

WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

**COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2013 @ 10AM
711 S. CAPITOL WAY, SUITE 405
OLYMPIA, WA 98504**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Steve Hunt, Chair; Clarence Henderson, Commissioner; Charlene Strong, Commissioner; Shawn Murinko, Commissioner

Staff: Sharon Ortiz, Executive Director; Cheryl Strobert, Asst. Director; Dianna Wilks, MA; Janice Whitman, Specialist; Laura Skinner, Exec. Asst.; Ludmila Barbacar, CSS; Sharon James, AAG; Stacia Hollar, AAG.

OPENING AND WELCOME

Chair Hunt called the meeting to order at 10:04AM.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Management Analyst Wilks provided budget overview; discussed Commissioner allotments; informed Commissioners submitted supplemental budget for outreach and supervision for satellite offices.

PROCESS TRAINING

Specialist Whitman conducted a power point training on the investigative process of a complaint for the Commissioners and staff.

BREAK @ 11:15AM

RESUME @ 11:26AM

ED REPORT

Director Ortiz provided overview of costs for agency, interpreter services, conference calling costs and travel costs; informed Commissioners the EEOC declined the requested upward modification by HRC.

Director Ortiz provided update on new Commissioner, Vito De La Cruz from Yakima; stated she will be going to Yakima on September 12th to meet with him.

Director Ortiz commented it's time to get organized with our legislative priorities; provided personnel updates and status of gratis office space; went over various meetings and conferences attended; informed Commissioners met with Bob Ferguson, Attorney General along with Asst. Director Strobert, AG considering forming a civil rights division and offered us assistance when needed.

Director Ortiz provided update to Commissioners regarding AAG Hollar working on amicus brief to the Washington Supreme Court; this is in response to Short v. Battle Ground School District and religious accommodation; another case is before the Supreme Court, Kumar v. Gates Gourmet; our belief that 49.60 does allow religious accommodation and have past practices to illustrate (Abu v. Best Western); AG Hollar to brief Commissioners in executive session.

Director Ortiz provided updates on daily operations, technical assistance, outreach and training; IT updates and case closure stats.

PRIORITIES OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners put together a list of priorities: TERO, rule making, RSJI, expansion of satellite offices, definition of public accommodation (legal issue), and relationship with other Commissions; Exec. Asst. Laura Skinner to send meeting dates and times for other Commissions.

Commissioner Henderson suggested putting together advisory committee to look into public issues and provide information to HRC.

Commissioner Strong stated to educate the state on HRC existence; make connection with other civil rights organizations, partnerships.

Commissioners had discussion about other organizations, attending the meetings geographically; discussed social diversity and branching from own interests.

Commissioners identified several organizations to reach out to: CAPPA, CHA, Commission on African American Affairs, Governor's Committee on Disability, Developmental Disability Council, Seattle Office for Civil Rights and Disability Rights Washington.

Commissioners discussed Public Forum process, does not seem to be working; Director Ortiz stated not best use of money; have joint meetings with other organizations.

LUNCH BREAK @ 11:55AM

RESUME @ 12:30PM

PRIORITIES OF COMMISSIONERS CONTINUED

Each Commissioner provided list of importance:

- Commissioner Strong –
- 1) Rule making
 - 2) RSJI
 - 3) Establish advisory committees
 - 4) Outreach/ education
- Commissioner Murinko -
- 1) Expansion of satellite offices
 - 2) Definition of public accommodation
 - 3) Annual report
 - 4) Attending other events
- Commissioner Henderson -
- 1) Outreach/ education
 - 2) Annual Report
 - 3) RSJI
 - 4) Rule making
- Chair Hunt -
- 1) Outreach/ education
 - 2) Public forums
 - 3) RSJI
 - 4) TERO

VISION OF COMMISSION 1, 3, 5 YEARS

Commissioners and Director Ortiz had discussion regarding the vision of the Commission and what they would like to achieve.

1 year - Chair Hunt said he'd like to see full staffing for HRC; Commissioner Murinko suggested increased visibility with stake holder groups; Commissioner Strong would like to see the continuity of team work, communication and outreach; Commissioner Henderson stated to implement and achieve items previously outlined with the priorities previously discussed.

3 year – Chair Hunt stated the previous goals set are enough to look at for now; Commissioner Murinko said he'd like to have the service animal legislation past.

Director Ortiz commented the service animal issue must be fixed; affects our contract with HUD; will meet with Senator Padden in the near future.

Commissioner Henderson stated would like to see a better budget, more resources.

5 year – Commissioners agreed to hold off on 5 year vision; priorities and goals set previously are enough to work on.

**POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS – OTHER COMMISSIONS/ AGENCIES/
PANELS**

Commissioners agreed this item coincides with priorities of Commission; have already set goals to partner with other civil rights organizations.

COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2014; PUBLIC FORUMS

January 23, 2014 – in person meeting, Olympia.

February 27, 2014 – Tacoma, location TBD; Commissioner Henderson

Commissioners decided to discuss further during October Commission meeting.

SATELLITE OFFICES, COMMISSIONER FEEDBACK

Commissioners agreed the satellite offices are working; gave approval to secure additional space.

LETTER TO COMMISSIONERS FROM JORGEN BADER

Commissioner Murinko reviewed letter; has conflict with issues due to WSDOT and Federal funds; may be involved with ADA issues.

Commissioner Strong provided information of issues with bicycles and parking in Seattle.

AAG Hollar will check into letter and advise Director Ortiz and Commissioners.

**COMMISSIONERS TO SIGN REVISED COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE
POLICY**

Commissioners signed revised Commissioner Attendance policy.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioners, Director Ortiz and AAG Hollar went into executive session at 1:15pm for 30 minutes to review performance of a public employee, RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g) and to consult with legal counsel regarding litigation that has been specifically threatened to which the agency is or is likely to become a party to, RCW 42.30.110 (1) (i).

Executive session ended at 1:28pm.

Commissioners voted and granted a 10% pay increase to Director Ortiz as of September 13, 2013.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Skinner
Commission Clerk