



**Human Rights Commission**  
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**DRAFT VERMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
June 27, 2024**

PRESENT: Commissioners: Kevin **CHRISTIE**, Chair; Nathan **BESIO**; Joan **NAGY**; **Bruce WILSON** (remotely). Staff: Big Hartman, Executive Director & General Counsel (“**ED**”); Mitch Rotbert, Senior Counsel (minutes); Kelly Poupore, Attorney Investigator (“**Poupore**”). Legal intern: Katherine Sanberg-Lawrence.

ABSENT: Dawn **ELLIS** (no reason provided).

Attorney Investigator Cassandra Burdyslaw (“**Burdyslaw**”) entered the meeting remotely at 10:28 a.m.

Attorney Investigator Daniel Flynnjac (“**Flynjac**”) entered the meeting in person at 12:30 p.m.

Commissioner Mary **MARZEC-GERRIOR** (alternate) entered the meeting (remotely) at 2:45 p.m.

Commissioner Don **VICKERS** (alternate) entered the meeting (remotely) at 2:48 p.m.

**CHRISTIE** called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

At 9:16 a.m., **CHRISTIE** moved to accept as written the minutes of the Commission meeting held April 25, 2024. **WILSON** seconded. **Motion passed (2 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstained).**

At 9:17, a.m., **NAGY** moved to accept as written the minutes of the Commission meeting held May 23, 2024. **BESIO** seconded. **Motion passed (3 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained).**

**EXECUIVE SESSION**

At 9:18 a.m. **NAGY** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor (4-0).**

At 9:43 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### **Executive Director Report**

**ED** reported that the Commission reported that the budget received for FY 2025, the Commission is substantially underfunded. Discussion thereon. **CHRISTIE** indicated that budget adjustment may result in a different outcome. **ED** reported that budget adjustment begins in October and requires the executive to agree with the adjustment requested. **ED** indicated that other avenues for funding, *e.g.*, if the Commission investigates more HUD-sponsored claims, there may be an incrementally greater reimbursement from HUD. **WILSON** inquired about whether the Commission sought funding for community outreach; **ED** responded that **ED** sought such support, but was denied.

Discussion on scheduling a retreat date. August 8, 2024, reserved.

In HRC Case No. HV24-0006, HUD Case No. 01-24-4349-8, **NAGY** moved the Commission to determine that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Respondent Stockton Security unlawfully discriminated against Complainant with respect to disability in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act (“VFHPAA”), 9 V.S.A. § 4503. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0).**

In HRC Case No. HV24-0006, HUD Case No. 01-24-4349-8, discussion on PDCA between Complainant and Dhruv Kumar, presented by **Poupore**. Commission voted unanimously to approve the PDCA.

In HRC Case No. HV24-0007, HUD Case No. 01-24-4350-8, discussion on PDCA between Complainant and Castleton University, presented by **Poupore**. Commission voted unanimously to approve the PDCA.

At 10:28 a.m., **Poupore** was excused and **Burdyslaw** was admitted.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 10:28 a.m., **NAGY** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor (4-0).**

At 11:02 a.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

In HRC Case No. HV24-0017, HUD Case No. 01-24-4431-8, **BESIO** moved the Commission to determine that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent unlawfully discriminated against Complainant with respect to race, color, or receipt of public

assistance, in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A § 4503. **NAGY** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0).**

At 11:02 a.m., **Burdyslaw** was excused.

At 11:07 a.m., **CHRISTIE** ordered lunch break.

At 12:30 p.m., **Flynjac** was admitted in person.

At 12:30 p.m., **CHRISTIE** called the Commission back to order.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 12:35 p.m., **BESIO** moved to go into executive session to discuss matters about which premature general public knowledge would clearly place the HRC at substantial disadvantage. **NAGY** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0).**

At 12:35 p.m., **Burdyslaw** was readmitted to the meeting (remotely).

At 1:05 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of executive session for the purpose of discussing matters about which premature general public knowledge would clearly place the HRC at substantial disadvantage.

At 1:05 p.m., **BESIO** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **NAGY** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor (4-0).**

At 1:34 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

In HRC Case No. PA24-0008, **Burdyslaw** presented a PDCA resolving the matter. Commission voted unanimously to approve the PDCA.

In HRC Case No. HV24-0020, HUD Case No. 01-24-4507-8, **NAGY** moved the Commission to determine that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent unlawfully discriminated against Complainant with respect to disability in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A § 4503, and that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent retaliated against the Complainant, in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A § 4506. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0).**

At 1:40 p.m., **Burdyslaw** was excused.

At 1:41 p.m., **CHRISTIE** invited **ED** to continue their report.

### **Executive Director Report (cont'd)**

ED reported that the staff is handling a greater volume of cases than ever, and that the shorter form of Investigative Report appears to contribute to staff's capacity to complete investigations in a timely fashion. We now have 11 cases filed in Vermont courts, with at least one more about to file. The Commission has had a drop in cases accepted, which is attributed to staff's work. ED commended Legal Intern for her consummate assistance and professionalism.

ED invited Commissioners to discuss ED's draft agenda for the retreat. Discussion held thereon.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 1:55 p.m., **NAGY** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor (4-0)**.

At 2:40 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

### **BUSINESS MEETING**

In HRC Case No. PA23-0013, **NAGY** moved the Commission to determine that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent Jay Focus Group, Inc., unlawfully discriminated against Complainant with respect to disability in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A § 4502(b). **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0)**.

In HRC Case No. PA23-0013, **NAGY** and that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that "Respondent 2" unlawfully discriminated against Complainant with respect to disability in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A § 4502(b). **WILSON** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0)**.

At 2:45 p.m., **NAGY** was excused.

At 2:45 p.m., **MARZEC-GERRIOR** was admitted (remotely).

At 2:48 p.m., **VICKERS** was admitted (remotely).

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 2:57 p.m., **BESIO** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **VICKERS** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor (5-0)**.

At 4:12 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

In HRC Case No. PA23-0003, **CHRISTIE** moved the Commission to determine that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent retaliated against “Q.A.” due to his parents’ protected activity, in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A § 4506(e). **BESIO** seconded. **Vote in favor of the motion (3): BESIO, CHRISTIE, and WILSON. Vote against the motion (2): MARZEC-GERRIOR and VICKERS.**

At 4:14 p.m., **MARZEC-GERRIOR** was excused.

At 4:15 p.m., **BESIO** moved to adjourn. **VICKERS** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (4-0).**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING Thursday, July 25, 2024.**

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont this 28th day of June 2024.

Respectfully submitted:

/s/ Big Hartman

Big Hartman  
Executive Director