



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
BI-MONTHLY PUBLIC MEETING

OFFICIAL COMMISSION MEETING
Via Microsoft Teams
January 12, 2022

ATTENDEES

Commissioners

Motoko Aizawa, Chair
Maria Burnett
Eleanor Collinson
Brian Griffey, newly-elected Vice Chair
Lauren Lowery
Adam E. Maier
Karen Mulhauser, newly-elected Secretary
Anika Simpson
Teri Quinn

Office of Human Rights Staff

Hnin Kaing, Interim Director
Charles Abbott, Esquire, Attorney Advisor
Alana Burnett, Esquire Attorney Advisor

Commission on Human Rights Staff

Brandes Ash, ALJ

Guests

Kency Nittler (OHR Intern)
Kennedy Olivia

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Chair Aizawa called the Commission's Official Meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

- a. Commissioner Simpson conducted the roll call.
- b. A total of 9 commissioners appeared. There was a quorum.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- a. The 01/12/2022 agenda was adopted.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

- a. The 11/10/2021 meeting minutes were adopted.

V. REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR

Before providing her report, Interim Director Khaing congratulated Chair Aizawa, members of the Awards Committee, Chief Judge Pierson and outgoing OHR Director of Communications and Community Engagement, Stephanie Franklin, for their work on last month's COHR Award Gala.

Thereafter, Interim Director Khaing provided the following updates to the Commission:

- a. Stephanie will be leaving OHR, her official last day is this week.
 - i. The agency will be looking for Stephanie's replacement.
 - ii. Interim Director Khaing looks forward to working with the Commission's Outreach Committee.
 - iii. OHR Community Engagement Specialist, Ajan Brown, will likely still be the Outreach Committee's point of contact.
- b. Some of OHR's litigation team is in attendance—Charles Abbott, Esquire and Alana Burnett, Esquire.
 - i. Attorney Abbott and Attorney Burnett introduced themselves to Commissioners and meeting attendees, and shared their background and experience.
- c. The job announcement for OHR's General Counsel position was posted on or around January 7, 2021.

- i. Position requirements include extensive litigation and civil rights experience.
- d. There have been several legislative updates, of which more information will be shared as legislation is passed, including:
 - i. Eviction Records Screening Amendment Act
 - ii. Cannabis Employment Protection Amendment Act of 2021---B24-109
- e. Commissioner Quinn inquired about additional OHR Human Rights Liaison training:
 - i. Interim Director shared the next (virtual) training will be held via WebEx on Wednesday, January 26, 2022 from 10 AM-3:30 PM.
 - ii. Interim Director Khaing stated she is also willing to conduct a training for Commissioners.

VI. REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

Judge Brandes Ash provided a report for the Commission on Human Rights (Commission), highlighting the following:

a. Commission Vacancies

- i. Interviews for Commission vacancies began in November 2021, shortly before the Thanksgiving holiday. We are coordinating with MOTA to complete interviews.
- ii. Judge Ash also pointed out that Commissioner Collinson is up for re-appointment.

b. Staffing Update

- i. The first round of interviews for the ALJ vacancy was conducted last month, with four applicants interviewed on December 17, 2021 and five applicants interviewed on December 20, 2021.
- ii. The second round of interviews was conducted last week, with each of the top two candidates interviewed on January 4th and January 5th respectively.
- iii. We anticipate that the ALJ vacancy will be filled in the immediate future.

VII. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION

- a. Chair Aizawa began her report by commenting on the Commission's very successful COHR Awards Gala, that more than 60 people attended, including the D.C.'s Deputy Mayor and City Administrator.
 - i. Chair Aizawa especially thanked Commissioner Griffey, Commissioner Maier and Commissioner Mulhauser, for their planning activities and hard work the day of the Gala.
 - ii. Chair Aizawa also recognized and thanked Interim Director Khaing and OHR Tipped Workers Fairness Program Manager, Larry Villegas-Perez, for their significant contributions to the Gala.
- b. COHR Award Gala 2021 Cornelius R. "Neil" Alexander Humanitarian Award recipient, Christy Repp, planned to attend tonight's meeting but, unfortunately, had a family emergency. Chair Aizawa discussed inviting Christy to the March 2021 Commission meeting.
- c. Chair Aizawa, Commissioner Griffey, Commissioner Maier, Commissioner Mulhauser, Interim Director Khaing, Chief Judge Erika Pierson, Judge Ash and outgoing OHR Director of Communications and Community Engagement, Stephanie Franklin, participated in a COHR Award Gala Debrief on December 28, 2021. Consequently, Stephanie created a very comprehensive planning toolkit to use for next year's Gala.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Judge Ash shared that there are currently around 15 cases pending before the Commission. Moreover, 4 cases have been closed since the start of FY22.
- b. Chair Aizawa reminded Commissioners of the priority to close out cases, particularly those that have been unresolved for several years.
- c. Chair Aizawa offered to share with Commissioners two recent final decisions from FCRSA cases, once the decisions become public, because they involve important issues of which everyone should be made aware.
 - i. The Tribunals for these two cases consisted of Chair Aizawa, Commissioner Allen and Commissioner Griffey. Judge Ash was the assigned Administrative Law Judge.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

