

New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights

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NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

March 7, 2024, at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners present: Christian Kim (chair), Nancy LeRoy, Basra Mohamed, Elizabeth Asch, Adrienne Evans, and Melissa Moriarty (virtual)

Commission Staff: Executive Director, Ahni Malachi
Assistant Director, Sarah Burke Cohen
Investigator, Katrina Taylor
Investigator, Erica Rosignol (Clerk)

Commissioner Kim called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES

Commissioner Asch moved, and Commissioner LeRoy seconded a motion to approve the minutes for January.

The Commission moved into a non-meeting session with the Commission's counsel at 5:12PM. The Commission moved backed into public session at 5:37PM.

3. GACDI UPDATE

Executive Director Malachi discussed the ongoing work of the Governor's Council on Diversity and Inclusion ("GACDI"). There was a presentation regarding the

developmental disability community. Commissioner Evans elaborated on the discussion about the developmental service system and concerning items, including a state statute regarding mental health facilities excluding those with developmental disabilities. Executive Director Malachi has a list of artists names for the commission of Roger Johnson's portrait. The NH Arts Council will narrow down the list of artists to send to GACDI. Executive Director Malachi also spoke to the Director of the NH Arts Council, Adele about potential grants and public artwork for the Commission's office walls.

4. OFFICE UPDATES

Executive Director Malachi discussed items that needed to be completed from the 2019 Financial Audit, including tackling the Continuation of Operations Plan ("COOP"). Executive Director Malachi met with HSEM, who will work to assist in the process, which could take approximately a year.

Executive Director Malachi has continued to discuss a case management system at weekly meetings with DOIT. She will talk to a company with DOIT, who is a current vendor of the state for a preview. If this vendor is selected, the Commission likely has the funds to move forward with the project. The vendor may have the ability to work with the staff individually to determine needs and access. It was also noted that the vendor is more expensive on licensing but less for hosting, as DOIT hosts the vendor. Commissioner Kim asked if RFP is required for the process in acquiring a vendor for a case management system. Executive Director Malachi clarified that RFI is typical for this process, if at all, but said this would not be required if a company is already contracted by the state.

Executive Director Malachi was part of a panel for legislation as part of an event for a Certified Public Manager program. The budget cycle has begun with the 7D process requesting position, Executive Director Malachi will be moving forward based on previous suggestions. The rules (100s-300s) have been submitted and Commissioners will be notified when a public hearing is set.

The Hate Crimes Seminar will become a series across the state. Dates are currently being determined. The next forum will likely take place in the western region of the state in a couple of months. Executive Director Malachi will distribute flyers about the forum to the Commissioners at a later date.

Executive Director Malachi gave a legislative update. Senate (SB 565) and house (HB 1165) both voted on the bill to pass. Commissioner Asch asked for clarification on the bill, as it may provide additional awareness. Commissioner Mohammed mentioned that the bill strategically works as an added barrier that strategically target occurrences, such as black woman in corporate jobs or the military discriminated against for their hair style. Executive Director Malachi clarified that the Commission has jurisdiction over matters with a basis of race, color, and national origin, however the Crown Act appears to cater to a specific group. Depending on where (house or senate) the bill is passed, the impact for the Commission would be how it would be adhered to Charges. Executive

Director Malachi also mentioned the Commission's efforts to add guidance and awareness to this area of jurisdiction.

5. REVIEW OF INVESTIGATOR CASE LOAD

Investigator Taylor reported 27 mediations have been scheduled so far for the year. 10 mediations have been scheduled for March. Investigator Taylor also noted movement in pending file and as there has been increased interest in the mediation program. Assistant Director Burke Cohen added that firms who have not previously participated have now begun to engage in mediation program.

Assistant Director Burke Cohen reported there are 283 total pending cases and 86 contract cases closed for FFY 2024. She is now assigning cases out of 2023 in the pending file. The new investigators are working up to a full case load of 25 cases. This means an anticipated 100 cases out of pending file.

6. HEARING SCHEDULE UPDATE

Assistant Director Burke Cohen discussed the public hearing schedule, including a case where Respondent had been dissolved has been amended to reflect a successor of interest. The remainder of the cases are the two that have settled today.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Investigator Taylor distributed the list of 2024 mediators to vote on appointment. Three new mediators were added to the list, including Alex Atilli., Michael Lambert, Esq., and William Noonan. Commissioner Moriarity asked about the screening process of mediators and conflict of interest. Investigator Taylor explained that most of the listed mediators have experience or have been practicing attorneys. She also explained that part of the assignment process to a case is checking for conflict of interest amongst involved parties.

Mediator Appointment: Commissioner LeRoy moved to approve and appoint the presented list of mediators. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken in which all present voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

8. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kim moved for adjournment. The Commissioner's meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.