



VT Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
<http://hrc.vermont.gov>

[phone] 802-828-2480
[fax] 802-828-2481
[tdd] 877-294-9200
[toll free] 1-800-416-2010

**VERMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 20, 2018**

PRESENT: Commissioners: Kevin Christie, Chair, Donald Vickers, Mary Brodsky, Nathan Besio, and Dawn Ellis. Staff: Karen Richards, Executive Director, Nelson Campbell, and Bor Yang, Administrative Law Examiners, Jocelyn Bolduc, Executive Staff Assistant (minutes).

Commissioner Christie called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m.

BUSINESS MEETING

MINUTES: Vickers moved to accept the minutes of the August 13, 2018 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Brodsky. Vote 4-0 Ellis absent

Vickers moved to accept the minutes of the August 23, 2018 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Brodsky. Vote 4-0 Ellis absent

Vickers moved to accept the minutes of the September 10, 2018 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Brodsky. Vote 4-0 Ellis absent

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Brodsky made a motion to go into executive session to hear a confidential case at 9:27 a.m. The motion was seconded by Vickers. Vote 5-0 (Ellis present).

The Chair brought the VHRC out of executive session at 11:09 a.m.

“Mr. Oak” o/b/o “K.O.” v. Town of Waterbury

VHRC Case No. PA17-0005

Vickers moved to accept the recommendation of reasonable grounds. The motion was seconded by Ellis. Vote 4-1 (Brodsky opposed)

BUSINESS MEETING – Continued

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Budget: The HRC ended FY18 with \$22,508.88 in carry forward. Our carry forward plan was approved by AoA. We are currently \$55,000 under budget. So far there is no word from the

AoA regarding this year's budget expectations. ED Richards expects a memo from them any time about this. We received notice of our federal grant allocation from HUD. It will be \$74,300 which is slightly less than the \$76,100 budgeted. This is mainly due to HUD's change in how training money is allocated which as previously reported as resulted in receipt of \$13,200 less in training funds. The loss of this funding was included in our carry forward plan.

A glitch has been encountered with our mediator contracts. Changes in state contracting provisions have resulted in HRC having no mediators who carry the amount of insurance coverage necessary even with a waiver of some of the provisions. We are therefore proposing to do a simplified bid process with the AGO but will still need to seek a waiver that sets a more realistic insurance amount.

Staffing: ALE Position was re-advertised with a slightly better response this time. First interviews were held September 17th with second interviews on September 24th. The new ED, Yang, will make the decision as to who to hire for the (now) two open ALE positions.

ESA Bolduc has resigned from her position. Her last day will be October 19, 2018.

Updates: 30th Anniversary Celebration – Further discussion on holding some sort of “celebration” in the Statehouse cafeteria during the Legislative session providing opportunity to engage legislators with our work and promote the HRC. ED Richards will work with ALE Yang on logistics.

Discussion: ALE Yang and Commissioners had brief discussion about postponing the October 12, 2018 staff/commissioner retreat. Commissioners agreed to cancel the October 12, 2018 meeting. Instead to have a meet and greet with new staff on a smaller scale in December. Further discussion and planning to be tabled until the October 25, 2018 Commission meeting.

A celebration of ED Richards career to wish her well in retirement will be held after the October 25, 2018 meeting in Montpelier. ALE Yang will contact local businesses to secure a space for this event.

Changes to HRC Staffing: In-coming Executive Director Yang wants to restructure the ALE position to create a Chief ALE position that would supervise the other two ALEs. This would relieve the executive director of some of these day to day responsibilities so she can focus on the other work. A request for reclassification will be submitted to DHR for this purpose.

The Commission engaged in a wide-ranging discussion about how to augment HRC staff to enable the agency to be more effective.

Commissioner Brodsky made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel and litigation matters at 1:30 where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the

HRC at substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vickers. Vote: 5-0.

The Chair brought the VHRC out of executive session at 2:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING October 25, 2018

The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont this 20th day of September 2018.

Respectfully submitted:



Karen L. Richards
Executive Director