

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Meeting of the Commission
July 27, 2011
10:00 a.m.

James R. Thompson Center
Murdock Room - IDHS
Suite 5-300
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601

and

Lincoln Land Training Center
(Capital City Center)
130 W. Mason, Room 104
Springfield, Illinois 62702

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Commissioners

In Chicago

Martin R. Castro, Chairman
Sakhawat Hussain, M.D.
David Chang
Robert A. Cantone
Terry Cosgrove
Nabi Fakroddin
Marylee V. Freeman
Spencer Leak, Sr.
Rozanne Ronen
Diane M. Viverito
Patricia Bakalis Yadgir

Absent

Marti Baricevic
Munir Muhammad

Staff

N. Keith Chambers
Dr. Ewa I. Ewa
Donyelle L. Gray
Evelio Mora
Christine Welninski
LaNade Bridges
Nidhi Chaudhary (Coles Fellow)
Meghan Vanleuwen (Coles Fellow)
Berneta Haynes (Coles Fellow)

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Patrick Bushell (Coles Fellow)
Tina Stanford (Coles Fellow)

Members of Public: Lon Meltesen, DHR Chief Legal Counsel
Brent Harzman, DHR Manager, Charge Processing Division

NOTICE:

Public meetings and closed meetings of the Illinois Human Rights Commission are audio recorded.

I. Call to Order

On July 27, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., Chairman Martin R. Castro called to order a meeting of the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

Pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq., it was determined that:

- 1) A quorum of the public body was present at the meeting.
- 2) Prior to the meeting, Commissioner Muhammad and Commissioner Baricevic gave notice (and good cause as defined by the Illinois Open Meetings Act) to the Acting General Counsel and Secretary of the Public Body, Donyelle L. Gray, that they would be unable to be present at today's meeting.
- 3) Commissioner Hussain arrived shortly after the approval of the June 22, 2011 En Banc minutes.

II. Consideration of Minutes

June 22, 2011

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2011 meeting as submitted by staff. Motion to approve the minutes made by Commissioner Freeman and seconded by Commissioner Nabi. Motion carried 10-0.

III. Staff Reports

A. *Martin R. Castro, Chairman*

Chairman Castro previously forwarded to the Illinois Attorney General's Office a letter in which he addressed alleged racial profiling in traffic stops by the McHenry County Sheriff's Office. The Chairman reported that he has not received a response from the Attorney General's Office. The Chairman informed the Commission that the matter of the alleged racial profiling will also be referred to the proper federal authorities.

Chairman Castro reported that he met with local Native American groups. The Chairman suggested that the Commission hold a town hall meeting at Chicago's Native American Center.

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Regarding the latest developments with the Commission's FY12 budget, Chairman Castro indicated this issue would be discussed in detail in the Executive Director's report and the Chief Fiscal Officer's report.

B. N. Keith Chambers, Executive Director

Mr. Chambers informed the Commission that the Illinois General Assembly has cut the Commission's FY12 budget by 23%. Mr. Chambers informed the Commission that he held a meeting with Chairman Castro, Dr. Ewa, Chief Administrative Law Judge Evans and Acting General Counsel Donyelle Gray regarding the FY12 budget cut. A layoff plan was requested by the Governor's office. The layoff plan was discussed at the meeting and a plan was forwarded to the Governor's Office.

Mr. Chambers informed the Commission that he, Chairman Castro and Dr. Ewa will be meeting with Jack Lavin, the Chief of Staff of the Governor, to discuss the FY12 budget and the impact cuts will have on staffing.

Mr. Chambers also briefly updated the Commission on the progress of the diversity dinner, indicating that plans for the dinner were moving forward.

Mr. Chambers briefed the Commission on the visit of a delegation from Kenya on July 18, 2011. The delegation met with the Chairman, Commissioner Leak, and the Commission's senior staff. The delegation was provided with a presentation and materials on the Commission process and the various matters handled by the Commission. A press release regarding the Kenyan delegation visit will be created and a copy of the press release will be sent to the Commissioners.

C. Dr. Ewa I. Ewa, Chief Fiscal Officer

Dr. Ewa provided further information on the FY12 budget cut. Dr. Ewa reiterated that the Governor's office requested a layoff plan and that a layoff plan was forwarded to the Governor's office. The layoff plan will go into effect if additional funds are not provided.

Dr. Ewa also advised the Commission that due to the FY12 budget issues, the search for a new General Counsel will most likely be put on hold.

Dr. Ewa also announced that the staff attorney for the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission has not been hired because TIRC's budget has also been cut.

D. Michael J. Evans, Chief Administrative Law Judge

Judge Evan's written report was submitted to the Commission.

E. Donyelle L. Gray, Acting General Counsel

Ms. Gray updated the Commission on the amended outside work policy. The amended policy will permit the Commission's full-time legal professionals to engage in secondary legal employment for payment. A draft of the policy will be presented at the August En Banc meeting.

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Ms. Gray informed the Commission that the Illinois Appellate Court has affirmed Panel C decisions in *Lockard v. First Baptist Church* and *Lockard v. Keith Jones*. A copy of the Appellate Court's unpublished decision was distributed to the Commissioners. Ms. Lockard has filed a petition to have all or part of the Appellate Court decision published. Ms. Gray will update the Commission on the status of Ms. Lockard's petition as soon as more is known.

Mr. Gray announced that the terms of the Commission's five Coles Fellows and its summer high school intern would be ending the week of August 8, 2011. Ms. Gray thanked the Fellows and intern for their work. Ms. Gray announced that on August 8, 2011 at 10:30 a.m, an appreciation brunch would be held for the Fellows and intern in the Hallstrom Hearing Room. Chairman Castro will be there to present the Fellows and intern with a token of our appreciation. All Commissioners were invited to attend the brunch.

Ms. Gray also distributed recent developments in employment law.

V. New Business

A. Illinois Department of Human Rights Presentation

Lon Meltesen, Chief Legal Counsel for the Illinois Department of Human Rights, and Brent A. Harzman, Manager of the Department's Charge Processing Division, conducted a presentation on the Department's charge process. Materials were distributed to the Commissioners and staff. Mr. Meltesen and Mr. Harzman entertained questions regarding the Department's investigation process and the Department's case statistics.

Mr. Harzman completed his presentation, but Mr. Meltesen was unable to make his presentation. Therefore, Mr. Meltesen was asked to return and make his presentation during the Commission's August 24, 2011 En Banc meeting. Mr. Meltesen agreed to do so if his schedule permitted.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m. Motion made by Commissioner Cosgrove, seconded by Commissioner Nabi. Motion carried 11-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donyelle L. Gray
Acting General Counsel