



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, November 7, 2019**

Present: Co-Chair Mercedes Evans, Co-Chair Joshua Stadlan, Commissioners Olinda Marshall, Katie Stack, Bonita Cox, Kuong Ly, Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, and Michael Kourabas. City Staff: CHRC Staff: Executive Director Nancy Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Sabrina Acloque, and CHRC Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa

Absent: Commissioners Sabrina Selk and Brandon Morgan, Attorney/Investigator Acloque.

Documents Used:

- October Minutes

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Mercedes Evans called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. No member of the public was present, and no one was recording the meeting.

2. Review and approval of October Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the October 3rd meeting. Commissioner Stack moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Cox.

3. Executive Director's Report

ED Schlacter updated the members of the Commission on cases. Since the October meeting, there is one new case open and two cases pending. One case closed. The pending cases involve allegations of disability discrimination in housing. The case that was closed concerned allegations of disability discrimination in public accommodations and housing. ED Schlacter updated the Commission on staff training and activities. ED Schlacter, Co-Chair Evans, and Co-Chair Stadlan interviewed 4 of the 10 applicants for the current vacancies on the Commission. One applicant was selected and appointed by the City Manager. Project Coordinator Rosa participated in a training on domestic violence. ED Schlacter attended the Employees Committee on Diversity event: Stories from Puerto Rico for Hispanic Heritage Month. ED Schlacter also participated in a Large-Scale Debris Management interdepartmental tabletop exercise with the Cambridge Fire Department. ED Schlacter attended the Asian-American/Pacific Islander Civil Rights Conference in Boston. ED Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Acloque continued with their participation in ongoing training by CEII, specifically on Structural Racism Workshop. The main focus of this workshop was for city-wide management to internally reflect on how racism is perpetuated. ED Schlacter stated that Research Associate Amelia Joselow is currently drafting a report on Housing Challenges for the Elder LGBTQ+ community. ED Schlacter attended a NEPT planning meeting for an upcoming event in December. There will be a Fair

Housing Listening Session public meeting with CHRC staff and the Community Development Department Housing Division on Wednesday, November 13, 2019.

4. **October meeting follow up:**

- **Cambridge Affordable Housing Information Sessions**
Commissioner Kourabas volunteered at the session on September 12, 2019. Commissioner Kourabas briefed that he was surprised by the city's inclusionary program. CHRC staff will send out the flyer for the next housing session dates.
- **Follow-up Questions from Presentation by Director Betsy Allen, Office of the Equity and Inclusion**
The Commission wanted to address the disparity between the representation of Asian-Americans in Cambridge and the limited representation of Asian American/Pacific Islanders in the City's workforce. They asked if any particular steps are being taken to address this disparity.
- **Presentation from Commission for Persons with Disabilities**
Either Rachel Tanenhaus, Director of the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD), or Kate Thurman, Project Coordinator for CCPD, is available to present at the December 2019 meeting. The Commission has questions regarding the challenges they see more frequently. ED Schlacter explained that usually respondents are unaware of their obligations to provide reasonable accommodations. The Commission wants to know how CCPD advises people about reasonable accommodation.
- **Feedback**
CHRC Co-sponsored the "Pride & Progress: Film Festival & Symposium" on Friday, October 25, 2019. ED Schlacter, Commissioner Padamsee-Forbes, and Project Coordinator Rosa assisted with the event. It was a deep and meaningful event.
- **Follow-up Commissioner Activities**
Commission Kourabas is looking for speakers or consultants that work on antiracist training for dismantling white supremacy in the workplace.
- **Cambridge Public School Department**
CPSD Dep. Supt. Turk was invited to present again in Spring 2020 on progress on CPSD/CRLS equity and inclusion efforts. Dept. Supt. Turk confirmed that she and CPSD Director of Diversity Ramon DeJesus are both available for the May 7 CHRC meeting and the Commission agreed to have them speak on that date.
- **Hate Crimes Presentation**
Dept. Supt. Lowe agreed to update the Commission on the latest information regarding hate crimes in Cambridge at the January 9, 2020 meeting.
- **Demographics Presentation**
Cliff Cook was unavailable for the Commission meeting in June 2020. ED Schlacter will schedule Cliff Cook for the meeting in April 2020. Co-Chair Stadlan stated that he would be working on a project to plot where complaints have occurred in the city to compare that data with information Cliff Cook would present. The Commission would like Co-Chair Stadlan to pull demographic information from the case files to analyze possible patterns.

5. **Outreach**

- **Materials Updates**

Project Coordinator Rosa is working with the PIO Intern to design a general discrimination brochure/flyer that describes the work of the Commission.

- **CPD Stakeholder's Meeting**

Dep. Supt. Lowe stated that the Commission still has time to decide on when to present. All dates are yet to be determined. The stakeholder's meeting happens quarterly on a Thursday from 10 am-12 pm. The presentations are usually 15-20 minutes long.

Commissioner Cox moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m., seconded by Co-Chair Kourabas.

Next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, December 5, 2019, in the Large Conference Room on the 2nd Floor at 6:00 p.m.