

**Office of Equity and Civil Rights  
Community Relations Commission  
Telephone Conference  
Public Session Minutes  
April 15, 2020**

Participating in the meeting were Commissioners Todd Yeary (Chair), Stephen Ruckman (phone), A. Adar Ayira (phone), and Nadine Finigan-Carr. Also present were staff: Cedric McCray (Deputy Director), Lisa Kelly (Supervisor), Danielle Burton, Lauren Jackson, Zelma Ortiz, Sandra Byrd, Carla Royal and Linda Batts. Guest: Mr. Marco K. Merrick

I. Welcome/Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:06 pm. Chair Yeary called for the Director's Report.

II. Approval of the Minutes

- A. February 19, 2020 not approved.
- B. Chair Yeary suspended the approval of the minutes until the next meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

III. Director's Report

- A. Deputy Director Cedric McCray spoke about the HUD Grant \$125,000
  - a. He asked Investigator Lauren Jackson to speak about the grant
  - b. Ms. Jackson stated that the grant will continue the Fair Housing activities
    - i. Housing webinars - pending approval
    - ii. Public hearing
      - 1. HUD analysis
        - a) Regarding barriers to public housing
        - b) Public comments are extended to April 28<sup>th</sup>
        - c) Invitation to the Commission to submit comments
      - 2. Office staff has been seeing complaints about threats of eviction
        - a) Disparate impact – Spanish speaking community
- B. Outreach
  - A. Deputy Director McCray acknowledged Commissioner Ayira for her input on the Equity team
  - B. Linda Batts (Deputy Director of Equity) acknowledged and thanked Commissioner Ayira for agreeing to work with the Equity Team.
  - C. Chair Yeary spoke about tracking zip codes and hotspots on COVID-19
    - i. Jurisdictions for CRC

- ii. Public Accommodations Law in relationship to COVID-19
  - D. Guest – Mr. Marco Merrick (Education & Outreach Associate, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights)
    - i. Mr. Merrick spoke about the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)
    - ii. Shared the work of MCCR throughout the State with regard to diversity and education trainings & workshops
      - 1. Trainings
        - a. Dimensions of diversity
        - b. Conflict resolution
        - c. Sexual orientation
        - d. Gender identity
        - e. Sexual harassment & prevention
        - f. Disability rights
        - g. Civil rights
        - h. Equity speaker series
        - i. Maryland Equity & Inclusion Leadership Program
      - 2. Advisory Councils
        - a. Created and established
        - b. Purpose: to hear the concerns of the other Maryland organizations on diversity & discrimination
    - iii. Commissioners asked questions.
- IV. Commissioners' Report and Open Forum
- A. Chair Yeary spoke about having an Equity conversation
    - i. The pandemic
    - ii. The data curve
    - iii. Limited testing
    - iv. High and at-risk neighborhoods and communities based on race and ethnicity
      - 1. Is the Office monitoring the data in vulnerable communities?
        - a. Deputy Director McCray gave an update
          - i. Calls are coming from those experiencing threats of eviction
          - ii. Testing has not been monitored
          - iii. Chair Yeary suggested reaching out to the Health Department with regard to contact tracing
      - 2. Concerns about under reporting
      - 3. Chair Yeary stated that evictions to his knowledge are not allowed

4. Commissioners discussed using social media and webinars to inform the public about the work of the Commission and to address concerns in the community
- B. Chair Yeary asked Deputy Director and Robin Drummond to make a note that it would be helpful to have a conference briefing with Commissioner Harris.
    - i. Calls on domestic violence
    - ii. Public guidance on face coverings and threats of violence, harassment and discrimination
    - iii. Deputy Director McCray will also include Mr. John Wesley
  - C. Commissioners discussed sending out reminders of how the Commission can help stop the threats of eviction, domestic violence, discrimination, etc.
    - i. Address Mayor, City Council & City Council President
    - ii. Commissioners will rely on CRC staff to come up with a bullet point list of ways the Commission can help with the dissemination of this information to the relevant parties
  - D. Chair Yeary spoke about nursing home cases of COVID-19
    - i. 170 confirmed cases at FutureCare Lochearn
    - ii. Commissioners discussed having enough testing,
    - iii. Having access to testing
    - iv. Contact tracing
  - E. What is the role of the Commission on monitoring the police department and domestic violence?
    - i. Commissioner Harrison needs to be aware of these issues
      1. the police department
      2. Disparate impact
      3. Workplace & economic issues
        - a. People are working within their homes
        - b. Families are subject to domestic violence
        - c. Employees risk losing their jobs
- V. Open Forum

- A. Next meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2020.
- B. Deputy Director McCray apologized on behalf Director Parrott as he had a double booking of his schedule and was not able to attend the meeting.

There was no further business to discuss.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:02 pm.

Note: There was no Executive Session on the record due to a lack of a quorum.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond