

**Office of Civil Rights & Wage Enforcement**  
**Community Relations Commission**  
**Telephone Conference**  
**Public Session Minutes**  
**December 20, 2017**

Participating in the meeting were Commissioners Rev. Todd Yeary (Chair), Syeetah Hampton-El, Adote Akwei, Phillip Farfel, A. Adar Ayira, and Karsonya Whitehead. Also present were Jill P. Carter, Director. The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

I. Welcome

II. Approval of the Minutes

After amendments to the Public Session Minutes, it was moved by Commissioner Hampton-El and seconded by Commissioner Ayira that the minutes be accepted. Therefore, the November 15, 2017 Public Session Minutes were approved with noted corrections.

III. Commissioners' Report

Chair Yeary asked Dr. Farfel and Dr. Ayira about the status of the Commission with the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers (ABAG). Dr. Farfel stated that the December meeting was rescheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup> due a conference. Dr. Farfel will confirm the time.

Commissioner Hampton-El announced that she will start her new position as Administrative Law Judge on January 31, 2018. Her last meeting as a CRC Commissioner will be on January 17<sup>th</sup> unless there is a conflict with her legislative responsibilities.

Commissioner Hampton-El will send the resume for her recommended replacement who has a Ph.D. and is experienced in trafficking, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct issues. In addition, the Commission is still looking for a recommendation for the vacancy connection to the LGBTQIA community. Director Carter stated that she has recommendations but no decision has been made. She also encouraged Commissioners to forward a resume along with each recommendation.

IV. Director's Report

In follow-up to the previous CRC Meeting, Director Carter stated that she had preliminary meetings with President Lisa Robinson of the Vanguard Justice Society (Black Police Officers Union) and President Ronald Hudgins of the Vulcan Blazers (Black Firefighters Union). She reported that President Hudgins was excited about the support of our Commission but did express certain issues about complaints not being

efficiently resolved to their satisfaction. He will send a follow-up letter laying out the issues in preparation for a later meeting with Commissioners. In addition, Lisa Robinson of Vanguard was excited about the Commission's involvement and has asked Director Carter to send an information request to the Police Commissioner of BCPD requesting certain information to include organizational charts, racial breakdowns of hires and commanders, as well as numbers of EE complaints. President Robinson felt that it would be best to have that information before rescheduling a second meeting.

Director Carter stated that the CRC has narrowed down the supervisor vacancy to two candidates. She is open to any feedback or conversation on information about the two candidates. She is looking for someone who can move the agency forward, clear up the backlog, and be a team leader. She would like to make an offer before the end of the year.

Director Carter and Chair Yeary had a meeting about the Commission's participation in the MLK Day of Service. As a result, the Mayor is requesting that every Commissioner participate in the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Martin Luther King Day Parade at noon (time and placement TBD). In addition, Director Carter would like to do a series of Town Hall Forums to be aired on Baltimore City's Charm TV starting in February: 1) for outreach and to introduce the City to the Commission, 2) to assess the needs of the Baltimore community, and 3) to assist the Baltimore community in eliminating discrimination. Director Carter spoke briefly about Chair Yeary's suggestion to bring in anti-discrimination/legal scholars to lead the forums. She also suggested putting together a committee to schedule and ensure that the forums are well-planned.

Chair Yeary suggested that it is best that everyone be engaged in the framing of the topics, finding the locations, and scheduling the dates and times. There was a discussion on how to frame the types of conversations for the forums: 1) 50 years since Dr. King's assassination, 2) the Fair Housing Act, 3) the State of Civil Rights in Baltimore City, 4) the future of Civil Rights in Baltimore City, 5) Cabinet level conversations from agency leadership on their areas of responsibility, and 6) informational conversations on Civil Rights Law. The first town hall would be in late February and should be scripted and well-planned to be sure that specific questions are answered.

Commissioner Hampton-El met with the Executive Director of BNI (Robert Strupp, Esq) and he wanted to inform Director Carter that they are having a program and would like the Commission to participate. She also asked if part of January's meeting could be dedicated to planning the February Town Hall. Suggestions were to use the law school, Rev. Yeary's Church, Morgan, Coppin, BCCC in order to engage the students and faculty.

Director Carter stated that she is responsible for the MAHRA Legislative Committee as well as planning Human Rights Day in Annapolis. The date will likely be late February or early March and she is hoping that the Commission will plan to participate.

In follow-up to the backlog of cases, Director Carter is waiting to bring on the new supervisor in which case that would be the first task.

V. Open Forum

Commissioner Akwei wanted to thank Commissioners for their feedback on the press release regarding the unrest in Togo, West Africa. He expressed his concerns about the continued fight and quoted Martin Luther King, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

There was no further business.

There being no further business, the Commission voted to adjourn the Public Session at 9:09 a.m. and move into the Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond  
Secretary III