

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**



**OFFICIAL COMMISSION MEETING**

January 8, 2020

One Judiciary Square, 441 Fourth Street, NW, Room 1117S

**ATTENDEES**

**Commissioners**

Earl D. Fowlkes, Jr., Chairperson  
Mark Herzog  
Adam E. Maier  
Wynter Allen  
Anika Simpson

Timothy Thomas  
John Robinson  
Eleanor Collison  
Karen Mulhauser  
Motoko Aizawa, Secretary

**Office of Human Rights Staff**

Mónica Palacio, Director  
Hnin Khaing, General Counsel  
Stacy Biney, Attorney Advisor  
Stephanie Franklin, Director of Communications  
& Community Engagement  
Camila Doherty

**Commission on Human Rights Staff**

Erika Pierson, Chief ALJ  
Toya Carmichael, ALJ

**MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

- a. Chairman Fowlkes called the Commission's Official Meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

**II. ROLL CALL**

- a. Chairman Fowlkes conducted the roll call.
- b. A total of 10 commissioners appeared. 7 were physically present and 3 via telecommunication. A quorum was present.

**III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

- a. The agenda was adopted.

#### **IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

- a. The November 13, 2019 meeting minutes were adopted by acclamation.

#### **V. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

- a. OHR Director Mónica Palacio, gave the report, highlighting the following:
  - i. Executive/Operations: Judge Erika L. Pierson began as the New Chief Administrative Law Judge on November 25, 2019. Judge Carmichael will be leaving the DC Commission of Human Rights, effective January 28, 2020.
  - ii. Enforcement: OHR has doubled in size in the last 6 years. OHR will restructure to reflect this growth and adapt to changing community needs. OHR is currently hiring more attorney advisors and supervisors.
  - iii. Communications & Community Affairs:
    - 1. COHR and OHR awarded the annual Neil Alexander Human Rights awards on Thursday, December 5, 2019, at Hogan Lovells. This year's event, "The Fight for 51," was centered on voting rights as a human right. A video of the event will be available on social media.
    - 2. The first report on street harassment in the district, from OHR and the Advisory Committee on Street Harassment (ACSH), will be published this spring. They have collected over 1600 survey responses. ACSH will develop model policies and training materials to provide to the District agencies about street harassment.
    - 3. OHR will hold its second Human Rights Liaison (HRL) of Fiscal Year 2020 on Wednesday, February 12 from 9:30am-4:30pm at 441 4<sup>th</sup> St NW, Washington, DC.
  - iv. Legislative Affairs:
    - 1. Director Palacio will testify before the Committee on Government Operations for OHR's Performance Oversight Hearing on Wednesday, January 22, 2020.
    - 2. On December 19, 2019, the Committee on Government Operations held a public hearing on the Attorney General Civil Rights Enforcement Clarification Amendment Act of 2019 (B23-0073). More than 30 public witnesses testified, and Director Palacio testified for OHR.

#### **VI. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

- a. The Commission discussed ways to improve the Commission and attendance of Commissioners at bi-monthly meetings, including:
  - i. Researching how Commissions function in DC and other cities
  - ii. Hosting Training Tribunals including Mock Tribunals
  - iii. Increasing outreach within Commissioner role
  - iv. Developing Best Practices/Toolkit to create better guidance for tribunals
  - v. Possibly moving location and/or time of Commission meetings
  - vi. Continuously assessing role of Commission and its function alongside OHR
  - vii. Possibly creating policy on gender equality
  - viii. Working to eliminate grey areas on who represents who in cases before the Commission

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Review of COHR Case Inventory and Case Assignments: The Commission reviewed the case inventory listed in order from oldest to newest case. OHR's role in cases prior to the Commission was also discussed.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Recap of Commission on Human Rights Awards:
  - i. Discussion around possibly changing the date of the award ceremony to early November to increase attendance, although there might be an issue because it is around the same time as election season.
  - ii. Moving forward, there will be two awardees.

## **IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. There were no announcements.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

- a. The Commission's January 2020 public meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.