

New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights



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JOANNE RUIZ

NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

August 4, 2022, at 5:15 PM

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners present: Christian Kim (chair), Basra Mohamed (via Zoom-at home alone-left the meeting at 6:07 PM), Adrienne Evans, Nancy LeRoy (via Zoom-at home alone), and Elizabeth Asch, Douglas Palardy, and Harvey Keye

Commission Staff: Executive Director, Ahni Malachi
And Investigator, Kelly Mederos

Commissioner Kim called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Kim asked if anyone from the public was present and wished to make public comment. There was no one present.

2. APPROVAL OF JUNE MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Palardy moved, and Commissioner Asch seconded a motion to approve the minutes.

3. GACDI UPDATE

Executive Director Malachi discussed how the Governor's Council on Diversity and Inclusion ("GACDI") is working on an educational tool kit. She stated that when the GACDI has a final draft of the tool kit she will release a copy to the Commissioners to review, so they may provide thoughts and comments to Ahni. The primary goal of the tool kit is to provide guidance to schools on preventing bias-based incidents.

Executive Director Malachi believes the toolkit will also have tools the NH CHR can utilize in their own educational trainings.

Commissioner Keye asked if there will be an Executive Order on this guidance from the GACDI. Executive Director Malachi stated that other states have various organizations that are issuing similar guidance that either deal with hate crimes in the criminal justice forum and/or school forum. Our purpose is ultimately to ensure educators and school administrators have guidance available to aid in preventing bias incidents while also available strategies to use in teaching students about these issues without the need to involve the police.

4. OFFICE UPDATES

Executive Director Malachi explained the HRC's newest hire is Joanne Ruiz, as the NHHRC's Intake Coordinator. She was previously a paralegal at the DOJ in the Civil Rights Unit and is currently being trained on the NHHRC process by primarily Investigator Katrina Taylor and Investigator Kelly Mederos since Assistant Executive Director Sarah Burke-Cohen is out.

Executive Director Malachi also explained that our summer internships have ended. However, Executive Director Malachi is hopeful that Piper might come back for an additional internship. Executive Director Malachi is also in the process of scheduling an interview for the NHCHR's vacant Paralegal position.

Executive Director Malachi explained that the Commission is presenting the Ethnic and Cross Cultural Skills Development training for a Manchester business. Executive Director Malachi discussed how the costs of printing/materials made to give out at this training was high and Commissioners discussed thoughts on how to reduce cost.

Executive Director Malachi discussed the EEOC National Conference that she attended via video conference. She is working on getting the substance of the materials shared at the conference with the legal updates to Investigators and Commissioners at the NHHRC.

Executive Director Malachi also discussed the NH Department of Justice training available online with modulars that she will be sharing, except for Commissioner Mohamed who will be offered this training through CLE training.

Executive Director Malachi is also going to be attending a FEPA conference in Rhode Island specific to our regional offices to share best practices, issues, and new experiences the various agencies in our region are dealing with.

Executive Director Malachi is going to be a key note speaker for the NH School Administrators Association (NHSAA). She stated that this will be a great opportunity to promote what we do at the NHHRC.

Executive Director Malachi is also working on creating a new event for community connections, under both umbrellas of the HRC and GACDI. The workshops will take place in Concord and Manchester. The focus of the event is to connect new American, Immigrant/Refugee, and minority organizations with state and federal resources and services. The EEOC is participating and assisting with funding for these events. Next year she will do her best to plan to hold this workshop in Nashua, pursuant to Commissioner Keye's request.

Executive Director Malachi discussed how the NHCHR is working on moving forward with the website update project and discussed how Investigator Nicole Lemelin has been diligently working on creating a template website design. Commissioner Kim asked what they could do to help.

Executive Director Malachi explained that the NHCHR is also working on getting a case management system. She explained that currently the NHCHR only has use of the EEOC's database called ARC. However, because it has limited functions, Executive Director Malachi has applied to get a grant from the State to fund our own case management system. If approved, Executive Director Malachi plans to use the same system as the HRC in Maine, with any additional improvements needed.

5. REVIEW OF INVESTIGATOR CASE LOAD

Executive Director Malachi discussed the investigator caseload. Executive Director Malachi said the investigators continue to move cases through the process efficiently. The Commission completed 100% of the 200 cases required as part of the EEOC Contract. The NHCHR asked for 20 more cases, and then asked for another additional 15 cases, for a total amount of 235 cases, which we have enough cases in the processes of being closed so that we know we will meet by the October deadline.

6. HEARING SCHEDULE UPDATE

Executive Director Malachi discussed the hearing scheduling and updated it.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Asch discussed how Assistant Executive Director Sarah Burke-Cohen and the interns came to her business in Lebanon to present the NHCHR's comprehensive training for businesses.

Executive Director Malachi explained the new technical updates to the NHCHR meeting room that will allow for more efficient video conferencing for public hearings and Commissioner meetings.

Additionally, Commissioner Palardy discussed how there are numerous Commissioner's that will be ending their term and wanted to bring it to Executive Director Malachi's

attention that the NHCHR may want to think about replacements and make recommendations.

8. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Palardy moved for adjournment and Commissioner Keye seconded. The Commissioner's meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.