

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

**FEBRUARY 28, 2014**

**An Informational meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, February 28, 2014. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Camille Vella-Wilkinson and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Iraida Williams, Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq., Nancy Kolman Ventrone and Alton W. Wiley, Jr., Esq. The meeting commenced at 10:30 a.m.**

**The Executive Director Michael D. Evora approved the minutes of January 17, 2014 on February 19, 2014. There were no changes to the minutes at this meeting.**

## **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 Executive Director and Counsel reported that the Governor's office called to see which Commissioners would like to be reappointed. The Annual Labor and Employment Conference at Alton Jones is being held on April 25, 2014, Commissioners Vella-Wilkinson and Lee would like to attend.

**Commissioner Meeting -2- February 28, 2014**

**OUTREACH:** Commissioner Lee reported that she took part in a panel presentation for Black History Month. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson reported that she is working with the City of Warwick to increase walkability on the sidewalks for seniors and those with disabilities. She is also working with the West Bay Collaborative to help the elderly, homeless and provide educational assistance. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson also reported that the City of Warwick

**has begun sexual harassment training.**

**She is also working with Warwick AARP to determine the needs/concerns of its members.**

**STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL: by Cynthia M. Hiatt and Francis Gaschen**

**Attorney Gaschen reported that on April 7, 2014 the Commission is presenting a Fair Housing Training on Predatory Lending in Newport at the Hyatt Hotel. This is an all day presentation and is open to the public free of charge.**

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

**LEGISLATION: Legislation proposed by the Commission and legislation relating to the Commission and civil rights.**

**The Commissioners and Legal Counsels discussed the question of whether to support a Constitutional Convention.**

**REGULATIONS: No Discussion at this time.**

**DECISIONS: No Discussion at this time.**

**Commissioner Meeting -3- February 28, 2014**

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

**The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next regular meeting will be on**

**Friday, March 28, 2014.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Michael D. Évora**  
**Executive Director**

**Notes taken by B. Ross**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S**  
**REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS**  
**28 February 2014**

**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>FY 2015</b>
	<b>(Enacted)</b>	<b>(Rev.Req.)</b>	<b>(Gov. Rec.)</b>	<b>(Unconstr.)</b>	<b>(Constr.)</b>	<b>(Recomm.)</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>1,150,785</b>	<b>1,150,785</b>	<b>1,146,066</b>	<b>1,184,229</b>	<b>1,095,286</b>	<b>1,193,083</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>308,638</b>	<b>318,987</b>	<b>317,367</b>	<b>303,788</b>	<b>318,035</b>	<b>287,096</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>1,459,423</b>	<b>1,469,772</b>	<b>1,463,433</b>	<b>1,488,017</b>	<b>1,413,321</b>	<b>1,480,179</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].**

**The Governor has submitted his formal recommendation in respect to the Commission's FY 2014 budget, as noted above. In addition, he has submitted an FY 2015 recommended budget to the General Assembly. That budget, noted above, would fund the Commission at an unconstrained level for FY 2015 and would provide funding for the Commission's current staffing of 14.5 FTEs.**

**I submitted the Commission's FY 2014 Second Quarter Report to the state Budget Office on January 17. The Commission projected a slight surplus (\$4,719) in General Revenue and a slight deficit (\$8,729) in Federal Revenue, for an overall projected deficit at the close of FY 2014 of \$4,010.**

**The Commission's FY 14 and 15 budgets will be heard by the House Finance Committee on March 5.**

## **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 closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13 was for 199 cases. For federal FY14 (beginning October 1, 2013), we have closed 77 co-filed cases; our contract is as yet unknown.**

**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 25 new housing charges, 24 of which are co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed 30 cases, 29 of which were co-filed with HUD (three of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations).**

**HUD APPROVES TWO PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS – The Commission recently was advised that HUD approved our applications for Partnership Funds for two fair housing projects. The first grant, for approximately \$56,000, is for a targeted outreach (including development of training/education materials) to the LGBT community and victims of domestic violence. The second grant, for \$2,650.00, will be used to plan and conduct a seminar on mortgage lending discrimination and predatory lending in the month of April 2014; the event will be open to the public with invitations to groups including the RI Association of Realtors and local financial institutions. I have received and signed the formal contract amendment from HUD, thereby allowing the Commission to access funds to begin implementation of these projects.**

### **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 206 cases (compare to 215 cases in this same time period in FY13).**

**•Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission's inventory for federal fiscal year 2014 (beginning October 1, 2013).**

**•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 2/27/14, we had a total of 304 cases in inventory; 47 of these cases were pending assignment.**

**&#9679;Performance Management Initiative – On July 16, 2013, 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. The next scheduled meeting with the Performance Management Team is March 11, 2014 at the Dept. of Administration.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Michael D. Évora**

**Executive Director**

**Attachments**