

WEBVTT

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00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:01.460

Stephanie Suerth: A plan.

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00:00:03.900 --> 00:00:15.399

Stephanie Suerth: So good morning, everybody as was previously noted. I hope everybody is dry and warm on this rather rainy day we will start with roll call, and Commissioner Sewerth, present.

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00:00:17.020 --> 00:00:20.279

Janssen Evelyn: Good morning, everyone. Commissioner Evelyn present.

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00:00:22.950 --> 00:00:25.710

noah metheny: Good morning, Noam Feeney, Commissioner, present.

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00:00:29.720 --> 00:00:32.210

Eileen Levitt: In Levitt, Commissioner, present.

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00:00:34.210 --> 00:00:37.419

Magdalena Navarro: Good morning, Magdalena Navarro Commissioner, present.

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00:00:38.550 --> 00:00:39.440

Stephanie Suerth: Yay!

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00:00:44.040 --> 00:00:48.063

Cleveland L. Horton II: Ms. Prescott, it's all on you. It's on you.

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00:00:48.510 --> 00:00:51.419

Kimberly Prescott: Really Prescott, Commissioner, present.

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00:00:52.220 --> 00:00:53.899

Stephanie Suerth: Welcome to your 1st meeting.

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00:00:53.900 --> 00:00:54.590

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yep.

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00:00:54.940 --> 00:00:55.460

Janssen Evelyn: Welcome!

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00:00:55.460 --> 00:01:01.370

Cleveland L. Horton II: So we saw you don't kind of doing like the double Dutch thing right like, do I jump in? Do I? Do? I go.

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00:01:01.370 --> 00:01:07.813

Kimberly Prescott: I wasn't sure if it was an alphabetical order, if it was a specific order that we were going in so.

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00:01:08.770 --> 00:01:10.999

Stephanie Suerth: No, it's more of a free for all to be honest with you.

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00:01:12.750 --> 00:01:17.190

Cleveland L. Horton II: I think we got all the Commissioners. So Cleveland Horton, executive director, present.

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00:01:18.630 --> 00:01:21.079

Glendora.Hughes: Dora Hughes, general counsel, present.

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00:01:21.940 --> 00:01:24.899

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Yolanda, Sonnier, deputy director. Present.

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00:01:25.190 --> 00:01:25.940

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Yeah.

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00:01:25.940 --> 00:01:28.150

Nicolette Young: Nicolette, young assistant director, present.

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00:01:30.450 --> 00:01:34.070

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Candace Crenshaw, Director of Education and Outreach, present.

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00:01:34.760 --> 00:01:38.810

Spencer Dove: And good morning. Spencer does special assistant to the executive director. Present.

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00:01:38.810 --> 00:01:39.360

Eileen Levitt: Okay.

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00:01:41.070 --> 00:01:44.420

Alesha.Bell: Alicia Back Civil Rights Supervisor Resident.

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00:01:49.720 --> 00:01:50.650

Stephanie Suerth: Is that everybody.

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00:01:51.220 --> 00:01:52.660

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yeah, that's all. Staff.

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00:01:53.080 --> 00:01:56.160

Cleveland L. Horton II: Excellent. It looks like we we do have.

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00:01:56.570 --> 00:02:00.160

Cleveland L. Horton II: Are there members from the public present?

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00:02:00.500 --> 00:02:02.670

Stephanie Suerth: That was gonna be my next question.

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00:02:05.390 --> 00:02:10.180

Crystal F-Mitcheltree: Yes, my name is Crystal Frederick Mitchell Tree, and

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00:02:10.300 --> 00:02:14.559

Crystal F-Mitcheltree: I am actually observing today from the public. Yes.

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00:02:15.380 --> 00:02:17.040

Stephanie Suerth: No problem. Thank you for being here.

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00:02:18.500 --> 00:02:21.679

Natalie Holder: Good morning. I'm Natalie Holder, and I'm also observing.

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00:02:22.900 --> 00:02:35.209

Stephanie Suerth: Wonderful. Thank you so much. We appreciate you joining us, and we'll open it up for public comments later. If there's anything that, you know you want to comment on as we go through our meeting, so welcome.

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00:02:35.210 --> 00:02:36.120

Crystal F-Mitcheltree: Thank you.

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00:02:38.190 --> 00:02:39.000

Stephanie Suerth: Wonderful.

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00:02:39.700 --> 00:02:42.360

Stephanie Suerth: So for my chairperson's report.

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00:02:42.750 --> 00:02:48.600

Stephanie Suerth: And actually, this is a little bit intentional, based on some of the things I know we want to discuss today.

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00:02:48.730 --> 00:02:53.980

Stephanie Suerth: I just wanted to take a moment and reflect on our just ending Maryland legislative session.

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00:02:54.170 --> 00:02:59.679

Stephanie Suerth: It was absolutely one that was interesting, and, as always there were a lot of bills out there.

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00:02:59.890 --> 00:03:09.120

Stephanie Suerth: Some of the more interesting things that occurred where the General Assembly passed a bill to establish the Commission to study potential reparations for slavery in Maryland.

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00:03:09.790 --> 00:03:22.070

Stephanie Suerth: This is more holistic in what it's going to look at. So it's not just things like financial compensation, but also tuition waivers and other ways to be able to address those impacts

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00:03:22.230 --> 00:03:24.589

Stephanie Suerth: and the systemic harm that was caused.

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00:03:24.900 --> 00:03:29.760

Stephanie Suerth: Also, there was the enactment of the Expungement Reform Act, and the second look act

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00:03:30.020 --> 00:03:33.522

Stephanie Suerth: which expand opportunities for individuals. To have

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00:03:34.240 --> 00:03:51.929

Stephanie Suerth: their criminal records expunged, which I know many of you will remember, there's also been some other legislation which did not pass, which talked about criminal records as potential, I guess tertiary dimension of diversity when it comes to employment, so I thought those were interesting.

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00:03:52.770 --> 00:03:56.545

Stephanie Suerth: I'd also like to take a moment and welcome our new Commissioner.

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00:03:57.120 --> 00:04:01.059

Stephanie Suerth: Commissioner Prescott. Do you have a preferred way to be addressed.

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00:04:03.500 --> 00:04:05.730

Kimberly Prescott: It's not Kim anything else.

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00:04:06.090 --> 00:04:07.819

Stephanie Suerth: Understood, and thank you for that.

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00:04:07.990 --> 00:04:08.350

Kimberly Prescott: Yeah.

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00:04:08.710 --> 00:04:24.460

Stephanie Suerth: So I hope you don't mind. I did a quick Google, since we have yet to have a moment to be able to connect, which I very much look forward to, and I apologize that we haven't done so quite yet. But, as I understand it, you are from Columbia, Maryland.

