

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
Monday, July 22, 2013 – 2:00 P.M.
Michigan Department of Civil Rights, 8th Floor Commission Room
110 W. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48909

MINUTES

Present: Commission Chair Mike Zelle
Commission Vice-Chair Lisa Peeples-Hurst
Commission Secretary Jared Rodriguez
Commissioner Agustin Arbulu
Commissioner Arthur Horwitz
Commissioner Deloris Hunt

Excused: Commissioner Rasha Demashkieh

The meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission was called to order by Commission Chair Mike Zelle at 2:04 p.m.

I. WELCOME

Commissioner Zelle indicated that the newly appointed commissioner, Linda Gobler, would be sworn-in at the July 29th meeting; continued follow-up on the Pay Equity hearings request; brought welcoming remarks and called the meeting to order.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

On Motion duly made (Commissioner Rodriguez) and supported (Commissioner Peeples-Hurst), the Agenda was approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 25, 2013

On Motion duly made (Commissioner Peeples-Hurst) and supported (Commissioner Horwitz), the Minutes from the May 20, 2013 meeting were approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. DIVISION REPORTS

Director's Report – Dan Krichbaum, Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights submitted his written report for comment and/or discussion; indicated that his contract ends Friday, July 26th; thanked everyone in the Department for their commitment and dedication during his tenure, with special thanks to the Leadership Team and the Commission.

Enforcement Report –Lori Vinson, Director of Civil Rights Operations indicated that during the October 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013 measurement period, the Enforcement Division processed 1,599 new formal complaints, completed 1,745 cases, some resulting in \$910,258 in monetary awards. Also during this period, the Aged Cases Backlog has been reduced by a total of 897 cases; Ms. Vinson distributed a memo detailing the progress of the backlog reduction, as compared to last year's backlog number of 490 cases.

Hearings and Policy Report – Dan Levy, Chief Legal Officer distributed a memo on the recent activity of the Supreme Court entitled “U.S. Supreme Court Review”, which cited cases under the following focus areas: Discrimination and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Diversity and Affirmative Action, Voting Rights Act, and Gay Marriage. Mr. Levy also provided updates regarding Indigent Defense Reform.

Legal Affairs Report – Sylvia Elliott, Managing Attorney of the Office of Legal Affairs submitted her written report for comment and/or discussion, indicating that currently there are four cases in Conciliation, four cases in Legal Review, and three cases in the Rule 12 Process.

Budget / Public Affairs Report –With regards to the Budget, Leslee Fritz, Director of Public Affairs and Administrative Services reported that the FY2014 budget is complete, and budget officers are preparing for the FY2015 budget (October 2013); discussed new reporting requirements for the Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver (MITW). With regards to the Office of Public Affairs, Ms. Fritz indicated that MDCR has completed the first thirteen of fifty scheduled 50th Anniversary Events across the state; for September and October 2013, events will be held in Kalamazoo, Adrian, Grand Rapids and Saginaw – Ms. Fritz will send an updated schedule to the Commission later this week; discussed request received from the King Center regarding the “Let Freedom Ring” event scheduled for August 28th, to include a ringing of bells across the nation at 3:00 p.m.; in lieu of an annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January 2014, discussed joint event with The Henry Ford Museum – “Rosa Parks Day of Courage”, February 2014, planning for this event will commence this fall; reported that the eight grants received from HUD in 2012 are now complete, an announcement indicating the availability of new grants was received recently, MDCR will once again seek grant funding from HUD; reported that a new employee engagement survey is scheduled for September 2013 under the Good Government Initiative from the Lieutenant Governor’s Office.

V. COMMISSION MATTERS

Chairman’s Report – Commissioner Zelle presented an award of recognition to Director Krichbaum for his three years of service as Executive Director for the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. The award reads: *“We proudly honor Dan Krichbaum for 3 years of excellence and commitment in defense of the civil rights of the people of Michigan and the prevention of discrimination as the Executive Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, serving from 2010 to 2013.”* Additionally, Commissioner Arbulu requested that a small committee be assembled to compose a proclamation recognizing former director Burton Gordin, requesting that his unsolved murder investigation be re-opened.

Attorney General’s Report – Ron Robinson reported on the *Barash v. SMART* case, indicating that the Appeal addressing the issue of whether or not the circuit court judge properly dismissed SMART’s appeal based on their failure to submit a timely brief is still pending. Mr. Robinson indicated that the Attorney General’s Office will file a Motion to enter the judgment. Also, with regards to the City of Detroit bankruptcy, there are currently six complaints from MDCR pending against the City of Detroit; there is now an Initial Stay on these open cases. Last, Mr. Robinson indicated that the DODHH (Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing) proposed rule set is expected to be submitted shortly to JCAR (Joint Committee on Administrative Rules).

Mr. Robinson introduced one of the AG law clerks, Lynn Alazem.

VI. DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES

Anti-Bullying Initiative – John Golaszewski, Director of Business and Community Affairs reported that the three school districts (Detroit, Allendale and Vandercook Lake) working with MDCR have submitted their Quarterly Progress Reports and are now studying the feasibility of implementing a Restorative Practice type of approach in combatting bullying in their respective districts; a second RFP (Request For Proposal) has been sent out, responses were due June 30th; exploratory meetings regarding research on Workplace Bullying have been convened with professors from Michigan State University and Wayne State University – both are exploring potential partnerships on this topic and what funding sources may exist to do this work.

Global Michigan Initiative – Mary McLellan reported on the success of two immigration events: the Global Great Lakes Initial Convening on June 6, 2013 and the Upwardly Global Launch of Licensing Professional Guidelines on June 20, 2013. Ms. McLellan also indicated that the Interdepartmental Committee Collaboration (the Immigration Workgroup) has not met lately, but she expects new meetings to be scheduled soon.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Zelay reported that over eighty applicants applied for the Executive Director position; thanked the Advisory Committee and the Commission for their recommendations; final candidates recommended by the Advisory Committee were Applicant #17, Applicant #15, Applicant #39, and Applicant #34; Applicant #45, one of the five final selections withdrew earlier this morning. During the Commission's discussion, each Commissioner provided their rationale for selecting the final candidates.

On Motion duly made (Commissioner Peeples-Hurst) and supported (Commissioner Rodriguez), the Commission will interview the following candidates at a Special Meeting to convene July 29, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. at the MDCR Lansing Executive Office: Applicant #17, Applicant #15, Applicant #39 and Applicant #34. Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

L.W. Morrow – Mr. Morrow brought concerns regarding continued harassment from the campus police department from Colorado University, and he is seeking a multi-million dollar award.

X. ADJOURNMENT

On Motion duly made and supported, the meeting of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission adjourned at 4:18 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary

Director