

# **MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2013**

**A meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, September 27, 2013 in the agency conference room. Present at the meeting were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Iraida Williams, Nancy Kolman Ventrone and Rochelle Bates Lee. Commissioners Alberto Aponte Cardona, Alton W. Wiley, Jr., and Camille Vella-Wilkinson were not present. The meeting commenced at 9:52 a.m.**

**A motion to approve the minutes of August 30, 2013 was made by Commissioner Williams. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ventrone and carried.**

## **Status Report of Michael D. Évora, Executive Director**

**A written report was handed out. All new information is in bold print.**

**Case Production Report – Attached**

**Aged Case Report – No aged cases to report.**

**Outreach Report – Attached**

## **STATUS REPORT – COMMISSIONERS**

**GENERAL STATUS:** The Commissioners received in-house training on the newly-enacted “ban the box” law which amends the Fair Employment Practices Act effective January 1, 2014. The Commissioners are still waiting on information on Commissioner re-appointments. Legal Counsel Hiatt reported that the Administrative Hearing Assessment was submitted to the Department of Administration.

Commissioner Rochelle Lee arrived at 10:20 am.

**OUTREACH:** Commissioner Williams reported that the East Providence Police Department will make changes regarding their Self Defense courses to accommodate hearing-impaired individuals who would like to take the class.

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**STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL by Cynthia Hiatt**

**LITIGATION: Report Attached. Counsel and the Commissioners discussed pending litigation in which the Commission has a role.**

**LEGISLATION: No report at this time.**

**REGULATIONS: Legal Counsel Gaschen reported on the progress on the previously approved proposed changes to the housing regulations.**

**STATUS OF HEARING CASES/HEARING SCHEDULE: Discussed**

**The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next regular meeting will be on  
Friday, October 18, 2013 at 9:30 a.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Michael D. Évora  
Executive Director**

**Notes taken by B. Ross**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S**  
**REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS**  
**27 September 2013**

**I. BUDGET**

**S = State/General Revenue; F = Federal (EEOC/HUD); T = Total**

	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
	<b>(Recomm.)</b>	<b>(Enacted)</b>	<b>(Rev.Req.)</b>	<b>(Unconstr.)</b>	<b>(Constr.)</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>1,150,785</b>	<b>1,150,785</b>	<b>1,150,785</b>	<b>1,184,229</b>	<b>1,095,286</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>308,638</b>	<b>308,638</b>	<b>318,987</b>	<b>303,788</b>	<b>318,035</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>1,459,423</b>	<b>1,459,423</b>	<b>1,469,772</b>	<b>1,488,017</b>	<b>1,413,321</b>

**The Commission's FY 14 (Revised) and FY 15 (Proposed) Budgets were submitted to the Governor on September 11. The submission included a Budget Impact Statement detailing the consequences to be realized should the seven percent general revenue decrease requested of all state agencies be implemented for the Commission [see Constrained Budget above].**

**II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS**

**EEOC – For federal FY 2012 (beginning October 1, 2011), according to**

**EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we closed 237 co-filed cases.**

**Our contract with EEOC for FY 2012 was for 235 cases. For federal FY 2013 (beginning October 1, 2012), we have closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13, received on May 13, is for 199 cases. EEOC Headquarters has explained that all FEPA contracts were unilaterally reduced by 16% this year. Two factors are cited for this reduction: 1) EEOC's FY13 budget started at 91%; 2) the federal sequestration caused another 7% reduction in EEOC funding. On August 1, I requested an upward modification of ten cases, which would bring our contract to 209 cases; the request was not approved by EEOC HQ due to EEOC funding. As of August 30, we met/exceeded our contract.**

**HUD – For FY12, according to HUD Project Director Angela Lovegrove, we took in 40 new housing charges, 37 of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we processed 45 housing charges, 43 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY13 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013), we took in 51 new housing charges, all of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we processed 50 cases, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have taken in 11 new housing charges, ten of which are co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed nine cases, all of which were co-filed with HUD.**

### **III. PERSONNEL**

**No new information.**

**IV. OUTREACH – Refer to attached report.**

## **V. GENERAL STATUS**

**•Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet monthly with individual investigative staff members to monitor case production.**

**•Case Closures – Refer to attached report.**

**We ended FY 2012 slightly behind the prior fiscal year's case processing rate. In FY 2011, we processed 422 cases; in FY 2012, we processed 411 cases (approx. 3.5% decrease). For FY13, we processed 389 cases (approx. 5% decrease from FY12). For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have processed 62 cases (compare to 65 cases in this same time period in FY13).**

**•Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission's inventory for federal fiscal year 2013 (beginning October 1, 2012).**

**•Overall Case Inventory – The Commission had over 1000 cases in its inventory at the end of FY 1998. We ended FY11 with 323 cases in inventory, FY12 with 255 cases, and FY13 with 265 cases. As of 9/19/13, we had a total of 296 cases in inventory; 33 of these cases were pending assignment.**

**&#9679;Performance Management Initiative – On July 16, I met with the Governor’s Performance Management Team to discuss the Commission’s agreed-upon performance goals. The Team noted that the Commission is one of the only state agencies that consistently complies with the Performance Management Directive in a complete/timely manner. These meetings will occur quarterly.**

**&#9679;HUD Review – From Monday-Wednesday, August 26-28, John Geiss, an Equal Opportunity Specialist with HUD/Boston, conducted an on-site review/evaluation of the Commission’s fair housing unit’s work during FY13 to assess the Commission’s compliance with HUD’s rules and regulations. A detailed report of Mr. Geiss’ conclusions will be prepared and submitted to the Commission for review/response.**

**&#9679;Russian Delegation – On September 20 at 11 a.m., the Commission welcomed a small delegation of mid- to high-level Russian government officials to the office as part of the Congressional Open World Program. Members of the Scituate Rotary Club hosted the delegation. Cynthia Hiatt and I presented an overview of the agency, its mission and operations, and answered questions.**

**&#9679;Racial Profiling Prevention – Beginning on September 4, I have been meeting bi-weekly with a group of law enforcement and**

**community representatives in an effort to review the Comprehensive Racial Profiling Prevention Act (tentatively renamed the Comprehensive Community-Police Relationship Act). Meetings will occur through the end of December with the goal of identifying language for a 2014 bill on which both sides can agree.**

**&#9679;"Ban the Box" law – please refer to the attached summary**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Michael D. Évora**

**Executive Director**

**Attachments**