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00:04:24.930 --> 00:04:36.640

Stephanie Suerth: and that you are the founder and president of Prescott, Hr. My understanding is you and Commissioner Levitt Eileen know each other, or know of each other, since you are both in Hr.

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00:04:37.226 --> 00:04:45.079

Stephanie Suerth: That you have served in leadership roles, including the leadership Howard County and Community Foundation of Howard County.

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00:04:45.300 --> 00:04:51.329

Stephanie Suerth: and that you have a commitment to not only civil rights but also community engagement.

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00:04:51.510 --> 00:04:57.339

Stephanie Suerth: And I apologize that that's a little light on details, but I promise I'll flush it out when we have an opportunity to talk.

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00:04:57.600 --> 00:04:59.020

Stephanie Suerth: So I hope that that's okay.

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00:04:59.020 --> 00:05:08.999

Kimberly Prescott: But I will say that I am from Augusta, Georgia. My business is based in Columbia, Maryland, but I'm from Georgia, and I own that every day.

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00:05:10.130 --> 00:05:11.190

Stephanie Suerth: Excellent.

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00:05:11.540 --> 00:05:12.110

Kimberly Prescott: Nope.

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00:05:12.110 --> 00:05:14.140

Stephanie Suerth: Understood and and thank you.

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00:05:15.050 --> 00:05:29.579

Stephanie Suerth: And since we do have a new Commissioner and I have everybody's attention. And you guys know I do this every year. I am going to remind everybody that we have a gala this year that we are no longer on a biennial schedule. This is going to now be an annual event. If I'm correct.

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00:05:29.900 --> 00:05:30.800

Stephanie Suerth: correct.

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00:05:30.800 --> 00:05:31.160

Cleveland L. Horton II: Correct.

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00:05:31.160 --> 00:05:31.720

Stephanie Suerth: Yes.

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00:05:31.930 --> 00:05:48.650

Stephanie Suerth: So the 2025 civil rights gala is themed looking ahead, no turning back, transforming challenges into opportunities which I think all of us can agree is something that is topical and important. Oh, Gina did join Hi Gina.

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00:05:48.790 --> 00:05:49.470

Gina McKnight-Smith: I'm doing.

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00:05:51.370 --> 00:05:57.579

Stephanie Suerth: The event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, August 23rd It will again be at Maryland. Live

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00:05:59.570 --> 00:06:11.910

Stephanie Suerth: early. Bird tickets apparently are available, and I will encourage all of us if you are able to attend to. Please do so, to show our support, not only for the the Commission itself, but also for the more

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00:06:12.300 --> 00:06:19.050

Stephanie Suerth: the larger civil rights, community and and those who work in that community, in our State and and elsewhere.

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00:06:19.850 --> 00:06:35.328

Stephanie Suerth: And then the reason for the recap is part of our new business is to talk about our approach and our strategies for the next legislative session. Because, you know, these things. Just keep on turning so hopefully. Everybody will have an opportunity to

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00:06:36.640 --> 00:06:43.659

Stephanie Suerth: to communicate, and we can start thinking about what that'll look like for this upcoming year, and then also more long term.

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00:06:43.940 --> 00:06:50.629

Stephanie Suerth: And that concludes my report other than to check in with everyone. Make sure that everyone is doing well.

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00:06:50.820 --> 00:06:52.959

Stephanie Suerth: and to see if there's anything that anybody.

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00:06:56.670 --> 00:06:59.340

Cleveland L. Horton II: I'm doing well, madam. Chair. Thanks for the checking.

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00:07:00.380 --> 00:07:01.899

Stephanie Suerth: It is truly my pleasure.

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00:07:06.110 --> 00:07:10.209

Stephanie Suerth: Okay, I will turn it over for staff reports. Thank you. Everyone.

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00:07:11.900 --> 00:07:13.820

Cleveland L. Horton II: Thank you, madam. Chair

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00:07:15.100 --> 00:07:37.079

Cleveland L. Horton II: Good morning, everybody. Hopefully. Everybody is off to a great morning, aside from the rain, but without the rain. We wouldn't appreciate the sunshine. So good morning, everybody. 2 quick things. First, st we wanted to acknowledge our newest commissioner, Miss Prescott, so I also wanted to just take the time to acknowledge and welcome her to

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00:07:37.080 --> 00:07:48.730

Cleveland L. Horton II: the commission. We are happy to have you. I did have the pleasure of having a brief conversation with with Miss Prescott, and we always appreciate those who just jump right in right? So

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00:07:48.730 --> 00:08:16.259

Cleveland L. Horton II: she appears to be one that is willing and able to jump right in, and we are absolutely willing and able to allow you to. So we look forward to working with you. We look forward to the skill set that you'll bring to this already diverse or wonderful Board of Commissioners that we have here at the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. So I just want to, on behalf of staff. Just extend our welcome to you, and we look forward to working alongside you here at the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights.

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00:08:17.500 --> 00:08:40.540

Cleveland L. Horton II: I also wanted to acknowledge. I noticed that she didn't change her name on her zoom title, but I wanted to acknowledge Dr. Seward right? So we wanted to congratulate her on completing her doctorate, and we are extremely proud of the accomplishment. We know that many of us were witnesses to you, kind of going through that process right? And trying to change

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00:08:40.539 --> 00:08:52.959

Cleveland L. Horton II: chair this commission. So we just wanted to take a moment to congratulate you on that wonderful accomplishment of now again. And we always want to now recognize you as Dr. Suith.

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00:08:56.230 --> 00:08:58.909

Stephanie Suerth: Thank you. That's so sweet.

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00:08:59.765 --> 00:09:00.620

Cleveland L. Horton II: So

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00:09:00.690 --> 00:09:27.409

Cleveland L. Horton II: I think, as a staff here at the Commission, we can really do continue to kind of monitor the current human and civil rights landscape and the environment under the current administration. I think it's important that we all recognize and understand exactly what's going on. We've all been kind of waiting from this in this civil rights landscape for the ball to drop. I mean, we've seen a number of different executive orders. We've seen the rollback on Dei things and really kind of waiting to see.

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00:09:27.410 --> 00:09:43.120

Cleveland L. Horton II: When is the impact? When are we going to directly feel the impact of this current administration? We know that recently there was about approximately 78 fip grants that were eliminated, and those are fair housing, initiative partners through the department of Housing and urban development.

