

**STATE OF ILLINOIS  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Meeting of the Commission  
October 21, 2009  
10:00 a.m.

James R. Thompson Center  
Room 5-300  
100 West Randolph Street  
Chicago, Illinois  
and  
Lincoln Land Training Center  
130 W. Mason Street, Room 104  
Springfield, Illinois

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Commissioners

*In Chicago*

Acting Chairman Sakhawat Hussain, M.D.

David Chang

Robert S. Enriquez (via telephone)

Marylee V. Freeman

Spencer Leak, Sr.

Munir Muhammad

Rozanne Ronen

Yonnie Stroger

Diane Viverito

Gregory Simoncini

*In Springfield*

Marti Baricevic

Staff

Reva Bauch

Lester Bovia

William Borah

LaNade Bridges

N. Keith Chambers

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Dr. Ewa I. Ewa  
Michael J. Evans  
Donyelle L. Gray  
Bricia Herrera  
Evelio Mora  
Brent Movitz, Coles Fellow  
Harriet Parker  
Christine Welninski

**I. Call to Order**

On October 21, 2009 at 10:02 a.m., Acting Chairman Sakhawat Hussain called to order a meeting of the Illinois Human Rights Commission. Chairman Hussain announced that the meeting would be audio recorded and that recording equipment was running.

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

A quorum of the public body was present at the meeting without the physical presence of Commissioner Enriquez. Prior to the meeting, Commissioner Enriquez gave notice (and good cause as defined by the Illinois Open Meetings Act) to the General Counsel and Secretary of the Public Body, Harriet Parker, that he would be unable to be physically present for the October 21, 2009 meeting. The Commission voted to allow Commissioner Enriquez to participate in the meeting via telephone. Motion made by Commissioner Simoncini, seconded by Commissioner Freeman. Motion carried 10-0.

**II. Consideration of Minutes**

September 16, 2009

The minutes of the meeting of September 16, 2009 were approved as submitted by staff. Motion made by Commissioner Freeman, with a second by Commissioner Stroger. Motion carried 11-0.

**III. Staff Reports**

A. N. Keith Chambers, Executive Director

Chief of Staff Jerry Stermer

Executive Director Chambers reported that he and Acting Chairman Hussain had met with the Governor's Chief of Staff, Jerry Stermer regarding HRC staffing issues and the Torture Commission. Soon after the meeting, e-pars for the hire of

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the 3 Administrative Law Judges (“ALJ”) and the Tech II Assistant General Counsel were approved. Offers were extended to 2 of the 3 previously identified ALJs, William Borah and Lester Bovia and to the previously identified Assistant General Counsel, Evelio Mora. All offers were accepted. Because a third ALJ candidate, Susan Finn had accepted another position, the next previously identified candidate, Lawrence Alberg was recommended to the Commission for hire as the third ALJ. The Commission approved Mr. Alberg for hire, and Mr. Chambers stated a new epar for Mr. Alberg would be submitted to the Governor’s office for approval.

Mr. Chambers stated Mr. Stermer had shared the process for the reappointment and appointment of current and new applicants to State of Illinois Boards and Commissions had commenced. Acting Chairman Hussain added decisions regarding Commission appointments and reappointments would be made sometime in October. Mr. Stermer reportedly requested a record of Commissioner attendance at HRC meetings, which was later forwarded to him.

Regarding the Torture Commission, Executive Director Chambers and Acting Chairman Hussain expressed concerns regarding how the Torture Commission would be funded, and where the Torture Commission would be housed because the HRC has no space. Mr. Stermer stated no funds would be taken from the HRC’s budget to fund the Torture Commission.

Department of Human Rights

Mr. Chambers stated that he had met with Mr. Clapps, Director of the Department of Human Rights to discuss areas of mutual concern with an eye towards working collaboratively. Mr. Clapps indicated he would be willing to conduct training for the Commissioners and that he would like to attend an En banc meeting.

HRC Lobbyist Mike Pollak

Mr. Chambers raised the issue of the former HRC lobbyist, Mike Pollak.

B. Dr. Ewa I. Ewa, Chief Fiscal Officer (CFO)

CFO Dr. Ewa reported that while the legislature approved a budget of \$2.1 million for FY 2010 for the HRC, the HRC budget has been cut from that amount to \$1.8 million. Currently all personnel, including all new hires and the third ALJ are covered under the FY 2010 budget. However, the HRC will not be able to hire the much needed third Administrative Assistant for the Administrative Law Section due to budgetary constraints.

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Audits: Inventory and Agency-wide

In response to an inventory audit finding that the HRC did not have an official policy for tracking purchases, Dr. Ewa has drafted an inventory policy. While the inventory audit has concluded, the Agency-wide audit is on-going with the auditors expected to return to the HRC in November 2009.

C. Michael J. Evans, Chief Administrative Law Judge

Chief Evans introduced the two new Administrative Law Judges: Lester Bovia, who started on October 16, 2009, and William Borah, who will start on November 2, 2009. The third identified ALJ candidate, Lawrence Alberg will be hired upon approval by the Office of the Governor.

D. Harriet Parker, General Counsel

The General Counsel introduced the new Assistant General Counsel, Evelio Mora, who will start on November 2, 2009.

**IV. Old Business**

FY2008-2009 Annual Report

Executive Director Chambers and Commissioner Viverito met to finalize the combined 2008-2009 Annual Report. Commissioner Viverito shared that the Report will be completed soon. Commissioner Viverito invited other Commissioners to provide input. Commissioner Hussain shared that he preferred the smaller format of prior Annual Reports as they appeared more professional.

Commissioner Freeman stated that the Sangamon County matter, wherein the HRC's ruling in favor of a complainant was upheld by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2009 had not been included in the draft she reviewed. Commissioner Freeman suggested this case be included in the Annual Report.

General Counsel Parker stated that she would be willing to write a brief case summary of Sangamon County as well as other case summaries for inclusion in the Annual Report

**V. New Business**

Executive Session

Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)), the Commissioners voted to close a portion of the public meeting at 10:42 a.m. in order to discuss an internal personnel matter. Motion made by Commissioner Freeman, seconded by Commissioner Muhammad. Motion carried 11-0.

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At 11:40 a.m., the open meeting resumed.

Lobbyist Contract

During the open meeting, the Commission voted not to renew the contract for Lobbyist Mike Pollak. Motion made by Commissioner Muhammad, seconded by Commissioner Stroger. Motion carried 11-0.

**VI. Adjournment**

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m. Motion made by Commissioner Muhammad, with a second by Commissioner Ronen. Motion carried 11-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Harriet Parker, General Counsel