



Human Rights Commission
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**DRAFT VERMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES
August 22, 2024**

PRESENT: Commissioners: Kevin **CHRISTIE**, Chair; Joan **NAGY**; Nathan **BESIO** (remotely).

ABSENT: Dawn **ELLIS**; Bruce **WILSON**.

Staff: Big Hartman, Executive Director & General Counsel (“**ED**”); Mitch Rotbert, Senior Counsel (minutes); Katherine Samberg-Lawrence, Summer Intern.

Attorney Investigator Poupore (“**Poupore**”) entered the meeting in person at 10:00 a.m.

Attorney Investigator Flynnjac (“**Flynjac**”) entered the meeting in person at 10:16 a.m.

CHRISTIE called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m.

BUSINESS MEETING

At 9:42 a.m., **NAGY** moved to accept as written the minutes of the Commission meeting held July 25, 2024. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote on the motion (3-0)**.

Executive Director Report

At 9:42 a.m., **ED** commenced their report to the Commissioners. **ED** reported observations after having taken over the intake in late June/early July. ESA role not sustainable as assigned in the past; **ED** is adjusting intake policies accordingly, with a lot of headway. It is more efficient for **ED** to return phone calls and do the intake; phone intake is intense; many callers having been through one or more prior agencies seeking some form of relief. **ED** caring for their own stress, delegating as possible.

ED reported on staff. Vanessa Bonebo, new ESA, begins August 26, 2024. Other staff on leave.

ED reported on the budget. Expenses and liabilities exceed budget allocation from the administration by \$25,589. HRC made it through in FY24 due to Pay Act increases, which came at the last minute. We are budgeted to receive an increase from HUD.

ED reported generally on PDCAs.

EXECUIVE SESSION

At 10:17 a.m. **NAGY** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor (3-0).**

At 1:17 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

BUSINESS MEETING

In HRC Case No. PA23-0018, **BESIO** moved the Commission to determine that **there are** reasonable grounds to believe that the Respondents unlawfully discriminated against Complainant based on disability in violation of the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act (“VFHPAA”), 9 V.S.A. § 4502. **NAGY** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

In HV23-0013, HUD Case No. 01-23-3790-8, **NAGY** moved the Commission to determine that **there are not** reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent discriminated against the Complainant based on race, color, or religion in violation of the VFHPAA, 9 V.S.A § 4503(a)(2). **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

Executive Director Report (cont’d)

At 1:20 p.m., **ED** returned to discussion on recent PCDAAs.

ED explained the Pre-Determination Conciliation Agreement resolving HRC Case No. HV23-0004, HUD Case No. 01-22-2346-8. Commission voted to approve the PDCA.

ED reported a Post-Determination Conciliation Agreement resolving HRC Case No. PA23-0009. Commission voted to approve the PDCA.

ED reported a Post-Determination Conciliation Agreement resolving HRC Case No. E23-0002. Commission voted to approve the PDCA.

Flynjac was excused at 1:34 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 1:47 p.m., **NAGY** moved to go into executive session to discuss matters about which premature general public knowledge would clearly place the HRC at substantial disadvantage. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

At 2:00 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.

EXECUIVE SESSION

At 2:08 p.m., **NAGY** moved to go into executive session to discuss confidential cases. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

At 4:07 p.m., **CHRISTIE** took the Commission out of Executive Session.

BUSINESS MEETING

In HV23-0016, HUD Case No. 01-23-3797-8, **NAGY** moved the Commission to determine that **there are** reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent discriminated against the Complainant based on disability in violation of the VFHPAA, 9 V.S.A § 4503. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

In HV24-0024, HUD Case No. 01-24-4345-8, **BESIO** moved the Commission to find that **there are not** reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent discriminated against the Complainants based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity in violation of the VFHPAA, 9 V.S.A § 4503. **NAGY** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

In HV24-0024, HUD Case No. 01-24-4345-8, **NAGY** moved the Commission to find that **there are not** reasonable grounds to believe that Respondent discriminated against the Complainants based on disability in violation of the VFHPAA, 9 V.S.A § 4503. **BESIO** seconded. **Unanimous vote in favor of the motion (3-0).**

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

NEXT MEETING Thursday, September 26, 2024.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this day 22nd day of August 2024.

Respectfully submitted:



Big Hartman, Esq.
Executive Director & General Counsel