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00:09:43.120 --> 00:10:01.260

Cleveland L. Horton II: Most of these organizations are nonprofit entities that focus on housing, counseling, landlord tenant issues. They do a lot of testing. So 78 of those grants were eliminated, and that was about a reduction of approximately 33 million dollars. We are potentially anticipating

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00:10:01.260 --> 00:10:20.160

Cleveland L. Horton II: that all fit funding will be eliminated during the next budget cycle which begins on July first, st and that is going to be critical to the fair housing services provided to those within our State, and really within the entire country, because many of those nonprofit organizations that again focus on

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00:10:20.160 --> 00:10:31.710

Cleveland L. Horton II: housing, counseling, testing, landlord tenant issues will become non-existent as a result of losing that funding. So we are keeping our ear to what's happening in the Fip environment

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00:10:31.980 --> 00:11:01.740

Cleveland L. Horton II: us ourselves. We are a Fap, a fair housing assistance partner. There has been no indication thus far that there is going to be any elimination of fap funding or reduction in the Fap budget. But again, we are keeping abreast of that, as we continue to move forward, me and Yolanda have started having conversations around. What can the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights do for our citizens here in the State to kind of figure out. What services can we think about providing

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00:11:01.740 --> 00:11:29.159

Cleveland L. Horton II: in lieu of not having some of those fit organizations being present? So whether that's testing whether that's some of those landlord tenant issues. We are in conversation now to kind of determine to what capacity we may be able to lift up some of those services and ensure that the citizens still get the services that they need around fair housing. I also wanted to just take a moment to really highlight

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00:11:29.160 --> 00:11:46.069

Cleveland L. Horton II: 2 significant enforcement efforts, and I know that I'm sure that Yolanda and potentially Glen Door will probably mention these in their reports as well. So I don't want to go in too much detail, because I don't want to steal that thunder, but I do want to take the time to acknowledge

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00:11:46.070 --> 00:12:15.039

Cleveland L. Horton II: the first.st We've had the largest financial conciliation in our agency's history over the last 30 days. So I do want to highlight Alicia Bell, who was able to conciliate an employment matter that we had to the tune of about \$500,000, and that conciliation really does exemplify an historic milestone for our agency, because one. It is the largest financial conciliation that we've been able to reach as the agency.

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00:12:15.090 --> 00:12:30.549

Cleveland L. Horton II: But it also just sends a message, right that we are moving forward aggressively as an agency. We are holding folks accountable, and we are protecting folks even in this uncertain environment that we find ourselves in. So I do want to take a moment just to

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00:12:30.550 --> 00:12:47.369

Cleveland L. Horton II: congratulate Alicia Bell in front of this body, and thank her for the great work that she did in getting that case to conciliation. So, Alicia, I just want to say, hats off to you, great job, and you now have written your name in the legacy of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

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00:12:47.370 --> 00:12:53.200

Cleveland L. Horton II: by achieving that historic milestone. So I just wanted to to give you a special shout out for that.

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00:12:53.570 --> 00:12:54.200

Alesha.Bell: Thank you.

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00:12:54.200 --> 00:12:54.880

Alesha.Bell: You.

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00:12:54.880 --> 00:13:16.280

Cleveland L. Horton II: No problem. You deserved it. Thank you. So the second one is, we've as we think about fair housing. We know that we are seeing a surge in source of income complaints coming through our agency. We did have a fair housing complaint in litigation. Well, I won't say we did, because we still is in litigation. But we did reach a stage where there was

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00:13:16.280 --> 00:13:22.169

Cleveland L. Horton II: an order issued by the court in the Fairhausen case, that Terrence Artis and our legal department litigated.

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00:13:22.170 --> 00:13:47.079

Cleveland L. Horton II: and we are thankful for him. It was just a 2 or 3 year process, a very difficult process. And again, I'm sure Glendara will illuminate in this particular case as well. But again, I just wanted to highlight Terrence and the great work that he did in terms of seeing this through. We aren't finished yet, but we are a lot closer than what we were 2 to 3 years ago, so I think it's on appeal, and I won't use the terminology

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00:13:47.080 --> 00:13:55.619

Cleveland L. Horton II: legal terminology. So I'll allow Glendora to talk about that when she talks about it. But it is significant because this this case also sends a message

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00:13:55.620 --> 00:14:18.070

Cleveland L. Horton II: to those within the real estate industry that we do take source of income seriously. We are going to hold folks accountable who violate source of income in any fair housing statute through our enforcement efforts. So again, we just want to make sure that as a commission, we are letting folks know that we're still here, and that if folks are again violating folks.

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00:14:18.070 --> 00:14:30.050

Cleveland L. Horton II: civil rights that we are going to to again enforce our statute to the fullest extent possible. So again, kudos to Alicia and Terrence for again leading the way in that particular area.

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00:14:30.320 --> 00:14:57.759

Cleveland L. Horton II: we are also working on increasing our efforts to issue commission initiated complaints. You all know that we come before you. We've come before you a number of times recently to have you all sign off and going through the process of commission initiated complaints. We are going to continue to do that because we do believe by us issuing commission initiated complaints. It does allow us as an agency to be more proactive and protecting vulnerable populations.

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00:14:57.760 --> 00:15:22.190

Cleveland L. Horton II: It also gives us an opportunity to examine industry-wide practices. We know that there are a number of different things going on within a number of different industries. And we want to make sure that when we're hearing of information that we are taking the stance that we are going to hold folks accountable right? So if it's bad practice, we're going to hold folks accountable. If you're violating civil rights, we are going to hold you accountable, and we can do that through our commission initiated complaints.

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00:15:22.190 --> 00:15:36.660

Cleveland L. Horton II: So you all will begin to see us coming to you all more frequently saying, Hey, we need you all to sign off on these commission initiated complaints, because again, we do want to send that strong message that we are here, and we are going to ensure that folks still rights are protected.

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00:15:36.730 --> 00:15:56.380

Cleveland L. Horton II: We are also internally continuing to kind of figure out how we can better streamline our processes enhance more of our inner unit collaboration. And a big part of that is going to be AI right. We know that every organization is talking about AI to some level in the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

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00:15:56.690 --> 00:16:24.670

Cleveland L. Horton II: is also doing that. So we are all of our leadership team. We recently attended an AI discussion and trying to figure out how we can embed AI in our processes myself. Yolanda and Glendora met with the AI Company on Friday, just to get a potential demo of what that could look like for the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. And we are continuing to really figure out, how do we? How do we leverage technology to be more efficient? This is not about us, you know. We hear the

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00:16:24.940 --> 00:16:50.320

Cleveland L. Horton II: part of the fear around AI in terms of reducing jobs or eliminating jobs. But this is exactly not the process that we're going through. We're really trying to figure out, how can we service the public at a much higher level by leveraging technology, by leveraging AI, and we do anticipate of being able to do that within the next 6 months or so. Again, we are going through a number of demos and demonstrations to kind of figure out what it looks like for us.

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00:16:50.320 --> 00:17:06.550

Cleveland L. Horton II: The number one priority for us is safeguarding the information to make sure whatever technology that we use, that the information that we put in is going to be safeguarded, and that folks won't have access to any and all information. So we'll keep you all abreast as we kind of go through the process of figuring out

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00:17:06.550 --> 00:17:28.569

Cleveland L. Horton II: how we're going to embed AI, and in what process? And we'll make sure we update you all as we continue to move forward, 2 other key points to our internal efforts really is around leadership, development, and professional development. One of the things that I've articulated to all of our leadership team really is that in order for us to lift our staff up in order for them to lift their ceiling up. We have to increase our ceilings.

