

**Office of Civil Rights & Wage Enforcement**  
**Community Relations Commission**  
**Public Session Minutes**  
**May 16, 2018**

Participating in the meeting were Commissioners Rev. Todd Yeary (Chair), Phillip Farfel, Stephen Ruckman, Adote Akwei, Karsonya Whitehead (conference call), Stephanie Maddin-Smith (conference call), A. Adar Ayira (Conference call), and Commissioner Designee Nadine Finigan-Carr. Also present were Raemond Parrott (CRC Supervisor), Troy Pumphrey, and John Wesley. The meeting was called to order at 12:18 p.m.

I. Welcome

Chair Yeary welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions. Ms. Nadine Finigan-Carr introduced herself as the recently appointed CRC Commissioner pending approval and a swearing-in date. Research, education and experience: adolescent behavior, health inequality, and human trafficking.

II. Approval of the Minutes

The April 18, 2018 minutes were approved with one correction on Page #3, Para.4.

III. Commissioners' Report

Commissioner Ruckman spoke in follow-up regarding the backlog and trying to boost the Commission's ability to run data analyses. He had a meeting with Moses Pounds from the Hopkins Center for Government Excellence who is very interested in coming in and helping to learn more about what systems we use and how they can run a light analysis and think about ways to help for free for a short-term. Commissioner Ruckman stated that they helped DLLR clear their backlog on Civil Rights cases. Mr. Moses would like to come to the June meeting and to meet with Mr. Parrott and to hear from the Commissioners. Mr. Parrott stated that he will have to consult the Law Department on how much data can be shared.

**Action:** Commissioner Ruckman will make the introduction between Mr. Parrott and Mr. Moses and coordinate a time to meet with the Commission.

Commissioner Farfel spoke about two pieces of legislation: 1) CRC jurisdiction and companies having less than 15 employees; and 2) large corporations that have small locations in the city who may be not be within CRC jurisdiction.

Chair Yeary said that the goal is to meet with the City Council President with Mr. Parrott as the technical expert to discuss the challenges with the existing ordinance.

**Action:** Chair Yeary stated that he did reach out to the Council President and will continue to follow-up with him.

Commissioner Akwei asked if there is any Union coverage. Mr. Parrott stated that it would be on a case-by-case basis and that it depends on the employer.

**Action:** Commissioner Yeary stated that they will follow-up on Commissioner Akwei's question.

Commissioner Ayira stated that she will be meeting with Councilman Brandon Scott in relation to his proposed legislation on institutional and structural racism. She stated that her conversation with Councilman Scott centers on whether the Commission can be of assistance. She also stated that Associated Black Charities (ABC) has been trying to educate the Maryland General Assembly and City Council on the use of incorporating a structural racism or racial equity lens for every piece of legislation before it becomes a law. Councilman Scott has been through ABC's racial equity training for policymakers and Commissioner Ayira will be following up in that conversation. In addition, she and Director Carter had been discussing how to bring CRC into the work that ABC is doing.

**Action:** Commissioner Ayira will report back if there is something of interest to the Commission.

Commissioner Maddin-Smith stated that there will be a Council Hearing on the Equity Assessment Bill on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. She noted as drafted, the Bill was not referred to the Office of Civil Rights but that it was referred to many entities and that the program would be handled through the Department of Planning and the Planning Commission. Commissioner Maddin-Smith also stated that the Planning Committee is having a hearing on May 31<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 p.m. with Councilman Scott.

Mr. Raemond Parrott stated that it does involve civil rights. However, the challenge with regard to staff is that it is outside the purview of Article IV. Reason: Equity in terms of planning is not covered under Article IV or Article 11. He felt that it would be a new policy area and new territory which can be done by the Commission but not staff.

Commissioner Farfel stated that he believes it does fall under Article IV because it deals with decisions that the City is making on resources, local communities, populations which is not pulling the Commission into planning but more into the task of the Commission.

Commissioner Maddin-Smith stated that as drafted the Bill requires each agency to appoint an equity coordinator and a Commission is considered an agency. Therefore the Commission would also have to identify their own equity coordinator and devise an equity assessment plan.

Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of the Bill.

**Action:** Commissioners Chair Yeary, Maddin-Smith, Ayira and Akwei agreed to be on the Committee to go over the Bill and email their recommendation to CRC and ABC on what they would like to present to Councilman Scott.

Chair Yeary asked about the status of the planning of the Civil Rights Day. Mr. Parrott stated that there is an issue of the funds needing to be used prior September due to the new budget year. Currently there is no set date or location. Mr. Parrott further explained that this event is basically an open house to let the communities know about the Commission and what they do with the target being mainly non-English speaking communities. Currently, they are searching for a venue and date.

New Commissioner Finigan-Carr suggested surrounding the venue around the various ethnic festivals in the City.

Mr. Parrott stated that Leakin Park has been identified as the most ideal location for the Civil Rights Day pending confirmation.

Commissioner Adote Akwei stated that he would be happy to participate and reach out to the French speaking community.

#### IV. Director's Report

Mr. Raemond Parrott stated that CRC has been closing a steady stream of cases. The focus is on those cases for federal contract credit and have been filed within the last 5 years. Nine cases have been closed since the last meeting session. Incoming cases have slowed but are steady.

Mr. Parrott stated that Mr. Samuel Johnson, Legislative Analysts for the Office of Council Services has requested data regarding the top 5 city agencies (BCPD, BCFD, DPW, DOT, and the Health Department with factors being culture and size) from which the CRC receives complaints. In addition, Mr. Parrott has been able to gather that data with the help of an intern. He has also been able to secure a new system which is adaptable to the needs of the Office.

#### V. Open Forum

There was no further business to discuss.

There being no further business, Commissioner Whitehead motioned to adjourn the Public Session at 1:13 p.m. and move into the Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Ayira.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond  
Secretary III