

**WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 24, 2019 AT 9:30AM
711 S. CAPITOL WAY, SUITE 402
OLYMPIA, WA
-CONFERENCE ROOM-**

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Deborah Cook, Skylee Sahlstrom, Guadalupe Gamboa and David Hackney.

Staff: Sharon Ortiz, Executive Director; Cheryl Strobert, Deputy Director; Sharon James, Assistant Attorney General; Laura Lindstrand, Policy Analyst; Jerry Lee, Operations Manager; and Deborah Gonzales, Commission Clerk.

OPENING AND WELCOME

Chair Cook chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order at 9:37AM.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Executive Director submitted decision packages for additional civil rights investigators due to an overwhelming backlog. In addition to a large volume of complaints, the Seattle Office of Civil Rights is no longer contracting with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to process housing cases, and those cases were transferred to the Commission.

Chair Cook and Director Ortiz met with the Governor's Committee on Disability regarding the Accessible Prescription Labeling. Director Ortiz met with the director of the Diversity of Department of Health, and was asked to write a one page summary of the issues in order to educate those who will be participating in this process.

The feasibility study for the database management system is underway. Completion of the study will assist in developing a decision package that will expectantly provide funding for the system itself.

MEETING MINUTES:

The September 26, 2019 Minutes were approved. Commissioner Hackney motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Sahlstrom seconded the motion.

CASE CLOSURES

The following cases were pulled prior to the meeting for additional review:

- Beard, Frances v. Lowes
- Aceves-Mendoza, Ramona v. Apple King LLC
- Colley, Kevin v. North Kitsap School District
- Pacheco Cruz, Celia v. Roanake Inn
- Smith, Eric v. Apollo Mechanical Contractors

Commissioner Gamboa made a motion to approve the cases for closure; Commissioner Sahlstrom seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

COMMISSIONERS' ATTENDANCE POLICY

Commissioner Sahlstrom discussed the Commissioner's current Attendance Policy. After discussion, the commissioner will make changes and propose at the next in-person meeting for review.

COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL POLICY

Commissioners reviewed and discussed the Commissioner's current Travel Policy. No suggested changes were made.

Commissioner Hackney motioned to adopt the Travel Policy as written. Commissioner Sahlstrom seconded the motion.

COMMISSIONERS' TRAINING

Director Ortiz and Policy Analyst Lindstrand provided training to the Commissioners regarding procedural requirements when investigating complaints. Ms. Lindstrand provided a brief history and explanation of the application of the law.

KEITH SWENSON

Mr. Swenson is the Director of Boards and Commissions for the Office of the Governor. He provided a general overview to all commissioners regarding the services and assistance he and his office can provide. He explained the roles of commissioners and what is expected of them as they serve in this agency. He also provided a status update in regards to recruitment for candidates for the vacant fifth commissioner position.

AAG UPDATE

The Attorney General's Office and the Human Rights Commission worked together to be a part of a nationwide amicus brief in National Women's Law Center v The Office of Management and Budget.

The Civil Rights Unit is currently reviewing four draft reasonable cause findings. The unit is preparing a petition for a temporary restraining order that may need to be filed in Clark County to prevent an alleged discriminatory eviction in housing. They are preparing to litigate a sixth matter in the Office of Administrative Hearing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commission moved into Executive Session. Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)(g) the Commission moved into closed session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation with legal counsel and to review the performance of a public employee and was to reconvene on the record after approximately 20 minutes.

Executive Session began at 1:44PM and ended 2:01PM.

2019 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

November 21, 2019 at 9:30AM: Via Telephone Conference
December 19, 2019 at 9:30AM: Via Telephone Conference
January 23, 2020 at 9:30AM: 711 S. Capitol Way, Ste. 402, Olympia, WA

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:04PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Deborah Gonzales