



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission  
Thursday, February 4, 2021  
Zoom Virtual Public Meeting  
Yasmin Padamsee Forbes: Chair**

**Present:** Chair Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Commissioners Mercedes Evans, Katie Stack, Joshua Stadlan, Kaileigh Callender, Olinda Marshall, Stefanie Haug, and Sabrina Selk

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

**Absent:** Commissioners Bonita Cox, Brandon Morgan, and Michael Kourabas

**Documents Used:**

- January 7, 2021 Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Yasmin Padamsee Forbes called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**2. Public Comment**

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

**3. Review and approval of January 2021 Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the January 7th meeting. Commissioner Callender moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Stack.

**4. Executive Director's Report**

Attorney Investigator (AI) Carolina Almonte updated the members of the Commission on the latest cases. Since the January meeting, no new cases opened but one case closed. Currently, there are four pending cases, of which half of the cases involve a claim of discrimination in housing and the other half a claim of discrimination in employment. In the housing complaints, the claims are based on the person's source of income, national origin and family status, respectively. In the employment complaints, the claims are based on national origin, age and gender identity. The closed case involved a claim of discrimination in housing based on the person's disability.

AI Almonte also provided a brief summary of the finding from the HUD Performance Assessment. Project Coordinator (PC) Rosa updated the Commission on staff training and activities. PC Rosa and former ED Schlacter met with the City Manager for the Budget Hearing. PC Rosa attended a webinar by Lawyers for Civil Rights Boston on Sustainable

Cities and Language Access. PC Rosa has joined the Language Justice Working Group for the Family Policy Council. Through that work, PC Rosa met with Welcoming America and Nancy Tauber, Executive Director of the Family Policy Council.

**5. January 2020 meeting follow up**

- Acting Interim ED from Law Department has not yet been announced. CHRC staff will inform the Commission once it is finalized.
- Commissioner Callender informed the Commission that she participated in a workshop by the Attorney General on how criminal records can be sealed by mail-in applications.
- Co-Chair Padamsee Forbes attended a meeting of the Asian American Commission of Boston to see how their meetings were run.

**6. New Business**

Members of the Commission brought up issues they have experienced accessing information about vaccine distribution and using the State’s website. Concerns on whether the State is collecting data about communities of color were also discussed. Commissioner Selk directed the members to access data by race on the Department of Public Health website or to email her directly with any question on what the State is doing in response to COVID19 and vaccine distribution.

**7. Outreach**

**Fair Housing Event – Fair and Affordable Housing Open House**

PC Rosa will be meeting with her counterpart at the Community Development Department, Emily Solomon, on launching the story journal for Fair Housing Month in April. Work on the Story Journal is in progress.

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

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