

Office of Civil Rights & Wage Enforcement
Community Relations Commission
Public Session Minutes
September 19, 2018

Participating in the meeting were Commissioners Rev. Todd Yeary (Chair), Adote Akwei, Stephen Ruckman, Phillip Farfel, A. Adar Ayira via (phone), and Nadine Finigan-Carr (via phone). Commissioners Karsonya Whitehead and Stephanie Maddin-Smith were absent. Also present were Acting Director Jill P. Carter, Raemond Parrott (CRC Supervisor), Gregory Logan, Danielle Crawley, and Shavey Blackwell.

I. Welcome

Chair Yeary welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 12:19 p.m.

II. Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioners Ruckman, seconded by Commissioner Farfel that the July 18, 2018 minutes be approved as written. All were in favor and the motion carried.

III. Commissioners' Report

Commissioner Ayira spoke via phone and asked to identify those in the room and on the phone. There was no report from Commissioners.

IV. Director's Report

Acting Director Carter thanked everyone for coming and for the active participation. She gave an overview of the staffing changes and staffing shortages. She stated that two offers have been extended to two candidates for CRC investigator, and OCR is in the process of hiring for a disabilities position. In addition, she spoke about the achievements under Mr. Rae Parrott's leadership. In six months the CRC fulfilled the original EEOC 40 contract requirement with a requested upward modification of 10 for a total of 50 and 5 additional contracts. Also, she stated that OCR was only 1 of 2 out of 12 in this district that completed the EEOC contract.

In addition, Ms. Carter stated that OCR has entered into a partnership with the Center for Dispute Resolution at the University of Maryland, who will provide ADR (alternative dispute resolution) services. Mr. Parrott spoke about the partnership and the advantages to having a formal mediation service in place. Chair Yeary and Mr. Parrott also mentioned that this service will include an ADR Fellowship program.

Acting Director Carter also congratulated Dr. Nadine Finigan-Carr on being sworn in as a new Commissioner. She also talked about the Civil Rights Breakfast and the positive feedback from 2017. She would like to see attendees take an interest in working with CRC beyond the breakfast.

Mr. Parrott recognized that it was Mr. Gregory Logan's last day and he spoke about his contribution to CRC. He also recognized that Ms. Danielle Crawley and Ms. Shavey Blackwell completed their probations. In addition, Mr. Parrott spoke about the partnership with CASA who will be handling part of the OCR's intake responsibilities in the Latinx community. He also talked about the law and language for employers and contractors who fall under the 15 person threshold and they are making strides toward those laborers who fall below 15 people. He stated that the legislation is in front of legislative reference and if possible, it will go to the labor committee.

Commissioner Farfel asked about the status of the case management system. Mr. Parrott stated that the system is in place, but he has not had a chance to train staff or implement it because they were trying to satisfy the contract. His plan is to have the system up and running in October.

Chair Yeary will meet with Michele about the commitments for the Breakfast. He also confirmed the start time at 8:30 a.m.

V. Open Forum

Chair Yeary asked about the draft of the annual report. Mr. Parrott stated that he is planning to the report for the beginning of 2019.

Commissioner Ruckman asked about any CRC needs regarding the data trend analysis. Mr. Parrott stated that he has the raw data which has not been shared. However, he plans to examine the data and to check with the law department on whether the information can be revealed. In addition, he plans to meet with Mr. Moses Pounds in October or November when the new contract year begins.

Chair Yeary asked Mr. Parrott to rank the 6 agencies with the top number of issues and complaints within the data. Mr. Parrott stated that these cases have been filed preceding 10 years against the 6 largest city agencies. He stated that police and fire are at the top; the health department ranks number four; and the housing department is difficult to rank at this time. However, Mr. Parrott suggested that the Commission extends an invitation to Chief Ford of the fire department to come in October.

Chair Yeary stated that it would be best to meet with each department head: 1) individually, and 2) then with the Board. In addition, Mr. Parrott stated that initially the Commission had discussed drafting a letter to go out to each agency but it has not been drafted.

Commissioner Akwei said that the feedback on his coloring books for Civil Rights Day was very good and that the OCR was his biggest client. He thanked the office for their support.

There was no further business to discuss.

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There being no further business, it was moved and seconded by Commissioners Ayira and Finigan-Carr that the CRC Public Session be adjourned and to move into the Executive Session. All were in favor and Chair Yeary closed the Public Session at 12:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond

Secretary III