

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Commission Meeting
December 12, 2023 – 10am
Meeting held virtually via Google Meet
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: Stephanie Suerth, MPA, CCEP, Chair; Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq, Vice Chair; Angela Scott, Esq; Isabella Shycoff; Jeff Rosen; Magdalena S. Navarro, Eileen Levett

Management Present: Alvin O. Gillard, Executive Director; Cleveland L. Horton II, Deputy Director; Glendora Hughes, General Counsel; Dia Drake- Sprague, Director of Education and Outreach

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

Members of the Public: None

Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chairperson’s Report

The Chair wanted to check in to see how people are doing emotionally. High expectations, loneliness and stress can lead to the “Holiday Blues” during the holiday season. In most cases symptoms are temporary, but they can be serious, leading to clinical anxiety and/or depression. Adding to this, the Chair also continued to point out that MCCR must be mindful of how the Middle East crisis could conflate the “Holiday Blues”

Commissioner Rosen was wondering if we can reassess the frequency and purpose of holding commission meetings every month. The Executive Director clarified that monthly meetings were statutorily mandated. Chair Suerth suggested that maybe we could consider suggestions that would make the meetings more relevant, or impactful. The Chair asked the Commissioners to send any thoughts and suggestions they may have for future meetings and a work group or committee could be formed to review and compile the suggestions and present to the full Commission.

Executive Director’s Report

The Executive Director has been meeting individually with every staff member to accomplish a couple of things.

1. To explain to staff the process for the appointment of the new Executive Director, hopefully to reduce anxiety and concern.
2. To personally thank staff for their contributions and support of the mission of MCCR.

The Executive Director will submit an exit summary that will identify the agency's growth/challenge areas, budget & staffing needs, and his assessment of the "state of MCCR", as he prepares to transition out, effective February 2024. .

The Executive Director informed the Commissioner's that the General Counsel will provide an overview of the legislative process during her report so that everyone knows what to expect when the General Assembly session starts.

Deputy Director's Report

- The Deputy Director highlighted a few points from the Case Processing Unit's written report.

General Counsel's Report

- The General Counsel (GC) highlighted a few points from the Unit's written report.
- GC met with the new Director of Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility for the Comptroller's Office, Dr. Kai Boggess-de Bruin on November 27, 2023.
- Attended Governor's Office Legislative Liaison Training on November 30, 2023. GC also gave an overview of the legislative process.

Education and Outreach Report

- January 17th, E&O in partnership with Impact Baltimore, will host a MLK Day event that will focus on Martin Luther King's letters from the Birmingham jail.
- February 21st E&O is partnering with Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women for its Black History Month Event at the Enoch Pratt Central Library in Baltimore. The theme for the event is artistic expressions of Black heritage.

New Business

None

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.