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00:17:28.569 --> 00:17:51.910

Cleveland L. Horton II: So we are making a significant investment in leadership development across the board. Everyone here, from a leadership standpoint is embracing and embarking on our leadership cohort around learning more about leadership together. And they always say, if you want to learn something, teach it. So each of our leaders is responsible for teaching all of us as a leadership team, different leadership aspects. And we've been going through that for the last.

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00:17:51.910 --> 00:18:06.909

Cleveland L. Horton II: I want to say 4 or 5 weeks, and we'll continue to do that so that we can make sure that we're lifting each other up together and becoming better leaders together. We also have professional development here now at the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, where all of our employees from top to bottom

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00:18:06.910 --> 00:18:20.730

Cleveland L. Horton II: on Fridays, from one to 2. We embark in a professional development hour. So there's no emails. There's no phone calls it, gives everybody in the agency the time to focus on their own professional development, in which they've identified with their supervisor

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00:18:20.730 --> 00:18:40.109

Cleveland L. Horton II: kind of what their career path is their career journey, and that professional development is going to be directly tied to their career path and their career journey here at the Maryland Commission on civil rights. So again, it's our efforts to make sure that we are lifting all of our ceilings up together and becoming better, so that we can better serve the public as we continue to move forward.

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00:18:41.462 --> 00:18:56.280

Cleveland L. Horton II: Chair talked about our wonderful civil rights gala. Right? So I appreciate her advertisement right? Especially because it was free, right? So we we appreciate it right? So we do want to make sure that all of our commissioners buy a table

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00:18:56.280 --> 00:19:20.309

Cleveland L. Horton II: or 2 right? You're not limited, right? So buy as many tables as you like. Right again. Our civil rights gala is Saturday, August 23, rd 2025. Again it will be at the Hall at Maryland. Live. We will have Tamika Mallory there this year, and I don't want to say too much, because I know Canada's like Cleveland. That's my job, right? So I will say anything else about the gala. I'll just ask. Please buy a table

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00:19:20.310 --> 00:19:37.509

Cleveland L. Horton II: again or 2. Tell your friends, have them buy a table or 2. We do want to make sure that we do sell out our gala, as we normally do. The last thing I just wanted to mention is, we do have our Maryland Commission on Civil Rights Employee appreciation cookout. Coming up this Friday.

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00:19:37.510 --> 00:20:03.569

Cleveland L. Horton II: You all should have received an email with the information in regards to that cookout again. It's Friday, May 13, th from 11 Am. To 3 Pm. It will be at Sandy Point State Park. It will be in the Osprey pavilion. So if you all are available to attend, we would love to see all of you all, if possible. So with that I will start. If there are any questions about my report. I am willing to take them at this time.

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00:20:05.780 --> 00:20:10.870

Janssen Evelyn: My only question, since you were doing advertising was, what was the cost of a table.

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00:20:11.660 --> 00:20:13.549

Janssen Evelyn: Oh, Yolanda, just responded.

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00:20:13.550 --> 00:20:26.399

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Well, no, I didn't actually put the cost, and Candace can probably share that with us. I was just saying, it depends on if you're buying a vip table, or if you're buying the general admission table, so the cost will.

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00:20:26.630 --> 00:20:29.880

Cleveland L. Horton II: Talking about we. But we talking about Commissioner Evelyn. So we know we're talking about.

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00:20:30.320 --> 00:20:36.270

Janssen Evelyn: A lonely public servant. So we know it's just so for me.

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00:20:36.670 --> 00:20:51.490

Cleveland L. Horton II: We know, but I'm sure that in her remarks Candace will go through the ticket pricing right? We got early, Bird, and then regular pricing, and I'm sure Candace will go through all of that, as she's going through her presentation as well, so she'll be able to tell you all that information during her presentation.

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00:20:51.700 --> 00:20:56.529

Janssen Evelyn: Alright perfect, and I'm sure she'll break down the like layaway, or the affirm pricing as well.

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00:20:57.445 --> 00:20:58.360

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yeah.

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00:20:58.360 --> 00:21:03.709

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Typing everything in the chat now and then. If you have any questions, we can talk offline.

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00:21:03.710 --> 00:21:04.330

Cleveland L. Horton II: You're.

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00:21:04.330 --> 00:21:05.580

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Layaway.

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00:21:05.650 --> 00:21:09.300

Cleveland L. Horton II: Any any other, any other questions about my report?

134

00:21:11.590 --> 00:21:25.989

Janssen Evelyn: Oh, I just wanna say Cleveland, Yolanda and the team I mean the work you all are doing. I definitely appreciate how in light of what this nation is going through, how you all are here, standing in the gap so like

135

00:21:26.520 --> 00:21:27.450

Janssen Evelyn: respect.

136

00:21:27.720 --> 00:21:28.940

Cleveland L. Horton II: We appreciate that.

137

00:21:31.048 --> 00:21:35.919

Kimberly Prescott: I know you said you would give more information in an update later about

138

00:21:37.270 --> 00:21:46.510

Kimberly Prescott: the specifics around AI. But high level. What were you envisioning? How were you envisioning AI to support the work that you're doing.

139

00:21:46.510 --> 00:22:04.699

Cleveland L. Horton II: That's a great question, Commissioner Prescott. We are still trying to figure that piece out right, because one of the things I always say is right. I'm not a tech guy, right? I do civil rights. So the best thing that we can do really is talk to those tech professionals about what we do and how we do it, and what we're really getting from them is what

140

00:22:05.180 --> 00:22:26.880

Cleveland L. Horton II: I can do for us. So right now, what we've been talking about preliminarily is utilizing AI agents. We had a demo on Friday with an AI agent that will literally allow an individual to go online, click a button in terms of how you initiate an inquiry, and you engage the AI agent in a conversation right? Just like you would a normal person.

141

00:22:26.880 --> 00:22:51.179

Cleveland L. Horton II: The agent will ask you questions. Take the information from you right, and be able to assess initially whether you've met the threshold to be able to get an intake interview. Right? So normally, that's what our office secretary does. Right? So when somebody files something online, she gets an email with the Pg. Which is our preliminary questionnaire, and then from there she determines whether you met the threshold to be able to

142

00:22:51.180 --> 00:23:02.919

Cleveland L. Horton II: get an intake interview like if it's timely. If if you're a cover complainant. If it's a cover

respondent, and the subject matter is within our jurisdiction. If all those criteria are met, then she schedule you for an intake, interview.

