Sadler

Staff:

Renée Battle-Brooks
Executive Director

Jose Villegas
Senior Investigator

Guests:

Keith Merkey

Excused:

Llamilet Gutierrez
Kyla Hanington (Clerk)
Kim Kendrick, Counsel to the Commission

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm.
2. Adopt Agenda – Commissioner Reed – Motion to adopt; Commissioner Price-Carter – Seconded the Motion. By unanimous vote, the agenda was adopted as written.
3. Approval of Minutes of the **October 26, 2020** Meeting. The Chair noted a typo on the second page. Commissioner Bryant – Motion to adopt; Commissioner Oduyebo – Seconded the Motion. By unanimous vote, the minutes were adopted as written with the noted correction.
4. **REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

Chair Eidelman wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. The Executive Committee is planning to review the By-Laws before the January 2021 Commission meeting. The Chair extended a welcome to new Commissioner, Llamilet Gutierrez, who was not in attendance at the meeting. She also thanked all the Commissioners, the Executive Director, and the staff of the Human Relations Commission for their hard work this year during a difficult time.

5. **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The **Executive Director** wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. She congratulated and welcomed new Commissioner Gutierrez. The Executive Director then reviewed outreach: the diversity dialogue book series “The Elephant We Don’t See” had concluded for the calendar year; the HRC’s author series continued with Kendra Allen, Michael Farris Smith, Randall Horton, and Natasha Trethewey. A Veteran’s Day event, in partnership with the Office of Veterans Affairs, highlighted the challenges, accomplishments, and difficulties with transition to civilian life as well as highlighting how OVA and the HRC work together to support veterans in the County. The Commission was invited to present on outreach at the EEOC’s mini-conference and also conducted onboarding for CARES regarding immigrant defense. She also explained that a video for human trafficking is underway and set to come out in January 2021. Lastly, the Executive Director shared that the Commission has been in the budget cycle, which has involved a tremendous amount of work.

Commissioner Johnson asked about funding for Commissioners to attend conferences. The Executive Director explained that due to COVID-19 constraints that was not under consideration at this time, but said that if Commissioners see a conference or webinar of interest they can submit a request to her as she is always open to dialogue. Due to funding limitations, there is no guarantee that anything can be approved, however, as the budget is challenging due to the pandemic.

Commissioner Howard asked for clarification on voting for Commission positions; the Chair said she would follow up with information.

6. **CASES SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING**

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

The first night of public hearing in this matter was held on January 28, 2020. Two more nights of public hearing were scheduled for March 11, 2020 and April 15, 2020. Due to the health crisis, these hearings were postponed. The case will continue with virtual public hearings on December 15th and 16th, 2021.

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; Commissioner Woolfolk as alternate.

This case was scheduled for public hearing on March 3, 2020 and March 5, 2020. A motion for continuance was granted. New dates are pending. Due to the health crisis, this hearing was postponed. Virtual hearing dates are now scheduled for December 9th and 10th, 2021.

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 for this matter is pending.

HRC Case No.: HRC19-0301
EEOC Case No.: 531-2018-02758
(Investigator Caitlin Mohler)

Joseph Watts, Sr. v Prince George's County Department of Corrections
Panel Members: Commissioner Price-Carter as Panel Chair, Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Bryant, with Commissioner Johnson serving as alternate.

Commissioner Sadler recused herself from this matter. A scheduling order for this matter is pending; however, Mr. Watts has filed in circuit court and a motion of dismissal will be before the Commission in the January meeting.

FEPA Charge No.: HRC20-0322
EEOC Case No.: 531-2020-00697
Reddick v DC Tours & Transportation
Panel members: Commissioner Green as Chair, Commissioner Woolfolk; Commissioner Oduyebo; Vice-Chair Proctor as alternate.

A scheduling order for this matter is pending.

7. **CASES READY FOR DECISION - NONE**
8. **HEARING PANEL UPDATES – NONE**
9. **CASE UPDATE – NONE**
10. **ATTENDANCE RECORD – Attached**
11. **NEW BUSINESS - NONE**

12. OLD BUSINESS

- a. SOPs – Commissioner Reed. The Executive Committee is reviewing the SOPs. Brief discussion. The Executive Director sent a link to the Division 12 updates to the Chair and the Chair will distribute to the other Commissioners.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2021.

14. CLOSED SESSION – No agenda items.

- 15. ADJOURNMENT** – The Chair acknowledged member of the public, Keith Merkey, with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. The Chair also reminded Commissioners to reach out to counsel to help finalize scheduling of panels. The meeting was adjourned at 6:05.

Wade A. Woolfolk

Commissioner Woolfolk
Secretary