

Prince George's County Human Rights Commission

Monday, August 22, 2022,
Zoom Meeting of the
Prince George's County
Human Rights Commission

Commissioners Present:

Charlene Proctor, Chair
Llamilet Gutierrez
Sylvia Johnson
Ademola Oduyebo
Wendi Howard
Joseph Reed, Acting Vice-Chair

Commissioners Absent:

Brindisi Chan

Office of Human Rights

Staff Present:

Renée Battle-Brooks
Executive Director

Jose Villegas
Senior Investigator

Jacqueline Cochran
Clerk to the Commission

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm and conducted the roll call for this Commission Meeting in the absence of a Commission Secretary. Commissioner Chan was absent for the meeting.
2. Adopt Agenda – The Chair called for a review of the agenda. The agenda was adopted as distributed with one correction noted under case updates.
3. Approval of Minutes of the **July 25, 2022**, meeting. The minutes were adopted as distributed.
4. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

The Chair commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone to their second Commission's Meeting for the County's fiscal year. The Chair proceeded to thank everyone for their voluntary and unwavering commitment and for their focus on the work of the Commission. The Chair stated that as she reflects on the work, she feels proud of the Commission having sustained a high level of responsiveness, expertise, and

adjudicatory skills to further their mission under Division 12. She noted although the Commission operates independently from the Office of Human Rights, the Commission is grateful for their support under the leadership of Executive Director Renee Battle-Brooks, in terms of virtual access and the many diverse training opportunities provided to the Commission.

The Chair shared that Acting Vice Chair Joseph Reed, Commissioner Sylvia Johnson and herself attended the MCCR's 2nd Biennial Civil Rights & Fair Housing Gala this past Saturday, August 20th, 2022. The Chair noted that a notable award recipient such as the Maryland Speaker of the House, Honorable Adrian Jones, was present at the gala as well. The keynote speaker for the gala, Mary Frances Berry, referenced the power of resistance and nonviolence with the latest example being the black farmers struggle considering President Biden's passage of a bill to help with inflation, which led to black farmers being left out in a larger part of the funding. The keynote speaker's overall message was that there is a power in resistance and nonviolence to get civil rights work done.

5. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director briefly echoed again her thanks to the Commission for all of their hard work. Noting that during the fiscal year there were several public hearings, some of which were withdrawn, she stated she sincerely appreciates all the long hours that each Commissioner on the various panels worked.

As previously reported by the Executive Director in the last meeting, a counsel for the Commission is still in the works. She noted the contract is soon to be finalized that she hopes to introduce the new counsel soon. She stated she will keep everyone informed once more information is available.

The Executive Director noted that their Youth Leadership Academy is scheduled to end in two weeks, making it their summer cohort, noting it as the third cohort to take place. She stated the academy has been successful as a compressed 8-week Leadership Academy.

The Executive Director mentioned that their EEOC contract ends on September 30th, 2022. The Executive Director lastly stated that on Tuesday, August 30th, 2022, they are scheduled to hold their diversity dialogue and that she, Kyla and Jose will discuss the book - "A Most Beautiful Thing, The True Story of America's First All Black High School Rowing Team", by Arshay Cooper. Also, on their calendar is Ernie Suggs, the author of "The Many Lives of Andrew Young". Ernie Suggs will hold a discussion regarding his work on Thursday, September 8th, 2022. The Executive Director shared that all links pertaining to these upcoming virtual events will be distributed soon.

The Executive Director concluded her report by informing the Commission that there are several events in the planning phase in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

6. CASES SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING - None

7. CASE STATUS UPDATE

FEPA Charge No.: HRC21-0202

EEOC Case No.: 531-2020-02614

Teonna Marshall v Seafood Fusions, Inc (aka Hook and Reel, Inc.)

Investigator Langston Clay

Panel Members: Former Commissioner Bryant as Panel Chair, Current Commissioner Johnson, Former Vice-Chair Sadler; Former Secretary Woolfolk as the alternate.

Four nights of public hearing were held in this matter on May 11th, May 16th, 2022, June 15th, June 16th, and June 23, 2022. An opinion in order is pending in this matter.

8. APPEAL HEARING

Below is an update on the petitions for judicial review of Commission decisions before the Circuit Court of Prince George's County.

Henry Lewis v Board of Education of Prince George's County HRC

Case No.: HRC17-0809

Lois Aba Kwakyewaa Yankah v Gateway Hall, LLC

OHR Case No.: HRC20-1203

Order of Court dated August 9, 2022, Judge Curry Ordered, that the Plaintiff's Motion for Extension of Time to correct Omissions in Record of Proceedings be and the same hereby is, Denied pursuant to Maryland Rule 7-206(e).

9. ATTENDANCE RECORD – Attached

The Chair invited the Commissioners to review the attendance record and to contact the Clerk of the Commission about any corrections.

10. NEW BUSINESS - None

11. OLD BUSINESS

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for September 26th, 2022.

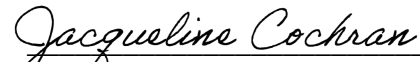
13. CLOSED SESSION

Motion to move to Closed Session was made by Acting Vice Chair Joseph Reed and seconded by Commissioner Sylvia Johnson. Motion was adopted with no objection. Commissioner Johnson stated her recusal from Closed Session.

EEOC Charge No.: 12H-2021-00022
FEPA Case No.: OHR21-0702

The Commission voted 4 Yays, 0 No, and 0 Abstentions to uphold the Executive Director's action and dismiss the case.

14. **ADJOURNMENT** – 6:09 pm



Jacqueline Cochran
Clerk to the Commission