143

00:23:02.920 --> 00:23:29.309

Cleveland L. Horton II: The AI agent will literally have the ability to do all of that in one as well as schedule. You for an intake interview. Give you all that information during that particular conversation and move forward. So those are just. That was the preliminary conversation that we had was just to do a demo of how the AI agents work, and what that would look like in real time. So we just continue to have those conversations and kind of figure out what are some of the steps that we can remove from staff

144

00:23:29.310 --> 00:23:35.929

Cleveland L. Horton II: and maybe leverage technology to allow to allow our staff to be able to do a number of different things and service, the public better.

145

00:23:36.670 --> 00:23:55.860

Yolanda F. Sonnier: And Cleveland. If I can just add to that also put in on the website where someone we have the frequently asked questions. But they can actually chat and get those questions answered. So put in the question, you know, what what areas do you investigate? And

146

00:23:55.950 --> 00:24:08.469

Yolanda F. Sonnier: you know it will spout out an answer as opposed to having the full on chat that we had with the chat. Bot it will also be a chat where people can go and get some of the frequently asked questions answered.

147

00:24:10.240 --> 00:24:31.079

Cleveland L. Horton II: And we are continuing to work through and really identify our processes to all these different, some of these different tech companies, so that they can really come back to us and say, Look, this is where you can leverage AI right? And then us trying to really figure out what we can do. What's the cost associated with it? Because we don't have unlimited funding.

148

00:24:31.080 --> 00:24:40.749

Cleveland L. Horton II: So really, just trying to figure out what's the best that we can do within the constraints of our budget to make sure that we're leveraging technology to the best of our ability.

149

00:24:42.660 --> 00:24:43.050

Nicolette Young: I'm sorry.

150

00:24:43.050 --> 00:24:47.949

Yolanda F. Sonnier: And not to get too excited on Friday, because it I knew

151

00:24:48.260 --> 00:24:49.919

Yolanda F. Sonnier: whatever they're going to come back with.

152

00:24:50.795 --> 00:25:00.849

Yolanda F. Sonnier: We may not be able to afford the whole the whole package. So I told myself, don't get too excited

about the whole demonstration they did for us on Friday.

153

00:25:01.790 --> 00:25:08.699

Nicolette Young: I'm sorry. Excuse me, Commissioner. Angela is in the waiting room waiting to get access into the meeting.

154

00:25:15.420 --> 00:25:16.130

Stephanie Suerth: Thank you.

155

00:25:16.900 --> 00:25:20.079

Cleveland L. Horton II: No problem. And I see, Miss Holder, you have your hand up.

156

00:25:21.110 --> 00:25:48.030

Natalie Holder: Yes, good morning, everyone. I'd be remiss if I didn't follow up on the question around AI. I'm actually working with a firm on an agentic AI model regarding advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations that have seen cuts that have seen eliminations, but still need this work to be done. So I wanted to find out what is the process for being able to have a firm present to the Commission, or present to you, Mr. Horton.

157

00:25:48.627 --> 00:26:11.320

Cleveland L. Horton II: Just have him reach out right? We are open to those who are looking to better service us, based off of the needs that we have, so we can make sure. I ask Spencer to put his contact information in the chat you reach out to Spencer. He'll set the schedule up, and we'll meet and talk about what that particular firm can offer us, what we need, and then go from there. But it is completely open.

158

00:26:11.870 --> 00:26:24.699

Natalie Holder: Okay, great, thank you. And then I guess I have a follow up question regarding just your staffing in general. Given that, as you mentioned. There are a number of different, you know, Federal cuts that are happening in the employment space.

159

00:26:25.230 --> 00:26:38.030

Natalie Holder: What and how is the Commission planning to supplement and be that stopgap, for you know people as well as organizations that are seeing these sorts of, you know, attacks and the backlash to Dei.

160

00:26:38.290 --> 00:26:53.869

Cleveland L. Horton II: That's a great question. I think us as an agency individually, there's not a lot that we can do right. One of the things that we are working with is the Administration. We know that Governor Moore has instituted a number of different initiatives to protect Federal employees

161

00:26:53.870 --> 00:27:18.180

Cleveland L. Horton II: and allow Federal employees to potentially roll into state government when there are positions available. So we are looking to fill positions when they are available with those who are qualified and potentially those within the Federal government is really the best thing that we can do. As you know, Ms holder, we don't have authority over Federal employees, but our job is to make sure that we can figure out what role we can play

162

00:27:18.180 --> 00:27:38.780

Cleveland L. Horton II: and trying to be a part of the stopgap. So identifying opportunities, especially for those we know that initially there were a number of individuals in those civil rights offices within the Federal Government that lost their jobs. So we are trying to work with some of our local sister agencies, as well to acknowledge and identify those positions that are available within our agencies.

163

00:27:38.780 --> 00:27:51.550

Cleveland L. Horton II: That may be a good fit for some of those employees. But again, we are working directly with the Administration and the initiatives of the Administration to help those who have found themselves in difficult situations as a result of this administration.

164

00:27:51.570 --> 00:27:53.229

Cleveland L. Horton II: to find additional employment.

165

00:27:54.420 --> 00:27:55.529

Natalie Holder: Thank you.

166

00:27:55.530 --> 00:27:56.310

Cleveland L. Horton II: No problem.

167

00:27:57.290 --> 00:28:14.370

Cleveland L. Horton II: And I know, Commissioner Prescott asked. I think in the chat I think I saw a pop up on my screen about the rif. It really depends on the amount that needs to be expended. Right? So it depends on the amount of the services that are being provided in terms of whether we need to issue a request for purchase or not.

168

00:28:20.350 --> 00:28:21.980

Cleveland L. Horton II: Commissioner Navarro.

169

00:28:23.610 --> 00:28:48.850

Magdalena Navarro: Hello, everyone! And again, I want to join Jans and Evelyn and saying congrats to all the great work that you're doing currently with the situations that we're having on people being laying off. But specific. To what else can this Commission do? Are we joining in some of the

170

00:28:49.460 --> 00:28:50.860

Magdalena Navarro: lawsuits?

171

00:28:51.050 --> 00:29:04.189

Magdalena Navarro: There are being effect for the layoff or or massive layoff in agencies, and how that is affecting Maryland altogether.

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00:29:04.370 --> 00:29:18.769

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yeah. So we haven't joined lawsuits because we don't have authority over federal agencies. We do know that we, one of our partners, obviously with the office of the Attorney General. They have joined in a number of suits on behalf of the State.

173

00:29:18.770 --> 00:29:44.500

Cleveland L. Horton II: right? So Us. As an agency. We haven't adjoined any of those particular lawsuits again, only because of our authority, but I would say that we would be indirectly adjoined with those lawsuits, because the office of the Attorney General representing the entire State. So we are working closely with the Attorney General's office. We also meet with the Administration myself. We have a track call with all of the heads of every agency we meet every

174

00:29:44.500 --> 00:30:08.860

Cleveland L. Horton II: Monday or Tuesday to discuss what's happening, the different lawsuits, the executive orders, and who's being impacted by that. So we are keeping our edges to the ground to know what's happening in real time. The Ag's office is always keeping us abreast of the different lawsuits and what's going on. So we are aware of the information. So if there's a need for us and the ability for us to join a lawsuit.

