

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

June 26, 2015

A regular meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, June 26, 2015. Present at the meeting were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Camille Vella-Wilkinson, Iraida Williams, and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioners Angelyne E. Cooper, Esq. and Tolulope Kevin Olasanoye, Esq. and Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq. The meeting commenced at 12:20 p.m.

Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson moved to approve the minutes of May 29, 2015. Commissioner Cooper seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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

OUTREACH: Commissioner Williams reported that she and her daughter was awarded the lifetime achievement award from the Cochlear America Organization which her family is a part of. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson reported that Warwick is holding a National Night Out Festival on August 4, 2015 regarding public safety at Oakland Beach. This event is open and free to the public.

Commissioner Meeting -2-

June 26, 2015

GENERAL STATUS: Dr. Susa, has informed the Commission that he will resign as the Chairperson of the Commission. He drafted a letter to the Governor requesting that Camille Vella-Wilkinson will be named chair.

STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL: by Francis Gaschen.

LITIGATION: Counsel and the Commissioners reviewed pending

litigation in which the Commission has a role. Report attached.

LEGISLATION: Legal Counsel reported on pending bills relating to civil rights and the bills were discussed.

HEARING SCHEDULE/STATUS OF HEARING CASES: Commission Counsel discussed with the Commissioners the hearing schedule.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m. There will be no meeting in July. The next regular meeting of the Commission is August 28, 2015 at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Michael D. ´Evora
Executive Director**

Notes taken by B. Ross

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS
26 JUNE 2015**

I. BUDGET

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

	FY 2015	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2016	FY 2016
	(Revised)	(Final)	(Req.)	(Gov. Rec.)	(Passed)
S	1,221,763	1,231,773	1,231,273	1,252,174	1,252,174
F	310,692	310,692	319,355	295,386	295,836
T	1,532,455	1,542,465	1,550,628	1,548,010	1,548,010

The House Finance Subcommittee on General Government held a hearing on the Commission's FY15 (Revised) and FY16 (Recommended) budget proposals, Cynthia Hiatt attended the hearing in my absence, gave a brief overview of the Commission's accomplishments in FY14, and answered questions from Committee members.

Our Budget Analyst has advised that the State Budget Office will be sending an amendment to our FY15 budget to the House and Senate for consideration. The amendment would add \$10,010 to our general revenue in order to pay a recently-received bill from our landlord for our proportional share of real estate tax increases from 2011 to 2015. The amendment was approved and the process has begun to obtain a purchase order to pay the back taxes.

The House and Senate have passed the state's FY16 (and FY15 Final) budgets. The particulars for the Commission are highlighted above.

II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS

EEOC – For federal FY12 (ending September 30, 2012), according to EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we closed 237 co-filed cases.

Our contract with EEOC for FY12 was for 235 cases. For federal FY13 (ending September 30, 2013), we closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13 was for 199 cases. For federal FY14 (ending September 30, 2014), we closed 232 co-filed cases. Our modified contract for FY14 was for 230 cases. For federal FY15 (beginning October 1, 2014), we have closed 135 co-filed cases. Our contract for federal FY 15 is for 206 cases; EEOC has increased the per-case reimbursement rate from \$650 to \$700.

HUD – For FY13, we took in 51 new housing charges, all of which were co-filed with HUD, and we processed 50 cases, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY14, we took in 49 new housing charges, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD, and we processed 51 cases, 50 of which were co-filed with HUD (three of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations). For FY15 (beginning July 1, 2014), we have taken in 101 new housing charges, 70 of which are (or are expected to be) co-filed with HUD. (28 were not eligible for co-filing and three were deferred to HUD for investigation.) Within this same time period, we have processed 81 cases, 56 of which were co-filed with HUD; three

of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations.

HUD PARTNERSHIP GRANTS – Because the LGBT/Domestic Violence Victims projects came in under budget, HUD agreed to permit us to use leftover grant funds to produce a general fair housing brochure, poster and Power Point presentation for use in outreaches going forward, and to conduct five fair housing outreaches throughout the state. A general fair housing poster and brochure have been drafted and approved by HUD. We now await word on the pending “military status” amendment to the state fair housing law before proceeding with translation, printing and distribution. The military status bills have passed the House and Senate and should shortly be transmitted to the Governor. Pending her approval, the next phase of the project will begin.

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.

In FY11, we processed 422 cases; in FY12, 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 processed 376 cases (decrease of approx. 3% from FY13). For FY15 (beginning July 1, 2014), we have processed 367 cases (compare to 327 cases in this same time period in FY14).

●Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission’s inventory for federal FY15 (beginning October 1, 2014).

●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, FY13 with 265 cases, and FY14 with 290 cases. As of 6/18/15, we had a total of 342 cases in inventory; 30 of these cases were pending assignment.

●HUD Onsite/Performance Assessment – HUD conducted an onsite visit on March 16 as part of its annual performance assessment process. During the course of the on-site, HUD officials conducted staff interviews and reviewed case files. We now await HUD’s report/conclusions.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Évora

Executive Director

Attachments