

State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Commission Meeting
November 12, 2019 – 10am
MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Allison U. Dichoso, Esq.; Eileen M. Levitt; Roberto N. Allen, Esq., Vice Chairperson

Commissioners Present by Phone: Gary C. Norman, Esq.; Shawn M. Wright, Esq.; Gina McKnight-Smith, Pharm D, MBA

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

Staff Present: S. Spencer Dove, Executive Associate

Meeting called to order at 10:04am.

- Motion to approved October, 2020, minutes made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner McKnight-Smith; motion carries unanimously.

Chairperson's Report

- Chairperson took a moment to reflect and recognize the service and sacrifice of our first responders and veterans.
- Chairperson shared that he was invited to be a part of the Public Policy Conflict Resolution C.L.E. and program.
- Chairperson will follow-up with Executive Director and Commissioners regarding the potential hiring of a consultant to build the next MCCR Strategic Plan.
- Staff Winterfest is coming in December. Date will be shared with Commissioners.
- January 2020 Commission Meeting will meet at the Library for the Blind.

Executive Director's Report

- Staff met with the Western Maryland Advisory Council on November 5 in Hagerstown, Maryland. Staff reviewed with the WMAC the procedures and structure of the advisory council. Also fielded a number of potential priority issues in a group discussion. Staff working with WMAC to schedule a conference call in the coming weeks to follow-up and identify the top priorities of the WMAC, as well as schedule the first quarterly meeting in the beginning of 2020.
- Staff continues working on the biennial Gala Celebration. The date of the gala is Saturday, April 25, 2020 beginning at 6:00pm, and it will be held at the Live! Ballroom in Hanover, Maryland. Theme for the Gala is "Her Story: Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Leadership", coinciding the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. Will also build in recognition of the ADA's 30th anniversary. Looking to build in a group of honorees into the program – Commissioner recommendations would be helpful. Save-the-Date will be going out before Thanksgiving. Goal is to have 500 attendees at the 2020 Gala.
- Staff have identified funding to bring in an outside facilitator to assist MCCR with the Strategic Plan process. Executive Director request Chairperson to determine if they want

to form a committee to get the process started, or another approach. Commissioner Wright does have a potential point-of-contact for the facilitator.

- Staff working to fulfill the data request from the Vice Chairperson made at last month's meeting.
- Staff have been in communication with Delegate Peña-Melnyk to schedule a date for the Commissioner Reception during the 2020 Legislative Session.
- MAHRA's annual Human Rights Day in Annapolis is scheduled for Friday, February 21, 2020.

Deputy Director's Report

- Reviewed submitted written report
- Correction to the Overview Report – total closures says 0, but October total closures should be 171. Year-to-Date closures updates to 278. Staff will circulate the corrections by email.

Assistant Director's Report

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- 3 positions are currently vacant. Interviews are being conducted at this time. Hope to have staff on board by the first of the year.
- MCCR's FY2020 budget request is being reviewed by the Department of Budget & Management. MCCR anticipates learning about the Governor's allowance at the beginning of next year.
- The Department of Legislative Services is looking to alter their budget hearing process so all smaller state agencies (including MCCR) will go from testifying once every 2 years to every year.

General Counsel's Report

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- *McKinley v. Piper* – still pursuing Respondent to obtain judgment against him.
- *Koch vs. MCCR* – his complaint was dismissed by Circuit Court for Montgomery County. Currently in period for parties to file an appeal.
- *Falls Homeowners vs. MCCR* – hearing on motion to dismiss happened and motion was denied. Court requested additional information regarding the status of the case.
- MCCR has filed a civil action in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County for a fair housing violation.
- Met with Delegate Shelly Hettleman, who was the chief sponsor for the sexual harassment training statute. Shared with the Delegate the current progress on the initiative, as well as identify the challenges being faced by MCCR.
- Met with Delegate Bonnie Cullison to share agency concerns about expanding MCCR's jurisdiction to include investigating claims of discrimination with respect to the delivery of health care. MCCR currently can receive complaints regarding health care access for protected classes, and MCCR has taken the position that the bill's provisions unifying the protected classes with those in Title 20 is acceptable. Also discussed with Delegate Cullison about her sponsorship of the public accommodations bill in the 2020 Legislative Session.

Education & Outreach Report

- Please reference highlights and dates in submitted written report. Education & Outreach Associates are in training today.
- Invitations will be circulated announcing the MEILP graduation.

Meeting adjourned 10:56am.