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00:30:08.860 --> 00:30:17.269

Cleveland L. Horton II: We will discuss it at that time, but that opportunity just has not presented itself as of yet, because again, our authority only lies here with the State.

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00:30:17.270 --> 00:30:21.379

Cleveland L. Horton II: Most of those lawsuits are suing the Federal Government, and we don't have the authority to do that.

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00:30:22.090 --> 00:30:49.190

Magdalena Navarro: Okay? And then, as a follow up question, if there are individuals that are in the State of Maryland, these agencies are in the State of Maryland, and want to get some guidance from this group from the Civil Rights Commission. Is that something that the Commission will be available to provide additional assistance, or you can't, because they may be in Federal agencies.

178

00:30:49.400 --> 00:31:07.040

Cleveland L. Horton II: Well, it depends on what guidance they're looking for. Right, you know, as a governmental agency. Obviously, we're not allowed to give legal advice. So typically our guidance really is about our processes right and how we handle complaints of discrimination. But again, that would be for someone that's covered by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights.

179

00:31:07.040 --> 00:31:25.619

Cleveland L. Horton II: If you're a Federal employee, then you're not going to be covered by us, because, again, that extends beyond our authority. So the answer to that is yes or no, depending upon what guidance they're looking for. If it's guidance about who we are, what we do and how we do it, we absolutely will provide them guidance in reference to that.

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00:31:25.620 --> 00:31:45.789

Cleveland L. Horton II: If it's guidance around, how can they handle a particular issue that they have outside of our authority, then, typically, what we would do is we would recommend them to contact a different agency. We would provide them with potential names of agencies to contact that can better assist them. But we just want to make sure they're getting the most accurate information.

181

00:31:46.170 --> 00:31:48.710

Magdalena Navarro: Okay, that sounds good. Thank you so much.

182

00:31:48.710 --> 00:32:05.369

Cleveland L. Horton II: No problem. There's also to your question as well, Commissioner Navarro, we are working with the Ag's office on. Know your rights. It started out as a brochure. It's more like a book now. It's probably about 40 to 45 pages, I think the last time I checked.

183

00:32:05.370 --> 00:32:26.200

Cleveland L. Horton II: and that will be coming out shortly, and that is being done by again. I want to highlight Candace and the work that she did her and her team with providing a large amount of information for that. Know your rights booklet that will go out shortly. And again, we are working in tandem with the office of the Attorney General, and that will go out to the public shortly, and that literally covers

184

00:32:26.200 --> 00:32:45.389

Cleveland L. Horton II: a little bit of everything. Right housing, religion, voting Lgbtq rights, immigrant rights. There's a whole host of different things. You can use the booklet as individual pages or a booklet as a whole. So we are looking forward to when we're able to actually issue that. But we do anticipate being able to issue that shortly.

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00:32:47.310 --> 00:32:50.329

Cleveland L. Horton II: Excellent. Thank you so much, looking forward for double.

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00:32:50.330 --> 00:32:58.580

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yep, and that will provide some more of the Federal guidance that you're referring to to Commissioner Navarro, that the Ag's office is putting in there as well.

187

00:32:58.950 --> 00:33:22.540

Magdalena Navarro: And and if I may, and I'm sorry for monopolizing this. But if I may would that booklet? And no, it looks more like a book right now be printed or somehow ways that we can print it. I was just thinking that making it available to some churches might be might be good.

188

00:33:22.680 --> 00:33:25.400

Magdalena Navarro: and how to make it available to other people.

189

00:33:26.250 --> 00:33:51.430

Cleveland L. Horton II: I think initially, it will be available electronically. But I think you raise a good point. We'll have to determine what funds we'll have available to be able to print that in mass, to be able to get out because the booklet is so large we'll have to take that into consideration and figure out amongst both of our agencies along with the Administration. Right? Because this is even though it's really been done by the Maryland Commission on Civil rights and the office of the Attorney General.

190

00:33:51.430 --> 00:34:05.720

Cleveland L. Horton II: It's coming out on behalf of the Administration, right? So the Administration will ultimately kind of determine who was going to be able to who was going to print it out, and how it was going to cover that cost. But we can definitely raise it as a as a question, as we continue to move forward.

191

00:34:07.020 --> 00:34:08.320

Magdalena Navarro: Okay. Thank you.

192

00:34:08.320 --> 00:34:09.150

Cleveland L. Horton II: No problem.

193

00:34:15.130 --> 00:34:16.630

Cleveland L. Horton II: any other questions.

194

00:34:20.840 --> 00:34:25.399

Cleveland L. Horton II: none. Again I thank you all, and I will pass it over to Yolanda.

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00:34:26.940 --> 00:34:35.980

Yolanda F. Sonnier: All right. Good morning, Commissioners, and good morning. Everyone attending. I think Cleveland did my report. I'm done. No, I'm just

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00:34:36.789 --> 00:34:44.751

Yolanda F. Sonnier: no I wanted to start again and do another big congrats to Alicia as well. Alicia

197

00:34:45.219 --> 00:34:45.699

Yolanda F. Sonnier: And

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00:34:45.699 --> 00:35:01.709

Yolanda F. Sonnier: inherited. I guess that case and Alicia was able to jump right on in, and, you know, work on getting that settlement, and you know and it was a fantastic you know, win for the complainant.

199

00:35:01.839 --> 00:35:24.469

Yolanda F. Sonnier: And also, you know a fantastic message that is, is, and was sent to the public about us, not tolerating and allowing discrimination. So, Alicia, thank you again very much appreciate you jumping in and being able to get the settlement that you were able to get for the complainant. So thank you. Thank you.

200

00:35:25.400 --> 00:35:43.340

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Oh, you're welcome Alicia. Everyone's received the case process and data. We continue to receive a number of inquiries each month, some of them a number of them. We have to continue to abort because they aren't related to the office.

201

00:35:43.670 --> 00:35:47.670

Yolanda F. Sonnier: or we don't have jurisdiction for other reasons

202

00:35:48.050 --> 00:36:01.649

Yolanda F. Sonnier: we have, and I think this was shared. I think last month that we pause, taken transfers from Eeoc,

for right now, as we continue to to get a hold on the backlog of cases that we have

203

00:36:01.690 --> 00:36:21.400

Yolanda F. Sonnier: and intake. Our investigative team continues to work hard, to try to get all of these cases investigated in a timely manner. And so we continue to work on processes and seeing how we can do better and make sure that we're serving the public in a more efficient way. When we're doing our investigations.

