



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission**  
**Thursday, May 4, 2017**

Present: Commissioners Chair Chanta Bhan, Olinda Marshall, Nicholas Leydon, Bonita Cox, Cynthia Orellana, Chara Itoka, Amanda Savage, Joshua Stradlan, and CHRC Staff Nancy Schlacter, Crystal Rosa, Attorney/Investigator Acloque, CPD Dept. Supt. Steve DeMarco.

Absent: Commissioners Vice-Chair Nadia Davila, Sabrina Selk, and Mercedes Evans.

Documents Used:

- March Minutes
- May Agenda

**1. Call to order**

Chair Bhan called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

**2. Public Comment**

No comment

**3. Review and approval of March Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the March meeting and approved them on a motion from Commissioner Leydon, seconded by Commissioner Cox, with two abstentions from Chanta Bhan and Olinda Marshall.

**4. Executive Director's Report**

ED Schlacter updated the Commission on cases, staff activities and outreach. Since the March meeting, 3 new cases opened, 7 cases are pending, and 2 cases closed. The pending cases involve housing complaints alleging: discrimination based on their source of income, discrimination based on race and color, discrimination based on race, color, and sex, discrimination against a person with a disability; and discrimination and retaliation based on race, color, and national origin. There is 1 pending case alleging employment discrimination based on race, color, national origin, and disability. ED Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Acloque attended the Community Engagement Team (CET) - Network Event Planning Team (NEPT) event focused on how to outreach effectively to Spanish-speaking communities. At the networking event, there was a presentation by Cliff Cooke, City Demographer; Former Vice-Mayor Dennis Benzen; and El Mundo Publisher Alberto Vasallo to 80 attendees, including city staff and local nonprofits. CHRC staff coordinated the Fair and Affordable Housing Open House held on Saturday, April 29. Despite the beautiful weather, there were approximately 100 individuals who attended the indoor event. The organizations involved were glad to have the opportunity to network with other housing related service providers.

**5. May Meeting Follow Up**

• **Speakers on Gentrification**

Commissioners expressed interest regarding a speaker on gentrification, specifically about housing and the changing landscape of small business community in Cambridge. Chris Cotter, Director of Housing, is scheduled for the June meeting.

- **Fair Housing Ordinance**  
FHO is still under review by the City Law Dept. to prepare for Home Rule petition to Legislature.
- **Debt-bondage in Cambridge immigrant community**  
After sending a letter to Senator Montigny, Chair Bhan received a response to arrange a meeting with him and discuss what would be helpful to support House Bill No 4595 Anti-human Trafficking Law (Senate, No. 2461). At the March meeting, Commissioners Itoka, Cox and Leydon expressed interest in participating in the conversation. The Commission was reminded that up to 4 commissioners could meet without violating Open Meeting Law. Chair Bhan stated she will follow up with the interested members of the Commission to attend a meeting with Senator Montigny.
- **Trainer for Businesses re: Transgender Rights in Public Accommodations**  
ED Schlacter has discussed this idea with Elysia Chandler, the LGBTQ+ Research Associate, who referred her to Kimm Topping, an LGBTQ+ Cmsn member who is a trainer on transgender issues. ED Schlacter also met with the License Commission, who will provide information about the training in their announcements to bars and restaurants. Attorney Investigator Acloque has reached out to the MCAD, regarding any guidance they have pertaining to gender-inclusive bathroom best practices. Ms. Acloque will assist Ms. Topping with the trainings. ISD will also provide information on building/plumbing code requirements affecting bathroom construction or renovation. Cambridge Local First (CLF) has not been contacted yet. Commissioner Itoka volunteered to contact CLF to start a discussion after ED Schlacter connects with Kimm Topping from the LGBTQ+ Commission.

## **New Business**

- **Spring CLC presentations**  
The Human Rights Commission was prepared to provide training to English language learners (ELLs) at the Community Learning Center (CLC) in May. However, ED Schlacter has learned that CLC students and staff want KYR trainings this year, instead of CHRC presentations. Presentations for CHRC will be placed on hold.
- **July and August meetings**  
ED Schlacter reviewed the Open Meeting Law policy regarding minutes, which explains that if a quorum is not reached, then the gathering it is not a meeting, and minutes do not need to be taken. ED Schlacter clarified that if there is speaker scheduled for a meeting for which there is no quorum reached, they will present, despite lack of quorum. Chair Bhan asked that members of the Commission inform CHRC staff whether they will attend the meeting by noon on the day of the meeting, to ensure that quorum can be met. In the past, a quorum has been difficult to achieve in the summer months, and a summer break has helped many members come back in the fall energized. Not having meetings in July and August was approved unanimously on a motion from Commissioner Orellana, seconded by Commissioner Marshall.
- **CHRC presentations at CDD/Housing Division Inclusionary Units Meetings**  
Nothing is confirmed yet.
- **Outreach Opportunities**  
The Commission has expressed interest in participating in River Fest (11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, June 3, 2017) and Danehy Park Day (Saturday, Sept. 16). Volunteers are needed to staff the outreach table for the entire event time. CHRC staff will email the Commissioners more information regarding logistics and shifts for each event.

- Other outreach ideas provided by members of the Commission:
  - Baby U.
  - Cambridge Hospital
  - Cambridge Public Health Department
  - Cambridge Libraries
  - Schools
  - Department of Veterans' Services

Commissioner Orellana moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Leydon.

**Next Commission meeting will be Thursday, June 1, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Rm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Flr.**