

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights  
Commission Meeting  
June 11, 2019 – 10am  
MINUTES**

**Commissioners Present:** Roberto N. Allen, Esq, Vice Chairperson; Eileen M. Levitt, SPHR, SHRM-SCP; Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA

**Commissioners Present by Phone:** Shawn M. Wright, Esq.; Rabbi Binyamin Marwick

**Management Present:** Alvin O. Gillard, Executive Director; Cleveland L. Horton II, Deputy Director; Nicolette Young, Assistant Director; Glendora C. Hughes, General Counsel

**Staff Present:** S. Spencer Dove, Executive Associate; Tara Taylor, Director of Education & Outreach

**Meeting called to order at 10:06 a.m.**

**Call to Order/Chairperson's Report**

Vice Chairperson introduced his guest Wilfredo Allen, who is an intern in his office. General Counsel introduced Spencer Yaffe, a Law Clerk with her office for the summer.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve May 2019 minutes made by Commissioner Rabbi Binyamin Marwick, seconded by Commissioner Eileen M. Levitt; minutes approved without opposition.

**Executive Director's Report**

- Staff continue outreach efforts in Western Maryland to make the region aware of MCCR's Western Maryland Advisory Council program and recruit applicants. Currently there are 18 applications submitted. Deadline has been extended to permit the agency to better advertise the program. Thank you to the Commissioners for all of their support thus far.
- MCCR was very pleased with the May 21 Medical Cannabis Symposium. The information shared during the program was incredible, and the registrants have shared incredibly positive feedback throughout and after the program. General Counsel will discuss this more during her report.
- The end of the contract year with the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development is coming to a close. Deputy Director will discuss more during his report. The agency overall is doing very well and hitting targets with respect to case processing and closures.
- Encourage the Commissioners to review the written reports, especially the Education & Outreach report which has a number of dates and events listed that may be of particular interest to the Commissioners. For example, there are many Pride events throughout Maryland across both June and July. If any Commissioner wants to join the staff at these events, then please let Ms. Tara Taylor know so we can coordinate.

### **Deputy Director's Report**

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- Currently recruiting to fill one vacant contractual position in the Investigative Unit, and two vacancies in the Intake Unit.
- The staff continue performing strong with respect to case processing and closures.

### **Assistant Director's Report**

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- The agency will end the year “in the black”, to which there was applause by the Commissioners.
- Currently recruiting for the contractual Civil Rights Officer II position.
- Agency has completed its audit from the Office of Legislative Audits and the agency is looking forward to receiving its findings sometime during the summer months.

### **Education & Outreach Report**

- MCCR has seen a lot of traction over the last couple of weeks drumming up interest and applications
- July 15 is the deadline to apply for the WMAC.
- Weekly email blasts and social media posts are going out – please feel free to forward them to your networks.
- Personal invitations to apply have been successful in getting applicants.
- A committee of 3 Commissioners and 2 Staff will review the applications electronically for formal review and discussion at the end of July. The goal is to have the applicants selected and nominees presented to the Commissioners for their review and final appointment at the September Commission meeting. After appointment, staff will conduct on-boarding and the first WMAC meeting will be November, 2019.
- If Commissioners know anyone, they can forward that information to Ms. Taylor and she will send the WMAC information to the individual.
- June is Pride month. MCCR is reaching out to many of the newer Pride festivals happening this year (Annapolis, Howard County, Hagerstown) to have a presence.
- Summer is the time for fairs and festivals – if you know anything going on, please forward the information and MCCR will look into having a presence.
- In partnership with Maryland Nonprofits, the Equity Speaker Series continues with sold out crowds. There are a few more events during the year – all of these items are in the report calendar.
- Information to come on a partnership with the JCC for professional development.

### **General Counsel's Report**

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- Discussed many of the highlights from the Medical Cannabis Symposium. The slides from the expert presentations and the recorded video from the event are available at <https://mccr.maryland.gov/Pages/Education-Outreach.aspx>.

- Mr. Yaffe introduced himself to the Commission. He is a first year law student at the University of Maryland. He is from Philadelphia. Family helped to start the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, and he is following in the family tradition.

### **Old Business**

- None.

### **New Business**

- Mr. Wilfredo Allen introduced himself to the Commissioners.
- Vice Chairperson suggested having a meeting in Cambridge (either monthly Commission meeting or the Commission Retreat) to also visit the new Harriet Tubman mural. Staff will look into availability for September 13.
- Commissioner Levitt volunteered to be the third Commissioner to serve on the Western Maryland Advisory Council Application Review Panel.

### **Adjournment at 11:00 a.m.**

Made by Commissioner McKnight Smith, seconded by Commissioner Marwick, meeting adjourned.