204

00:36:22.770 --> 00:36:23.850

Yolanda F. Sonnier: We.

205

00:36:24.590 --> 00:36:29.840

Eileen Levitt: I think one of our meetings the past couple of may meet months. We shared.

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00:36:30.080 --> 00:36:36.682

Yolanda F. Sonnier: That we are building out the Adr unit. And so we have been.

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00:36:37.360 --> 00:37:03.259

Yolanda F. Sonnier: we have one person that is half dedicated to mediation. We have a couple of volunteers that have been helping volunteer mediators as well as an intern that has been helping us go through. Some of we have targeted the backlog and contacting the cases that have not yet been assigned, and trying to see if they want to mediate their cases.

208

00:37:03.270 --> 00:37:25.880

Yolanda F. Sonnier: We had 2 cases last month that settled in mediation, and we had a number of other cases that a few other cases that settled because they will not settle. I'm sorry they closed because the parties had filed in court. And so we are continuing to build up that Adr unit

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00:37:26.000 --> 00:37:27.830

Yolanda F. Sonnier: we were.

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00:37:27.940 --> 00:37:48.109

Yolanda F. Sonnier: We are thankful that the Governor put into his budget for us to get additional positions to help with the with the backlog, as well as some other positions that were greatly needed. And so 2 of those positions are contractual positions in which we will

211

00:37:48.885 --> 00:37:59.839

Yolanda F. Sonnier: be bringing 2 of the people into the Adr unit, which will continue to assist the growth of the Adr unit and be able to assist us

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00:38:00.080 --> 00:38:06.579

Yolanda F. Sonnier: and the public, and making sure that these cases get mediated on a timely level, and with the hopes that

213

00:38:06.700 --> 00:38:11.530

Yolanda F. Sonnier: we're able to settle the cases and the parties aren't, don't have to wait

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00:38:11.550 --> 00:38:37.109

Yolanda F. Sonnier: the time length that they do for the investigation. So stay tuned for the updates about the Adr unit. We do have other positions that will become available later on. In the years that in October we have the funding that will be available for someone to start in October. And so we are planning for those positions, and we'll

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00:38:37.480 --> 00:38:45.279

Yolanda F. Sonnier: be working sometime soon in order to post those positions with understanding that those positions won't start until October.

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00:38:49.990 --> 00:38:51.590

Yolanda F. Sonnier: I was

217

00:38:53.150 --> 00:38:56.570

Yolanda F. Sonnier: I had the honor to speak, I think, last month

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00:38:56.970 --> 00:39:14.559

Yolanda F. Sonnier: at a symposium that the Baltimore County Commission on Veterans Affairs, and the Baltimore County Commission on Women did jointly, and I was able to share about military status as well as just kind of what the Commission.

219

00:39:14.560 --> 00:39:32.169

Yolanda F. Sonnier: who the Commission is, how the Commission can be a resource, what the Commission is seeing, and how the Commission is still here and able to help Maryland residents, despite what's happening on the the Federal level. So I was honored to be able to speak to

220

00:39:32.980 --> 00:39:36.299

Yolanda F. Sonnier: to the Baltimore County community that was present.

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00:39:36.700 --> 00:39:38.240

Yolanda F. Sonnier: I

222

00:39:38.490 --> 00:39:48.080

Yolanda F. Sonnier: think that is all that I have. Unless anyone has any questions based upon the case, processing data report or any other questions for me.

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00:39:49.650 --> 00:40:14.890

Cleveland L. Horton II: I did want to acknowledge. And I apologize, Yolanda, because I didn't acknowledge you, and the fact that you have been designated as one of the top 100 women with the Daily Record. I had the opportunity to attend that ceremony for Yolanda, so I did want to acknowledge her as well again that she was listed as one of the top 100 women with the Daily Record. So Yolanda congratulations on that as well.

224

00:40:15.460 --> 00:40:26.620

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Thank you, Cleveland, and that actually you. I appreciate you saying that because someone came up to me after the ceremony and said, I have a case there. So I started bracing myself

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00:40:26.620 --> 00:40:53.190

Yolanda F. Sonnier: because I didn't know what was going to be said, and it was the best compliment to one of our investigators and how he was. It was an attorney that was representing one of the parties, and how one of our investigators was able to be patient. He was able to listen, make sure everyone felt heard. He was able to work with both of the parties and get the case settled, and it was

226

00:40:53.400 --> 00:41:17.250

Yolanda F. Sonnier: an awesome compliment to get. It was at the end of the day end of the night, and I thanked her because so often so people are. They don't have any problems with bringing complaints, and we accept those complaints, but we also like to receive the compliments, and so I told her I greatly appreciated her bringing that to us, and I also led

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00:41:18.080 --> 00:41:32.819

Yolanda F. Sonnier: our investigator. I let him know as well, and you know he was touched, that someone, you know thought that much to to actually come after hours to me and and give and sing his praises. So

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00:41:33.490 --> 00:41:37.799

Yolanda F. Sonnier: thank you, Cleveland, that just jogged that just kind of jogged my memory. So thank you.

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00:41:41.160 --> 00:41:45.640

Yolanda F. Sonnier: If no questions for me, who's who's the microphone going to.

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00:41:45.640 --> 00:41:52.679

Cleveland L. Horton II: Is going to the woman of the hour, the one that everybody always comes here to listen to, and that would be Nicolette, the money lady.

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00:41:52.680 --> 00:41:55.030

Yolanda F. Sonnier: The money. Lady! Alrighty.

232

00:41:55.350 --> 00:42:18.070

Nicolette Young: Oh, wow! Okay, well, good morning, everyone. I hope that you all had a very nice weekend, would like to welcome our newest Commissioner, Commissioner Prescott, we will be. Our agency will be contacting you because we need to get some information on how to process your per diem. So we'll be sending you an email this week. Okay, so let's get right into it.

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00:42:18.070 --> 00:42:25.670

Nicolette Young: So the agency has expended well, through April 30, th the agency has expended 85.7% of its budget.

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00:42:26.030 --> 00:42:36.140

Nicolette Young: We are working with Dbm to determine if they're going to have to be any reversions for year end. So

we'll absolutely let you know when we get that information.

235

00:42:36.140 --> 00:43:00.259

Nicolette Young: As Yolanda mentioned, we do have some new positions that will be coming on board. Contractuals will be July first, st and the additional positions. The permanent positions will be coming on board. October first.st We will start that recruitment over the summertime, so we will be sending you all that recruitment posting when we're ready to start that recruitment.

236

00:43:01.350 --> 00:43:19.030

Nicolette Young: As was previously previously mentioned, the civil rights gala will be held on August 23.rd So if you can drum up some advertising, some marketing for us, so we can get a lot of a nice turnout that would be greatly appreciated, and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time.

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00:43:26.190 --> 00:43:26.950

Nicolette Young: Okay.

