

**Office of Civil Rights
Wage Commission Minutes
March 7, 2019**

Participating in the meeting were Commissioners Sheryl R. Wood (Chair), Mark McLaurin, John Barber, Caryn York and Ally Amerson (by phone). Also participating in the meeting were Director Darnell Ingram, Deputy Director Cedric McCray, Larry Ennels (Compliance Officer II), and Andrea Williams (Compliance Officer II). The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:19 PM.

I. Welcome

Chair Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 3:19 PM.

II. Director's Report

Director Ingram noted that the "Can We Talk" event was rescheduled for the March 14th, due to the inclement weather and encouraged the commissioners to attend. Director Ingram noted that on March 27th the Mayor's Office would be holding a "Face Time with Primes" event at the Vollmer Center. He noted that on April 3rd, 2019 there would be a "Weigh in On Wage" event at the Carpenter's Union Hall on Patapsco Avenue to discuss classifications, and noted that Commissioners would be invited to speak. He noted that they were also planning an Equity Outreach event to create conversations on equity and entrepreneurship.

He stated that wage investigators had completed 9 site visits, 11 pre bid meetings, more preventative, proactive activities since the last meeting. He noted that there were two pending cases of wage theft. He stated that they had hired two payrolls specialists to assist with processing payrolls. He noted that they were looking for creative ways to streamline the process, including the potential use of Google forms to submit payrolls.

He noted that they had added two wage investigator positions, and stated that they had asked the Department of Finance for five, but had only received two. He requested that commissioners refer anyone they know who might have wage experience and be a good fit. He noted that the revenue from the fines and restitution they were able to collect must justify their salaries.

Chair Wood expressed concern about the fact that the Wage Commission had been promised two positions previously, and the administration had rescinded the offer.

Director Ingram noted that investigators had also held meetings with contractors to explain late payrolls process, as well as meetings with the Department of Labor for training and additional experience.

Director Ingram provided an update to Commissioners about several pieces of legislation that were up for review regarding Wages in Maryland, including SB300/HB524, SB15, SB40, SB329/HB972, and SB 959/HB1333.

John Barber asked if there were still plans for the master database software for all City projects. Director Ingram stated that he would love to have the software, but was not sure where they were in the process, and were currently only able to review Citibuy for insight into which contractors were working on City projects.

Caryn York asked if there was anything that the Commissioners could do to support the process of getting the necessary software to track all wage contracts. Sharon Snyder noted that they could review Board of Estimates bids, but they were only using paper, and did not have a computerized system to track bids, although they were posting the minutes of their meetings online. John Barber noted that the Wage Commission should be informed of what jobs were taking place in the City. Director Ingram noted that it was a moving target and they would continue brainstorming to solve it. Larry Ennels stated that once they had some administrative help, that person could attend BOE meetings to review and report back. Director Ingram stated that he would talk to Solicitor Davis.

Chair Wood asked if the Wage Commission would have summer interns, and Director Ingram noted that they would have a Youthworks intern, and another intern starting the following day from University of Baltimore. He noted that they would continue to seek interns.

Mark McLaurin felt that the Wage Commission should not have unpaid internships at the Office of Civil Rights, as it locks people out of internships who cannot afford to work without pay. Ally Amerson noted that 99% of law students have unpaid internships, and first year students understand. Caryn York felt that this depended on their placement, but that overall it would not send a good message if interns for the Wage Commission are not provided with a stipend. Director Ingram noted that he eventually wanted to move the program to a legal clinic for class credit, but that most internship programs were unpaid. Caryn York felt that they should change the narrative.

III. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of December 6, 2018 Minutes

Mark McLaurin moved to approve the minutes, John Barber seconded, and all were in favor. The minutes were approved as written.

b. Approval of January 3, 2019 Minutes

Mark McLaurin moved to approve the minutes, John Barber seconded, and all were in favor. The minutes were approved as written.

c. Approval of February 7, 2019 Minutes

Mark McLaurin moved to approve the minutes, John Barber seconded, and all were in favor. The minutes were approved as written.

IV. Items for Discussion

a. Review of Pending Decision

Commissioners reviewed and discussed the decision letter for a decision pending release.

b. Update on Rules and Regulations

Director Ingram stated that the new intern would be working on rules and regulations. Commissioners and staff discussed rules and regulations.

V. Closing

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Muth
Special Assistant to the Wage Commission