



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission  
Thursday, December 6, 2018**

**Present:** Chair Chanta Bhan, Vice Chair Joshua Stadlan, Commissioners Katie Stack, Mercedes Evans, Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Michael Kourabas, Olinda Marshall, and Kuong Ly. City Staff: Police Superintendent Steven DeMarco, CHRC Staff: Executive Director Nancy Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Sabrina Acloque, and CHRC Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa

**Absent:** Commissioners Sabrina Selk and Bonita Cox.

**Documents Used:**

- November Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Chanta Bhan called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

**2. Review and approval of October Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the November meeting. Commissioner Evans moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Vice Chair Stadlan, and Commissioner Kourabas abstained. All others approved the minutes from the November meeting.

**3. Executive Director's Report**

ED Schlacter updated the members of the Commission on cases. Since the November meeting, two cases opened, and five cases are pending. The case closed due to lack of probable cause concerned allegations of discrimination in public accommodation based on race. The pending cases involve allegations of discrimination in places of public accommodation and housing, based on disability, gender, and national origin. ED Schlacter updated the Commission on staff training and activities. ED Schlacter attended the HUD Fair Housing Training Conference in Crystal City, Virginia from November 27-29. Attorney Investigator Acloque attended a training by Lee Gianetti, Cambridge's Director of Communications, on how to reduce bias when reviewing data. The training discussed ways decision-makers can avoid a rush to judgement. ED Schlacter announced that Commissioner Nadia Davila resigned her position. ED Schlacter explained the posting of the vacancy may be up longer because of the holidays.

**4. October meeting follow up:**

- **Baby U – Lead Law/Family Status discrimination**

Since Commissioner Davila resigned, the Commission agreed to put this idea on hold until Commissioner Selk is present to decide on how to move forward.

- **Connecticut Human Rights Commission Guidance on Non-discrimination in Hiring Veterans**

Commissioner Ly asked to postpone the discussion until the next meeting to provide time for research.

## 5. New Business:

- **Votes for 2019 CHRC Chair /Vice-Chair/Co-Chairs**

The vote was postponed until the next meeting because the Commission was unsure if Commissioner Cox was interested in accepting the nomination. Members nominated for the positions are current Chair Bhan, current Vice-Chair Stadlan, and Commissioner Evans. The Commission discussed the chair/vice-chair v. co-chairs model.

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights Reading**

The Main Library is planning a reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The event is scheduled for December 10, 2018 at 11:30 am. CHRC Staff will contact the library to inform them that Commissioners Evans and Forbes expressed interest in participating. Attorney Investigator Acloque will be reading as well.

- **Online Discrimination Intake Form**

Spanish and Kreyol translations of the form were published in mid-November. Commissioner Kourabas asked if the Spanish and Kreyol speaking communities had received announcements in those languages that the forms are available. CHRC staff explained that CET workers are provided the information and they distribute it among their language communities.

- **Update on the Fair Housing Ordinance – still pending**

The Fair Housing Ordinance is still awaiting a legislative ruling on the City's Home Rule petition, and therefore has not yet been approved. ED Schlacter stated that she will follow up with the law department on whether members of the commission can reach out to State Representative Marjorie Decker (or others) to help advocate.

## 6. Outreach:

- **Outreach to CRLS Guidance Counselors**

Commissioner Michael Kourabas stated that he will follow up on this topic.

- **Potential New Sites for CHRC Presentations**

Vice-Chair Stadlan asked if Commissioners could create a calendar of events that Commissioners could reference of possible outreach opportunities. ED Schlacter listed the general timeframes for the Community Learning Center presentations in Spring, the Fair Housing Event in April, summer events of Danehy Park Day and Riverfest. CHRC Staff explained the difficulty of getting volunteers for city events and expressed concern that having Commissioners focus on other events, which may make it more difficult for getting volunteers at events the city is planning. ED Schlacter also informed the

Commission that CDD's Housing Information sessions will occur in January and February and would be a great opportunity for additional outreach.

Commissioners brainstormed ideas for collaboration with other departments, such as a public viewing the PBS documentary "Race: the Power of Illusion." Another Commissioner suggested showing the documentary at the Fair Housing Event in April.

Commissioner Forbes shared that Harvard is organizing an LGBTQ film series symposium on human rights in April. Commissioner Forbes will provide more information when available.

## **7. Future Planning**

- **CHRC/LGBTQ+ Collaboration: Public Accommodations Law Trainings for Licensed Businesses**

Planning for this training is postponed for Spring because the Licensing Commission is in high demand due to the relicensing application deadline.

- **Annual Fair Housing Event in April**

Planning for the event has begun. The date of the event is still in process.

- **Presentation by CPD Superintendent DeMarco on Hate Crimes**

Commissioner Evans asked if CPD could present on data regarding Hate Crimes since the election. Superintendent DeMarco stated that he could have information ready to present for the next meeting.

Commissioner Ly moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Stadlan.

**Next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, January 3, 2018, in the Large Conference Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor at 7:03 p.m.**