

WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

**COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2013 @ 9:30AM
711 S. CAPITOL WAY, SUITE 402
OLYMPIA, WA 98504**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Shawn Murinko, Chair Pro Tem; Clarence Henderson, Commissioner; Charlene Strong, Commissioner; Vito De La Cruz, Commissioner.

Staff: Sharon Ortiz, Executive Director; Cheryl Strobert, Asst. Director; Laura Skinner, Exec. Asst.; AAG Chad Standifer; Stacia Hollar, AAG; Sharon James, AAG; Janice Whitman, Specialist.

OPENING AND WELCOME

Chair Pro Tem Murinko called the meeting to order at 9:30AM.

Commissioners welcomed new Commissioner, Vito de la Cruz.

AAG BRIEFING; TAFOYA V. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

AAG Standifer provided history and briefing regarding case Tafoya v. Human Rights Commission.

Chair Pro Tem Murinko suggested sending out technical assistance letters to housing providers; Director Ortiz stated sent out press release regarding the case and also emailed briefing to housing providers.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS; STRATEGIC PLANNING RESULTS

Director Ortiz informed Commissioners the top two items were RSJI and outreach; provided suggestions regarding planning.

Commissioner Strong informed Commissioners and staff she is working with the City of Seattle regarding LGBT issues to do with Russia and how person's are being treated and incarcerated; working on resolution and will be moderating the event; suggested Commissioners attend; suggested Commissioners write a resolution.

AAG Hollar commented on the writing of a resolution regarding Russia; roles of the Commissioners are neutral; cautioned on any case that may come before the Commission; possibility of a complaint coming before the Commission not likely.

Director Ortiz spoke more about RSJI planning.

Chair Pro Tem Murinko stated would like to hear more about RSJI and research; should plan more for January 2014 meeting.

Commissioner Henderson suggested discussing RSJI the next two meetings and going forward at the January 2014 meeting.

Director Ortiz spoke about outreach and education; informed Commissioners to keep in mind budget and suggested to Commissioners to conduct outreach in their area; will keep RSJI and outreach as action items for meetings; stated session is coming and budget is the priority.

Commissioner Strong suggested having a work session in November or early December.

Commissioners and Director Ortiz agreed on December 9, 2013 at 10am will hold work session as a special meeting.

RECONSIDERATIONS

Specialist Whitman provided an overview for Bond v. East Valley Crossing Senior Apartments; provided reason(s) for the Grant determination.

Commissioners discussed the Grant for Bond v. East Valley Crossing Senior Apartments; asked questions to clarify why determination of granting the reconsideration was made.

Specialist Whitman stated the determination was made to Grant due to a specific date which needs to be looked at further for Complainant Bond and to clarify if her reasonable accommodation was met.

Director Ortiz added there was an internal dispute whether to re open the case to clarify if the reasonable accommodation had been met and to clarify when the request was submitted.

Commissioner De la Cruz made motion to approve; Commissioner Henderson seconds; motion carried.

Specialist Whitman provided an overview for Walvatne v. Willina Ranch Apartments; provided reason(s) for the Deny determination.

Commissioners discussed the Deny for Walvatne v. Willina Ranch Apartments.

Commissioner Henderson made motion to approve; Commissioner De la Cruz seconds; motion carried.

BREAK @ 10:32 AM
RESUME @ 10:42 AM

ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE LITIGATION BRIEFING

AAG Hollar and AAG James provided overview and briefing on case Kumar v. Gate Gourmet; court seems interested, should know more within six to nine months; Amicus brief the AAG and WSHRC wrote was beneficial.

AAG Hollar stated the AG's office is putting together a team regarding Civil Rights.

AAG Hollar informed the Commission the AG's office was invited by the US Supreme Court to write an amicus brief regarding the Township of Mt. Holly issue of disparate impact claim of the fair housing act; signing onto brief.

Commissioner Strong stated would like to set up meeting between Commissioner's and the Attorney General, Bob Ferguson.

AAG Hollar to facilitate setting up the meeting.

MINUTES

Commissioner Strong made motion to approve September 26, 2013 meeting minutes; Commissioner Henderson seconds; motion carried.

CASE CLOSURES

Director Ortiz added case to agenda, WSHRC/ NWFH v. Walter Nevin; gave copies of finding and conciliation agreement to Commissioners to review; provided overview of case.

Asst. Director Strobert informed Commissioners case pulled, Nicols v. The Poly Clinic; needs additional research.

Commissioner Henderson made motion to approve cases; Commissioner Strong seconds; motion carried.

OVERVIEW OF RSJI, DARLENE FLYNN

Darlene Flynn with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights provided an overview of RSJI, the Race and Social Justice Initiative; gave handouts to Commissioners and staff of the structure and why race was used as a model for the initiative.

Commissioners and Ms. Flynn had discussions regarding RSJI and how the initiative impacts other groups and how to bring those groups into the initiative.

Ms. Flynn also provided a power point that went over the RSJI, disparities, racial wealth gap, defining equity, root cause of racial disparities, identify and remove institutional barriers to racial equity, institutional culture – relevant and accessible to all, partnerships, department work plans, tools and resources.

BREAK @ 12:22 PM
RESUME @ 12:31 PM

ED REPORT

Director Ortiz provided a handout to Commissioners of her report and a budget report form Dianna Wilks; informed Commissioners management team is undergoing strategic planning for the agency, will submit written plan to Commissioners for consideration; will be attending the Veterans Going to the Dog Conference on November 22, 2013.

Director Ortiz brought to the attention of the Commissioners the time of year again for the service animal legislation; met with Senator Padden and had a great conversation with him and believes there is hope for the bill.

Director Ortiz provided an overview of various meetings and conferences attended within the last month; provided personnel, outreach, and IT updates.

COMMISSIONER REPORTING

Commissioner Henderson stated he attended the CHA meeting in Bellingham on October 18, 2013 along with Director Ortiz; will attend the upcoming meeting in November for the African American Affairs Commission.

Commissioner Strong informed she will be participating in the Qlaw Falltacular, speaking as an individual; went to the TERO conference with Director Ortiz on October 23, 2013; on November 18, 2013 will meet with the World Affairs Council regarding Russia at 6:30pm;

Commissioner De la Cruz commented on demographics in Eastern Washington; growing Latino population and growing poverty population; litigated against Pasco police department.

Commissioner Murinko stated he attended meeting with Asst. Director Strobert at the Governor's Commission on Disability and Employment issues; trainings to employers on how to accommodate.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioners, Director Ortiz and AAG Hollar went into Executive Session at 12:55 for 5 minutes to receive and evaluate complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee. RCW 42.30.110 (1) (f).

Executive Session ended and the meeting resumed at 1pm.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Skinner
Commission Clerk