

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Commission Meeting
February 14, 2023 – 10am
Meeting Held by Google Hangouts Meet
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: Stephanie Suerth, MPA, CCEP, Chair; Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq. Vice Chair: Eileen M. Levitt, SPHR, SHRM-SCP; Magdalena S. Navarro, MSc, Diane E. Bernier; Isabella Firth Shycoff;

Management Present: Alvin O. Gillard, Executive Director; Cleveland L. Horton II, Deputy Director; Glendora Hughes, General Counsel; Kara N. Hunt, PhD, Director of Education & Outreach

Staff Present: Gerald T. Ford, Executive Associate.

Meeting called to order at 10:03 am

Motion to approve the January minutes are approved.

Chairperson's Report

- Will be attending the Human Rights Day in Annapolis and encouraged all Commissioners to attend.

Executive Director's Report

- Stressed the importance of Human Rights Day in Annapolis as a networking and outreach event, in every sense. Events like this give MCCR the opportunity to partner with other human rights organizations from around the state in order to help protect the rights of all Maryland citizens.
- Informed the Commissioners that many have been contacted or attempted to have been contacted by a former complainant in regards to their complaint. We are aware of her concerns and now there are other issues involved. The Executive Director asked Commissioners not to directly respond to the individual, and that he was happy to share with in greater detail what was occurring.

Deputy Director's Report

- MCCR received final approval from the state's Department of Information Technology to move forward in the purchase of a new custom database for the agency. MCCR has identified the funding source to support the purchase and has initiated the purchase process. Our hope/goal is to have the system up by July 1, 2023.

- MCCR also received approval for Power PDF and that will allow us to shift our case files to digital case files.

Intake

During the month of January 2023, Intake authorized the following charges:

- 23 Employment
- 22 Housing
- 2 Public Accommodations
- 0 Commercial
- 47 Total Complaints for December

During the month of January 2023, Intake aborted the following inquiries:

- 12 Employment
- 4 Housing
- 3 Public Accommodations
- 2 Other
- 0 Commercial
- 21 Total Aborts for January 2023

Housing/PA

As of February 1, 2023, there are:

- 153 open Housing cases (Dual Filed with HUD) with an average age of 298 days;
- 23 open Housing Title 20 Only cases with an average age of 267 days; and
- 51 open PA cases with an average age of 445 days

During the month of January 2023, the Housing Unit closed:

- 17 Housing cases (Dual Filed with HUD) with a total monetary settlement of \$11,680
- 1 Title 20 Only Housing case with a total monetary settlement of \$5,000

Employment

As of February 1, 2023, there are:

- 267 Assigned Open Employment cases
- Average age is 400 days
- 192 Employment Cases in Backlog status
- Average age is 187 days

During the month of January 2023, the Employment Units closed:

- 61 Employment cases closed with a monetary benefit of \$82,000

General Counsel's Report

- Highlighted the General Counsel's written report.

- Discussed the Attorney General's' bills.
 - HB0771 (SB0658) gives the Maryland Office of the Attorney General the power to conduct pattern or practice investigations of systemic misconduct in state agencies, negotiate agreements, and seek judicial remedies. The Maryland Office of the Attorney General would be authorized to step in, if reasonable cause of a pattern or practice of misconduct arose.
 - HB0772 (SB0540) will authorize the Office of the Attorney General to actively participate in the Maryland civil rights enforcement arena to investigate, prosecute, and remediate certain civil rights violations under certain circumstances as well as authorize the Attorney General to intervene in certain causes of actions.

The General Counsel acknowledged the AG's office for reaching out to MCCR in constructing the bill and being a partner in this process rather than ask our input after the fact.

Director of Education & Outreach Report

- MIELP: E&O is in the second cohort of MEILP It is now being offered three times per year. The second cohort has 38 participants and will run for eight weeks. UB has informed MCCR that they'll have 2 New Co-directors this coming cycle.
- Young Scholars Program: E&O did an orientation last week and things seem to be going well. The second segment of the program (in partnership with Prince George's County Public Schools,) is focused on housing and it started in January. The speaker for this unit States Attorney Aisha N. Braveboy. The participants really appreciated learning from her and having the opportunity to hear more about the way that they can access civil rights and opportunities in Prince Georges County.
- Civil Rights Leadership Program: Last year, there were 40 or so applications for the program total last year and 11 participants were selected. This year, we have 357 applications and we accepted 89 participants. And so far, 63 have accepted
- E&O has established a relationship with Barnes and Noble, as well as Busboys and Poets to offer a series of community events with the focus of spotlighting local authors. The first one is in the Barnes and Noble in Bowie with Dr. Kris Marsh from the University of Maryland, College Park. She will be speaking on a singlehood as a civil rights issue and furthering intersectionality as it pertains to our marital status protections.
- Dates of note
 - Women's History Month Event - March 20th from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM @ Busboys and Poets in Columbia is a Women 's History Month breakfast. The theme will be the state of women in Maryland with specific focus on civil rights

issues. MCCR is partnering with Howard County's Office of Civil Rights and Equity.

Old/New Business

- Need to re-evaluate when we will have our first in person meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.