



VT Human Rights Commission
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VERMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 21, 2017

PRESENT: Commissioners: Mary Marzec-Gerrior, Chair, Donald Vickers, Mary Brodsky, Nate Besio, Dawn Ellis. Staff: Karen Richards, Executive Director, Nelson Campbell, Bor Yang, and Ayn Lee Sing, Administrative Law Examiners, Jocelyn Bolduc, Executive Staff Assistant (minutes).

Commissioner Marzec-Gerrior called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m.

BUSINESS MEETING

Marzec-Gerrior amended the agenda to include scheduling of the 2018 Commission meetings.

MINUTES: Brodsky moved to accept the minutes of the August 24, 2017 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Vickers. Vote 5-0

MINUTES: Ellis moved to accept the minutes of the August 31, 2017 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Besio. Vote 5-0

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Budget: The Agency of Administration (AoA) considered the HRC request to retain \$31,539.70 in carryforward and approved the retention of all but \$10,000 of those funds which will revert to the general fund. There was no action by the AoA with regard to HRC special funds.

HUD Grant: The issue of HRC access to the electronic system for accessing federal funds was finally resolved. Our SFY18/FFY17 appropriation of \$70,700 is now available to the HRC along with the \$6000 remaining from our FHAP Partnership grant in FFY16.

Gender Neutral Driver Licenses: ED Richards continues to work with LGBTQIA Alliance and law enforcement to explore changing driver licenses and DPCs to give a gender neutral choice of X in addition to M and F. Law enforcement will be having a discussion at the Law Enforcement Advisory Board (LEAB) meeting on October 11th. ED Richards is planning to attend.

Fair and Impartial Policing Policy: At Vickers request ED Richards explained further about what this policy is meant to do. The policy is being changed so that all police agencies in the state are

adhering to the same guidelines, especially around immigration issues. This will ensure that regardless of where an individual is stopped in the state, they can expect that the same guidelines apply. The deadline for approval of the new policy by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council is January 1, 2018.

Racial Disparities: The meeting of stakeholders to look at and help recommend strategies for addressing racial disparities across other systems including education, housing, healthcare, labor and employment and economic development is set for September 28th from 2-4 p.m. in Room 10 at the Statehouse. We are hoping that it will be well attended and will generate good ideas for moving forward. From that meeting the plan is to do a draft of the report that is due on November 1, 2017 and send that out for comment. We may try to hold a second community forum in the evening in Chittenden County but timing is obviously tight.

Professional Development: Commissioner Ellis wondered if the HRC could compile and provide information to the public of other agencies/organizations/websites offering free professional development for individuals wanting to learn more about implicit bias or other issues related to HRC work.

Post Case Updates:

Diallo v. Thrifty, PA16-0007- The first of two trainings (the final deliverables from the mediated agreement) was completed on September 20th. The second is scheduled for September 26, 2017 and will be conducted by ALE Yang.

Nolan v. Wesco d/b/a Capital Deli, PA17-0002- The parties will be going to formal mediation on October 5, 2017.

Fortin v. Grey Fox Inn, PA17-0010- The HRC is considering possible options for pursuing the matter in court.

Hay v. UVMMC- PA16-0016- The parties are actively discussing settlement.

Brenda Churchill from the LGBTQIA Alliance met with Commissioners and staff and answered questions regarding transgender status. The conversation was interesting and thought provoking and assisted staff and Commissioners in gaining a greater understanding of the issues facing transgender people and the ways in which the Commission can be more accommodating in working with them.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioners and Staff engaged in strategic planning for FY18. The major areas of focus, in addition to on-going initiatives will be in continuing to explore restorative approaches to the HRC work and in a concerted outreach effort.

Commissioners and Staff engaged in brainstorming for the thirtieth anniversary of the Human Rights Commission but there were no specific decisions about how to proceed. The ED will distill the ideas into some concrete proposals for further discussion.

NEXT MEETING: October 21, 2017 at the Human Rights Commission Office

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont this 21st day of September 2017.

Respectfully submitted:



Karen L. Richards
Executive Director