

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights**  
**Commission Meeting**  
**March 10, 2020 – 10am**  
**MINUTES**

**Commissioners Present:** Gary C. Norman, Esq., Chairperson; Eileen M. Levitt

**Commissioners Present by Phone:** Roberto Allen, Esq., Vice Chairperson; Allison U. Dichoso, Esq.; Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, 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 10:15am**

- Motion to approve January, 2020, made by Commissioner Levitt, seconded by Commissioner Dichoso; motion carries unanimously.
- Motion to approve February, 2020, minutes, made by Commissioner Levitt, seconded by Commissioner McKnight-Smith; motion carries unanimously.

**Chairperson's Report**

- Had a meeting with the Maryland Truth & Reconciliation Commission yesterday. The Commission continues to do their work, setting hearing and meeting dates and supporting a bill to extend the sunset on the Commission.
- Last week was World Book Day.

**Executive Director's Report**

- Thank you to the Assistant Director and Staff for all of their work in preparing the agency for the budget hearings before the General Assembly in February. At both hearings MCCR concurred with the Governor's Allowance. There were some questions from the members of each committee, and the overall hearings went well. In the FY2021 budget, MCCR received permission to hire an additional contractual employee.
- MCCR continues to plan for the Biennial Gala Celebration on April 25, 2020. Agency is looking at contingencies on contracts (venue, vendors, speaker, etc.) in the event that the coronavirus impacts MCCR's ability to hold the event. Staff will keep the Commissioners apprised of any developments over the next two weeks.
- Staff is meeting this afternoon to review the State's pandemic policy and the utilization of teleworking as a tool to reduce staff exposure to the virus.

**Deputy Director's Report**

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- Leadership continues to look at ways to address increased caseloads per investigator. Compared to other states, MCCR investigators are handling approximately double the cases during the year. This is directly linked to turnover issues at the agency over the previous years.
- Served as Chair for the Regional Stakeholder Group studying impediments to fair housing. Draft report was issued two weeks ago, and it was officially released last week.

for a 30-day comment period. Commissioners are invited to review the report and submit any comments to the Deputy Director who will make sure they are reviewed.

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

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- Completed the recruitment for the Office Secretary position in the Intake Unit.

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

- Reviewed submitted written report.
- Provided a brief update on bills being tracked and supported by MCCR. Of particular note, the bill adding "source of income" as a protected class in housing is being debated for final passage by the House of Delegates. Bill crossover day is March 16, so expect a lot of bills to receive votes in the coming days.

#### **Old Business**

- Chair plans to have guidelines, including the election process, to Commissioners soon for review.
- Chair urges the Commissioners to continue supporting the Gala with ticket sales and soliciting sponsorships.

#### **New Business**

- Chair states that the April, 2020 Commission Meeting will be an online and conference call meeting, in the interest of public health. The Chair of the Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission will join the meeting to discuss their work.
- June, 2020, meeting tentatively slated to be held at RespectAbility in Rockville, Maryland.
- Chair would like to have a luncheon in September with Commissioners. Questions for consideration were circulated by the Chair via email.

**Meeting adjourned 10:51am**