

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



OFFICIAL COMMISSION MEETING

March 14, 2018
One Judiciary Square, 441 Fourth Street, NW, Room 1117

ATTENDEES

Commissioners:

Commissioner Fowlkes, Chairperson	Commissioner Herzog
Commissioner Muhammad, Vice Chairperson	Commissioner Maier
Commissioner Aizawa, Secretary	Commissioner Sanabria
Commissioner Allen	Commissioner Simpson
Commissioner Collinson	Commissioner Thomas
Commissioner Figueroa-Garcia	Commissioner Ward

Office of Human Rights Staff:

Mónica Palacio, Director
Hnin Khaing, Deputy Director
Ebony Scott, General Counsel
Stephanie Franklin, Policy and Communications
Luisa Nguyen, Compliance Manager
Stacey Biney, Attorney-Advisor
Ajan Brown, Community Engagement Specialist

Commission on Human Rights Staff:

David C. Simmons, Chief ALJ
Dianne S. Harris, ALJ
J.P. Howard, ALJ
Daniel Gick, Law Clerk

Members of the Public:

Mat McCullough, former Commissioner, Director of the D.C. Office of Disability Rights
Michael Sindram

MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Fowlkes called the Commission's Official Meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Aizawa conducted the roll call and a total of eleven Commissioners were present, constituting a quorum. An additional Commissioner arrived shortly thereafter.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda was amended to move the sexual harassment training from New Business to a separate item earlier on the Agenda. Commissioner Ward moved to adopt the amended Agenda, Commissioner Figueroa-Garcia seconded the motion, and the amended Agenda was adopted by acclamation.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Figueroa-Garcia moved to adopt the Commission's January 2018 Minutes, Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion, and the Minutes were adopted by acclamation.

V. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF OHR

Mónica Palacio, Director of the Office of Human Rights, gave the report of the Director. Director Palacio highlighted several points of the written Director's Report provided to the Commission including:

- Introduction of new OHR employees, including Stacey Biney and Ajan Brown by General Counsel Scott and Policy and Communications Manager Franklin;
 - Ms. Biney is a new attorney who will take on FOIA duties and will litigate at the Commission;
 - Ajan Brown will be working on community outreach;
- An overview of the Office's City Counsel Oversight Hearing;
- The Mayor's State of the District will be given at UDC at 5:30 pm on Thursday, March 15, 2018;
- A review of numbers and production;
- The "Hear Me Now" event was held on February 6 at Union Temple Baptist Church in Southeast Washington, D.C., where the Office heard from returning citizens; and
- Announcement of a March 19th voter registration drive for returning citizens

The Commissioners and members of the Office reintroduced themselves and had discussion concerning how criminal background affects the right to vote; regulatory activity by the Office; the Office's budgetary concerns; and the Office's social media. The Commissioners asked the Office to forward outreach materials to them as they are developed.

VI. SEX HARRASSMENT TRAINING

As required by the Mayor's Order, all of the Commissioners present participated in the on-line training concerning sexual harassment. Additionally, Deputy Director Khaing emphasized several points established by the Mayor's Sexual Harassment Policy.

VII. REPORT OF CALJ

In light of the time, Chief Judge Simmons did not present a full report and stated that he would transmit his report in writing. However, he did highlight the fact that, for the first time in recent memory, the Commission has a full complement of 15 Commissioners. The Mayor and MOTA were commended on their excellent efforts in identifying and appointing Commissioners.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Chief Judge Simmons indicated that, in the interest of time, he will submit information regarding the Street Law Mock Trial in a follow-up communication to the Commissioners.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of New Members:

Commissioner Gunther Sanabria was introduced by Chairperson Fowlkes and welcomed to the Commission. Commissioner Sanabria addressed the Commission and provided information about his background; specifically, he noted that he is an immigrant from Peru who has become an immigration attorney so as to be able to assist other persons who come to the United States. He noted that he was previously on the Commission for Latino Affairs and expressed excitement about joining in the work of the Commission.

Call for Tribunals

Chairperson Fowlkes asked Chief Judge Simmons if any tribunals would be necessary for upcoming cases. The Chief indicated that one case would require a tribunal in the next few weeks and that members for additional tribunals would be necessary in the coming weeks. Chairperson Fowlkes called for volunteers and several Commissioners offered to participate.

X. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Community comments were provided. The definitions of Defamation and Slander were read into the record. A community member then accused Chief Judge Simmons and the Office of Human Rights of defaming him. He then began to insult Commissioners directly, including references to their ethnicities and religions. At this juncture a point of order was raised. Chairperson Fowlkes reclaimed the floor and ruled the person was out of order for his *ad hominem* attacks on members of the Commission.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Fowlkes called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Maier moved to adjourn; Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion; and the motion passed by acclamation. The Commission's March 2018 public meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

REVIEWED AND TENTATIVELY APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, PENDING FINAL ADOPTION AT THE NEXT OFFICIAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION.