

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

**June 27, 2014**

**A regular meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, June 27, 2014. Present at the meeting were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Camille Vella-Wilkinson, T. Kevin Olasanoye, Esq., Angelyne E. Cooper, Esq. and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioners Iraida Williams and Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq. The meeting commenced at 9:45 a.m.**

**Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson moved to approve the minutes of May 30, 2014, Commissioner Cooper seconded and the motion carried.**

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

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

**A copy of the “Know Your Rights” pamphlet was circulated. This new pamphlet, developed with funding from a HUD grant, discusses lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender fair housing rights.**

**Case Production Report – Attached**

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

**Outreach Report – Attached**

## **STATUS REPORT – COMMISSIONERS**

**OUTREACH:** Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson reported that Governor Chafee signed legislation to recognize Blue Star Parents Day on the third Sunday of May. She also informed the Commission that the West Bay

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**CAP and Warwick AARP will be sponsoring training on housing and lending issues in FY 15.**

**APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS:** The Executive Director reported that the Senate gave advice and consent to the appointments of Commissioners Olasanoye and Cooper and the reappointments of Commissioners Susa, Vella-Wilkinson, Williams,

**Aponte Cardona and Lee.**

**GENERAL STATUS:** The Commissioners discussed honoring former Commissioners Nancy Kolman Ventrone and Alton W. Wiley, Jr., Esq. for their service to the Commission. The Commission will plan a luncheon in honor of them at the Commission for August.

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

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

**LEGISLATION:** Counsel and the Commissioners reviewed legislation relating to the Commission and civil rights.

At 11:00 a.m., Commissioner Lee entered the meeting and Commissioner Olasanoye left the meeting.

**BFOQ REQUEST:** Commission Counsel discussed the BFOQ hearing which is scheduled for July 30, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. in the agency's Hearing Room.

At 11:10 a.m., Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson left the meeting.

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**HEARING SCHEDULE/STATUS OF HEARING CASES: Commission Counsel discussed with the Commissioners the hearing schedule and status of hearing cases.**

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

**The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m. The next special meeting of the Commission is July 30, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Michael D. Évora  
Executive Director**

**Notes taken by C. Hiatt**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS  
27 June 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>(Gov. Rec.)</b>	<b>(Rev.)</b>	<b>(Unconstr.)</b>	<b>(Constr.)</b>	
<b>(Recomm.)</b>	<b>(Enacted)</b>				
<b>S 1,150,785</b>	<b>1,146,066</b>	<b>1,146,066</b>	<b>1,184,229</b>	<b>1,095,286</b>	
<b>1,193,083</b>	<b>1,193,083</b>				
<b>F 308,638</b>	<b>317,367</b>	<b>317,367</b>	<b>303,788</b>	<b>318,035</b>	<b>287,096</b>
					<b>287,096</b>
<b>T 1,459,423</b>	<b>1,463,433</b>	<b>1,463,433</b>	<b>1,488,017</b>	<b>1,413,321</b>	
<b>1,480,179</b>	<b>1,480,179</b>				

**The Commission's FY14 (Revised) and FY15 (Proposed) Budgets were submitted to the Governor on September 11, 2013. The submission included a Budget Impact Statement detailing the impact should the seven percent general revenue decrease requested of all state agencies be implemented for the Commission [see Constrained Budget above].**

**The Governor submitted his formal recommendation in respect to the**

**Commission's FY14 Revised budget, and his FY15 recommended budget to the General Assembly. The FY15 budget, noted above, would fund the Commission at an unconstrained level and would provide funding for the Commission's current staffing of 14.5 FTEs.**

**The Commission's FY14 and FY15 budgets were heard by the House Finance Subcommittee on General Government on March 5. I presented an overview of the Commission's accomplishments in FY13. Chairperson Rep. Ferri congratulated the Commission on its receipt of the two HUD Partnership Grants, and he and Rep. Valencia commended the Commission on its success in decreasing both the case backlog and the time it takes to process cases.**

**On March 10, Rep. Ferri and Nobel Judy, House Fiscal Analyst, toured the Commission's facility.**

**I submitted the Commission's FY14 Third Quarter Report to the Budget Office on April 16. The Commission projected a slight surplus (\$4,719) in General Revenue and a slight deficit (\$11,520) in Federal Revenue, for an overall projected deficit at the close of FY 2014 of \$6,801.**

**On June 13, the House passed a budget which included funding for the Commission consistent with the Governor's recommendations for FY14 and FY15 (see above). The Senate passed the budget on June 16 and it was signed by the Governor on June 19.**

## **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 140 co-filed cases. Our contract for FY14 is for 244 cases; we must close an additional 104 cases by September 30 to meet 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 45 new housing charges, 43 of which are co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed 46 cases, 45 of which were co-filed with HUD (three of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations).**

**UPDATE ON HUD PARTNERSHIP GRANTS – 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. On March 17, former Investigator Susan Pracht began a nine-month position as Community Liaison Specialist overseeing the implementation of the LGBT/Domestic**

**Violence grant.**

**The second grant, for \$2,650.00, was used to plan and conduct a seminar on mortgage discrimination and predatory lending on April 7 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Newport; the event was attended by 32 individuals from RI and MA, including several representatives from HUD.**

### **III. PERSONNEL**

**No new information.**

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

### **V. GENERAL STATUS**

**&#9679;Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet monthly with individual investigative staff members to monitor case production.**

**&#9679;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 FY 13, we processed 389 cases (approx. 5% decrease from FY 12). For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have processed 327 cases (compare to 344 cases in this same time period in FY13).**

**&#9679;Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission’s inventory for federal FY 2014 (beginning October 1, 2013).**

**&#9679;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 6/26/14, we had a total of 312 cases in inventory; 55 of these cases were pending assignment.**

**&#9679;Performance Management Initiative – The Governor’s Performance Management Team has noted that the Commission is one of the only state agencies that consistently complies with the Performance Management Directive in a complete/timely manner.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Michael D. Évora**

**Executive Director**

**Attachments**