a. Officer Elections (Vice Chair and Secretary positions, to take effect immediately)

i. Chair Aizawa opened the floor for Vice Chair nominations:

- 1.** Commissioner Mulhauser nominated Commissioner Griffey.
- 2.** Commissioner Griffey accepted the nomination.
- 3.** Motion for Commissioner Griffey to serve as Vice Chair on the floor; Commissioner Maier seconded the motion.
- 4.** Motion passed.

ii. Chair Aizawa opened the floor for Secretary nominations:

- 1.** Commissioner Griffey nominated Commissioner Mulhauser for Secretary.
- 2.** Commissioner Mulhauser accepted the nomination.
- 3.** Motion for Commissioner Mulhauser to serve as Secretary on the floor; Commissioner Maier seconded the motion.
- 4.** Motion passed.

b. Chair Aizawa thanked Commissioner Collinson for serving as Vice Chair and Commissioner Simpson for serving as Secretary.

- i.** Of note, Commissioner Simpson was recently elected Co-Chair of the National LGTBQ Taskboard. Due to her workload, she decided not to continue as Secretary.

c. Proposed Commission Tribunal Rotation Schedule

- i.** Up until now, Commission Tribunals have been staffed on a voluntary basis only. Accordingly, Judge Ash explained that the proposed rotation schedule is intended to provide equal opportunities to Commissioners to serve on Tribunals and, among other things, help spread Tribunal work more evenly.

- 1.** Commissioner Lowery expressed concern over newer Commissioners participating in the proposed schedule absent sufficient guidance from training materials/working alongside experienced Commissioners.

2. Commissioner Lowery also asked whether the proposed schedule will be rotating?

a. Commissioner Collinson shared that it may make sense to pair newer commissioners with more experienced ones before implementing the proposed schedule.

ii. In response, Chair Aizawa shared that for the next few tribunals, newer Commissioners –namely those who have not ever served on a tribunal—will be intentionally paired with experienced ones. Once newer Commissioners have had the opportunity to get their feet wet, we will adopt the propose rotation schedule.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ DISCUSSIONS

a. Chair Aizawa shared that she thinks it would be a good thing for Committee Chairs, in addition to the officers of the Commission, to form an Executive Committee.

b. **Rules Committee** (Commissioner Simpson, Former Chair)

i. Commissioner Simpson shared that the Rules Committee needs a new Chair.

ii. The Committee started out with three goals, two of which have been accomplished.

1. The primary objective now is revising D.C. Municipal Regulations Chapter 4-4, Procedure for Contested Cases.

iii. Chair Aizawa asked Commissioners to keep this (Chair) vacancy in mind.

XI. **Outreach Committee** (Commissioner Mulhauser, Chair)

a. Committee has not yet met, but Chair Mulhauser encouraged everyone to attend OHR's Human Rights Liaison training on January 26th.

b. The January 26 training will be recorded. Previous Human Rights Liaison training[s] are also available and can be circulated.

XII. **Awards Committee** (Commission Chair Aizawa, Interim Chair)

a. Given last month's COHR Award Gala, there is no report.

- b. Chair Aizawa asked Commissioners to keep in mind a Chair is needed for this committee as well.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

- a. Chair Aizawa adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.

**** As of now, the next Commission meeting will take place via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday March 9, 2022 at 6:30 PM.**

Link to join Meeting on March 9, 2022:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NThiMWUyYWYtNTgzZS00OWQxLWI4NjMtODdhN2M0NjM3Yjk1%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%228fe449f1-8b94-4fb7-9906-6f939da82d73%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22cb0bdb1e-3fc7-45a3-b71c-0be90c7ea4c9%22%7d