

WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 23, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by Chair Pro Tem Clarence Henderson.

Present by phone were the following Commissioners: Clarence Henderson, Skylee Sahlstrom, Lenore Three Stars, and Guadalupe Gamboa. Chair Charlene Strong was not present.

Executive Director Sharon Ortiz was present as well as Deputy Director Cheryl Strobert.

Scott Douglas, Assistant Attorney General was also present telephonically.

Draft meeting minutes from the February 23, 2017 were considered. The minutes were unanimously approved as drafted.

The list of case closures were considered. The following cases had corrections: Brown v. Kennedy, Kramer v. Dedicated Realty, Ensign v. Dedicated Realty, McMeel v. Olympic Lighting, Brian v. DCT Chambers Trucking and Stevens v. Alaska Airlines.

The case of Goodnow v. Mosaic Hills was re-submitted to the Commissioners for consideration as it was pulled from the February meeting agenda. Director Ortiz stated that she reviewed the case and shared her review with the Commissioners. Commissioner Sahlstrom stated that she still had concerns about the case based on a 2015 reasonable accommodation request made by Complainant and for this reason wanted the case to be held until next month's meeting.

All cases, with the exception of Goodnow v. Mosaic Hills were voted upon by the Commissioners and the staff's recommendations set forth in the findings were unanimously approved.

Subsequently, Commissioner Sahlstrom realized that she was in error and that there had not been a 2015 reasonable accommodation request by Complainant in the Goodnow v Mosaic Hills case and that she had no further questions in that regard. A motion was put forth to adopt staff's recommendation in the Goodnow case. This motion was voted upon and unanimously approved by the Commissioners.

Director Ortiz reported that Laura Skinner, Executive Assistant, resigned her employment with the Commission today.

Director Ortiz also reported the following: The IAOHRA Board has determined that the annual conference will be held in Seattle from September 24-27, 2017. Commissioner Sahlstrom has offered to work on coordinating a Pike Place Market tour as one of the events for the conference. Seattle Office for Civil Rights is assisting IAOHRA with building the agenda for the conference.

Director Ortiz stated that she has met with the Chief of Police for Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater and the Mayor of Spokane and Chief of Police. She has been meeting with legislators in order to help preserve the WSHRC budget. ESHB 2029 has not yet had a hearing in the Senate; it needs to go through the Law and Justice Committee. She has reached out to the Mike Gempler Growers League and the Farm Bureau to explore whether there is support for ESHB 2029.

None of the Commissioners had any activities to report this month.

Assistant Attorney General Scott Douglas reported that the initial Presidential Executive Order with regard to the travel ban was upheld by the entire ninth circuit; that the stay in federal district court has been joined by other states and that Attorney General Ferguson has asked to keep the case alive. There has been no ruling on the second travel ban yet. It was reported that ICE is checking IDs courthouses in the state of Washington. In response to that Chief Justice Mary Fairhurst sent out a letter to the Department of Homeland Security expressing concern for these enforcement actions.

Commissioner Sahlstrom expressed concern over ICE's enforcement activity and asked whether the Commission can do something to show its displeasure with this type of enforcement action. Assistant AAG Douglas stated that something echoing Chief Justice Fairhurst's letter would be an appropriate response. Other Commissioners were in support of this proposal. Commissioner Sahlstrom stated that she would be willing to put together a draft letter on behalf of the Commission. She requested a copy of the letter sent to Homeland Security.

Director Ortiz stated that the April Commission meeting is scheduled to take place in Pasco, WA, however, Commissioner Henderson has a work conflict. It was discussed and the Pasco meeting is moved to May 26, 2017. April meeting will be telephonic. June meeting will be in person in Seattle. It was also proposed that July meeting take place in Spokane due to the possibility of a know your rights forum being convened with other social justice organizations.

Commissioner Henderson reminded Commissioners to refer their friends to the WSHRC Facebook page. There are currently 239 friends on the page.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03PM.