

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights  
Commission Meeting  
November 17, 2022 – 10am  
Meeting Held by Google Hangouts Meet  
MINUTES**

**Commissioners Present:** Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq., Vice Chairperson; Eileen M. Levitt, SPHR, SHRM-SCP; Jeff Rosen, Diane E. Bernier, Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA

**Management Present:** Alvin O. Gillard, Executive Director; Cleveland L. Horton II, Deputy Director; Terrance Artis, Assistant General Counsel; Kara N. Hunt, PhD, Director of Education & Outreach; Martine Chery, Assistant Director for Administration.

**Staff Present:** Gerald T. Ford, Executive Associate; Alesha Bell, Investigative Unit Supervisor

**Members of the Public Present:** Patti Mascone

**Meeting called to order at 10:05 am**

**Motion to approve the September minutes was approved with no discussion.**

**Members of the Public:**

Patti Mascone's comments are attached

**Chairperson's Report**

Recognized the various celebrations in the month of October

- LGBTQ+ History Month
- Hispanic heritage month
- Indigenous People's Day

The Vice-Chair shared that he was encouraged to see the rising consciousness of so many Americans recognizing and celebrating diversity.

**Executive Director's Report**

With the Gala past us, MCCR will re-focus on connecting/reconnecting with other organizations throughout the state dedicated to improving civil and human rights. The Executive Director met with the Women's Equity Center Action Network and the ARC of Maryland. The Executive Director also asked the Commissioners for help in identifying organizations that they believed MCCR should partner with or have some relationship with. The Executive Director expressed that MCCR's future is tied to its ability to connect with other like-minded organizations. "We cannot be effective if we're trying to do this work all alone."

Executive Director sent copies of the Maryland Hate Bias Report to the Commissioners. MCCR has used this report as an educational tool with the human rights/civil rights community. On

occasion, it has led to building programs around hate bias reporting and responding. For example:

- In Anne Arundel County, a community forum was convened to address hate bias reporting and responding to acts of hate bias. The program was a partnership among the County Executive, the School Superintendent, the States Attorney and community leaders.
- In Western Maryland, (specifically through efforts with the Western Maryland Advisory Council and our E&O team), MCCR has been able to make some inroads in the Western Maryland by connecting with law enforcement agencies to establish dialogue with community members and leaders on hate crimes reporting.

MCCR is in communication with the Attorney General's Office around specific programmatic uses of a grant they received to address issues of hate and hate crime reporting. One idea being discussed is the training of all law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Maryland with MCCR doing a presentation at these trainings to discuss civil rights/human rights and the community impact of acts of hate bias.

Finally, the Executive Director discussed the changing face of the workforce and its impact on MCCR. The workforce is becoming younger in terms of both age and experience in the civil rights arena. MCCR leadership thought it would be helpful if it identified training that would better equip management to understand the communication styles and needs of a younger workforce. Leadership engaged in skill-based training around working with and understanding a younger workforce. MCCR management found it enlightening and helpful to look at some of the differences in generations in terms of their needs and expectations in the workplace. Leadership hopes to use this training to identify how to better structure practices within MCCR to meet some of those needs.

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

- For the month of September, MCCR brought in 62 complaints
  - 47 employment
  - 11 housing
  - 4 public accommodations
- A total of 21 abortions for the month of September
  - 15 for employment
  - 4 housing
  - 2 public accommodations
- Housing and PA units,
  - 143 open housing cases.
  - Average number of days open is 299 days.
  - 17 open Title XX only cases with an average of 205 days
  - 34 open PA cases with the average number of days over 601 days
  - In September, Housing unit closed 9 cases with a total monetary settlement of approximately \$14,000.
  - Closed 1 housing Title XX only case
  - Legal Dept closed 1 housing dual filed HUD for a monetary settlement of \$5,000
  - Closed 5 PA case with a monetary value of \$2,000.

- Employment
  - As of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 241 assigned employment cases
  - Approximately 273 employment cases in backlog status
  - Average number of days open for employment cases is 339 days
  - During the month of September, closed 83 employment cases with a total monetary benefit of \$310,000.
- Officially closed the EEOC contract which ran until the end of September. Fell short of the contract goal by 25 cases due to the staff transition.
- Still in conversations regarding the database issues with EEOC. The EEOC system has very limited reporting system that does not provide detailed information like in years past. The Deputy Director is discussing ways create our own internal database to solve that issue. Solicited a few vendors and the lowest price to build out a database was \$115,000.
- Vacancies in MCCR
  - Still have 4 contractual PINS vacant. Two contractual PINS will be dedicated to the Housing & PA Unit. The other 2 will go to the employment unit.

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

- Reviewed written case report.

### **Administration Report**

- MCCR currently has five vacancies. Vacancies include
  - One Office Secretary III –
  - Four Level I Civil Rights Officers.
 Anticipate recruiting for the Office Secretary III by next month.
- Effective 11/1/22, 4.5% COLA will take place, increase is subject to all state employees.
- MCCR has submitted its FY 24 Budget Request to DBM. DBM's Analysis will be completed with recommendations to MCCR for our review and response.

### **Director of Education & Outreach's Report**

- Attending events
  - Baltimore County African American Festival
  - African Heritage Festival
  - Prince George's County HRC Meeting
  - Second Chance Job and Resource Fair- Epicenter Aberdeen
- Young Scholars Program (in partnership withy Prince Georges County Schools) started October. 248 Scholars are enrolled
- Maryland Equity and Inclusion Leadership Program (in partnership with the University of Baltimore) had its orientation October 7<sup>th</sup>. Had 40 participants unrolled under the Dept. of Housing and Community Development

- Held a virtual presentation, *Religious Accommodations During The Jewish Holiday Season* featuring Howard Libit, Executive Director of the Baltimore Jewish Council. 72 participants joined.
- Will host a listening session on October 20: *Applying A Hispanic/Latinx Lens to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiatives* with Amanda Anastasia Paniagua
- Future virtual trainings
  - November 2: Religious Accommodations and the Law.
  - December 7: Disability, Reasonable Accommodations and the Law

#### **Old/New Business**

- The Vice Chairperson brought up having an in-person meeting and will discuss this with the Chairperson
- The next Commission meeting is scheduled for November 8<sup>th</sup> which is Election Day, the State is closed Election Day. The Commissioners asked staff to send out a poll as to their availability the week of the November 15<sup>th</sup> for rescheduling the meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:47 pm.**