

**WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MAY 27, 2021 AT 9:30AM
CONFERENCE CALL**

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Deborah Cook, James Mohr, and Jeff Sbaih.

Staff: Sharon Ortiz, Executive Director; Cheryl Strobert, Deputy Director; Sharon James, Assistant Attorney General; Jerry Lee, Operations Manager; Selene Garcia, Customer Service Specialist 2; and Deborah Gonzales, Commission Clerk.

OPENING AND WELCOME

Chair Cook chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order at 9:34A.M.

MEETING MINUTES

The April 22, 2021 Minutes were reviewed and approved.

Commissioner Sbaih motioned to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Mohr seconded the motion.

CASE CLOSURES

No cases were pulled this month.

Commissioner Sbaih motioned to approve the cases for closure. Commissioner Mohr seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORTING

The Governor's Budget has been released and there were no cuts made to the agency's budget. The agency is also set to receive funding for a new database system to improve work processes, which will allow for portals for outside parties to file a complaint or upload relevant documentation during the investigation.

Director Ortiz also updated the Commissioners with the open recruitment for Civil Rights Investigators, and the upcoming performance audit with the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. The agency is also working on updating the current complaint questionnaire in order to preserve complainant's rights.

There is still a backlog of over 270 cases with the agency. Director Ortiz has been working with the Attorney General's Office to explore ways of managing this backlog.

There is a plan of state government to reopen in the upcoming months, and we are awaiting further guidance from the Governor's Office on how to implement those changes. Director Ortiz

will also be working alongside Chair Cook to begin the recruitment process for the new executive director.

COMMISSIONER REPORTING

Citing concerns surrounding implicit bias, Commissioner Sbaih assisted with initiatives regarding equitable vaccine delivery in specific communities including those in transit deserts, and those areas heavily populated by people of color.

Commissioner Mohr met with the Executive Director of the Peace & Justice Action League in Spokane. They discussed the collaboration between other organizations and ways he can become involved to present to those organizations the agency's mission. Commissioner Mohr also continues to work closely with the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force on the development of their Hate Report project.

2021 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

June 24, 2021: Via Conference Call
July 29, 2021: Via Conference Call
August 26, 2021: Via Conference Call
September 23, 2021: Via Conference Call
October 28, 2021: Via Conference Call

Chair Cook requested the commission meeting in July be rescheduled due to conflicting schedules. The commission agreed to move the commission meeting date from July 22, 2021 to July 29, 2021.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:59A.M.

Respectfully submitted by,
Deborah Gonzales