



Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, January 7, 2021
Zoom Virtual Public Meeting
Michael Kourabas: Co-Chair

Present: Co-Chairs Michael Kourabas and Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Commissioners Katie Stack, Joshua Stadlan, Kaileigh Callender, Olinda Marshall, and Stefanie Haug

CHRC Staff: Executive Director Nancy Schlacter, Attorney Investigator Carolina Almonte, and Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa, and Cambridge Police Department Deputy Superintendent Robert Lowe

Absent: Commissioners Mercedes Evans, Bonita Cox, Brandon Morgan, and Sabrina Selk

Documents Used:

- November 5, 2020 Minutes

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Michael Kourabas called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Public Comment

No one was recording the meeting and members of the public were not present.

3. Introduction to Stefanie Haug

Members of the commission introduced themselves to the newest member, Stefanie Haug.

4. Review and approval of November 2020 Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the November 5th meeting. Co-Chair Padamsee Forbes moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Stadlan.

5. Executive Director's Report

ED Schlacter updated the members of the Commission on the latest cases. Since the November meeting, one new case opened resulting in five pending cases. Three of the cases involve a claim of discrimination in housing. In those housing complaints, the claims are based on the person's disability, source of income, national origin and family status, respectively. The other two pending cases involve a claim of discrimination in a place of employment. In those employment complaints, the claims are based on national origin, age and gender identity. The closed cases include two cases that involved a claim of discrimination in public accommodation based on race. The third closed case involved a claim of discrimination in housing based on race, national origin, and sex.

ED Schlacter also updated the Commission on staff training and activities. ED Schlacter and Project Coordinator (PC) Rosa virtually attended the National Fair Housing Alliance webinar “Healing our Divided Society: Fifty Years After the Kerner Commission Report.” ED Schlacter and PC Rosa completed the HUD Performance Assessment Interviews that are required every couple of years. ED Schlacter participated in the CET NEPT planning for their next quarterly event.

6. November 2020 meeting follow up

There was no quorum in December. Members of the commission held an open discussion about the events that occurred on January 6th at the Capitol.

7. New Business

Election of 2021 Chair/Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Padamsee Forbes suggested that the Commission postpone the 2021 elections of the Chairs because of the meetings missed due to COVID 19. Commissioner Callender motioned to postpone the election for 6 months until July 2021, seconded by Commissioner Haug. The vote was unanimously accepted.

Develop CHRC Annual Report

Co-Chair Padamsee Forbes proposed that the Commission work on creating an annual report like the one created by a Human Rights Commission in Vermont. ED Schlacter explained the department’s previous effort in creating an annual report only to learn that there was no demand for the report. ED Schlacter stated that she could not commit the next Executive Director to create an Annual Report, but it can be placed on the Agenda for future consideration.

8. Outreach

HUD Partnership Grant

PC Rosa provided the Commission with updates on the HUD partnership grant which is nearly complete. ED Schlacter and the ASL Interpreter were recorded on Zoom because of the COVID circumstances of social distancing. The recording is being reviewed and edited by 22 CityView. Closed Captioning will be added after the recording is finalized.

9. Future Planning

ED Schlacter is retiring at the end of January and will be leaving the new or interim Executive Director a memo on the work of the Commission and department staff. ED Schlacter cannot commit the new ED to any future projects.

Commissioner Callender moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Haug.

The next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, February 4, 2020, in the Large Conference Room on the 2nd Floor of 51 Inman at 6:00 p.m., or Virtually on Zoom, depending on the status of the City’s pandemic reopening policy.