

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Commission Meeting
April 11, 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; Diane E. Bernier; Isabella Firth Shycoff; Jeff Rosen; Gina McKnight Smith

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

Staff Present: Gerald T. Ford, Executive Associate; Dia Drake-Sprague, Education & Outreach Associate; Ngeri Azuewah, Education & Outreach Associate; Terrance Artis, Assistant General Counsel

Public/Guest Present: James Willis, Office of the Attorney General

Meeting called to order at 10:03 am

Motion to approve the April minutes are approved.

Chairperson's Report

- A major push of the Chair is to increase public participation in the monthly meetings. The Chair will be working with the E&O unit to craft an email for Commissioners to send to their networks about attending the monthly meetings.
- The Chair also suggested that we begin inviting various organizations and other civil rights leaders to speak before the Commission. This allows the Commission to learn about other organizations and vice versa.
- The Chair will speak with the Lieutenant Governor to get a better understanding of the civil rights agenda of this administration. MCCR has the prime opportunity to serve as subject matter experts to the administration.

Executive Director's Report

- The Executive Director introduced Dia Drake-Sprague and Ngeri Azuewah from the Education & Outreach Unit. He wanted to thank them for ensuring the work of the unit continues in a seamless fashion.
- April is Fair Housing Month and MCCR is planning a Virtual Fair Housing Forum on April the 27th

- MCCR is hosting in partnership with the Western Maryland Advisory Council, the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MSP) and the Attorney General's Office a Hate /Bias Reporting Forum in Western Maryland (Frostburg State University.)
- Also, in the month of June, MCCR is working on hosting an open forum on the use of recreational marijuana and its impact on employment policies. MCCR is partnering with the University Of Maryland School Of Law for this event.
- The Executive Director complimented staff on their ability to partner with organizations and individuals on these various forums and initiatives which is reflective of the strategic plan of the agency.

Deputy Director's Report

- The Deputy Director highlighted a few points from the Case Processing Unit's written report.
- Case Processing has submitted 98 closures to HUD. They are anticipated to reach 120-130 cases for our contract with HUD.
- Case Processing has completed 286 employment closures. Our EEOC contract is for 560 and we are on track to reach our contract number.
- The case backlog is down to 83 cases. The average time a case stays in unassigned status is 97 days.

General Counsel's Report

- The General Counsel highlighted a few issues contained in the Unit's written report.
- The General Counsel reviewed the following bills supported by MCCR that have passed both houses and are awaiting the Governor's signature:
 - HB0009 (SB001) -Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses
 - HB0309 (SB0574) - State Employee Rights and Protections - Personnel Actions and Harassment – Complaints
 - HB0339 (SB0478) - Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Reporting and Sunset Extension
 - HB0608 (SB0535) - Human Relations - Housing Discrimination - Service Dogs and Guide Dogs
 - HB1066 - Hate Crimes - Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention – Establishment
 - HB1244 (SB0842) - Maryland Holocaust Remembrance Day
 - SB0540 (HB0772) - Human Relations - Civil Rights Enforcement - Powers of the Attorney General

Old/New Business

- None

Meeting went into executive session at 11:06 am.