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00:43:26.950 --> 00:43:27.660

Cleveland L. Horton II: Staying on.

239

00:43:27.660 --> 00:43:28.460

Nicolette Young: Very much.

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00:43:28.460 --> 00:43:34.279

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yeah, thanks, Nicola, seeing none, we will pass it over to our general counsel, Gondora Hughes.

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00:43:36.830 --> 00:43:42.209

Glendora.Hughes: Good morning, everyone. Welcome, Commissioner Prescott.

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00:43:44.310 --> 00:43:55.369

Glendora.Hughes: just a couple of things. I will go in deep dive in the case that Cleveland basically took all the thunder out as usual. But

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00:43:56.640 --> 00:44:03.240

Glendora.Hughes: yeah, we'll do in an executive session, so that I, when I discuss it in more detail.

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00:44:04.360 --> 00:44:07.410

Glendora.Hughes: since it is still a pending case.

245

00:44:10.090 --> 00:44:20.059

Glendora.Hughes: also, on the issue of AI we had we. We use Westlaw as our research legal research engine.

246

00:44:20.220 --> 00:44:26.750

Glendora.Hughes: and they have incorporated an AI system in Westlaw.

247

00:44:27.000 --> 00:44:46.359

Glendora.Hughes: which is a really great system. They have guardrails that require the, as they call machine, to only utilize the data that is contained in their database and their libraries, and but they also have attorneys

248

00:44:46.900 --> 00:44:50.670

Glendora.Hughes: who oversee and manage

249

00:44:51.730 --> 00:45:01.470

Glendora.Hughes: the machine in their subject matter areas so that you don't get what they call an AI hallucinations, which is the

250

00:45:02.340 --> 00:45:27.809

Glendora.Hughes: AI making up things to please you. And you, you know, and and one of the things that you have to be careful when picking the software, picking a vendor and picking the system is to make sure there are those guardrails, and that the data, what the data that's being put in is going to be reliable because you get you put bad data in, you'll get bad data out.

251

00:45:28.473 --> 00:45:35.270

Glendora.Hughes: There's, you know, tendency to think that AI is this miracle, but it does require

252

00:45:36.210 --> 00:45:50.840

Glendora.Hughes: which why? Jobs are not going away, human contact and involvement to assess and make sure that you're getting accurate information. So Westlaw Westlaw has added

253

00:45:51.120 --> 00:45:57.700

Glendora.Hughes: a research AI, that assists with research, and then they also have what they call co-council.

254

00:45:57.800 --> 00:46:09.140

Glendora.Hughes: which is another feature that assist with drafting pleadings and briefs and motions which

255

00:46:10.754 --> 00:46:17.699

Glendora.Hughes: watching it in action, and it would significantly cut down.

256

00:46:18.926 --> 00:46:26.100

Glendora.Hughes: Time in research and writing, answering motions and filing motions and writing briefs.

257

00:46:27.210 --> 00:46:33.809

Glendora.Hughes: And we're presently we have a free test until June

258

00:46:33.990 --> 00:46:43.020

Glendora.Hughes: and the staff is, is utilizing on some of our, some of our motions and some of our things that we have to respond to, to see

259

00:46:43.200 --> 00:46:50.930

Glendora.Hughes: how it works and and and and there they have offered multiple trainings as to how again.

260

00:46:51.690 --> 00:46:56.969

Glendora.Hughes: that's another feature to help cut down time and processing

261

00:46:57.814 --> 00:47:03.850

Glendora.Hughes: and assist us in moving cases or being able

262

00:47:03.980 --> 00:47:07.209

Glendora.Hughes: in reality for us, we have to compete

263

00:47:07.350 --> 00:47:19.609

Glendora.Hughes: in the marketplace with with firms and government agencies who have AI, and they're using it. Even the courts are using AI in in the

264

00:47:20.780 --> 00:47:22.100

Glendora.Hughes: State courts

265

00:47:22.450 --> 00:47:31.333

Glendora.Hughes: a large percentage of State courts, and I believe Maryland, the Attorney General's office is is going online with AI. So it is

266

00:47:31.900 --> 00:47:35.729

Glendora.Hughes: not only something you want to have to assist, but

267

00:47:36.130 --> 00:47:43.010

Glendora.Hughes: you need to have to compete and to be able to. address

268

00:47:43.680 --> 00:48:06.539

Glendora.Hughes: these things at the same time as your competitors are, or the other side who are representing the respondents and in our cases. And then also we need to learn it in order to investigate it, because you have respondents utilizing it to screen people in landlord tenant cases to screen people in hiring cases.

269

00:48:06.540 --> 00:48:21.529

Glendora.Hughes: And we need to understand how that works in order to conduct the investigation, to determine whether or not there's discriminatory actions being taken based on bad information and or

270

00:48:22.137 --> 00:48:23.419

Glendora.Hughes: that it's deliberate.

271

00:48:23.960 --> 00:48:51.569

Glendora.Hughes: And we're seeing that popping up in our housing cases where landlords are saying, Oh, we didn't do it. The software did it. And you know the AI screened it out. We're objective. No, it's not. And we have to understand the lay of the land in order to investigate and address those challenges. Now, in this, in our present state of things.

272

00:48:53.090 --> 00:48:55.753

Glendora.Hughes: the only other thing I would point out, is that

273

00:48:56.200 --> 00:49:02.789

Glendora.Hughes: in terms of the what is happening in the Federal government? And and what is happening?

274

00:49:03.600 --> 00:49:06.600

Glendora.Hughes: You know, what can we do? What can the State do?

275

00:49:07.383 --> 00:49:08.630

Glendora.Hughes: I have

276

00:49:08.800 --> 00:49:22.050

Glendora.Hughes: participated in and listened to. A couple of webinars are the labor employment law section of the Maryland State Bar, which I'm a member of. They did a lunch and learn on

277

00:49:22.230 --> 00:49:32.359

Glendora.Hughes: dealing with the Federal Government's employment. Law related executive orders, and how to

278

00:49:33.030 --> 00:49:37.709

Glendora.Hughes: address them, and what kinds of sharing.

279

00:49:38.010 --> 00:49:41.810

Glendora.Hughes: what kind of actions the private bar it has brought?

280

00:49:42.609 --> 00:49:50.809

Glendora.Hughes: In response, and also many of them who are plaintiff counsel talking about saying, they're they're drowning. They're they have

281

00:49:51.770 --> 00:49:59.199

Glendora.Hughes: an extreme amount of inquiries or extreme amount of folks coming to them, seeking advice and seeking

282

00:50:00.780 --> 00:50:04.090

Glendora.Hughes: representation to get their jobs back, and

283

00:50:04.270 --> 00:50:11.530

Glendora.Hughes: they're they're they're probably more management side than there are plaintiff side.

284

00:50:11.970 --> 00:50:18.030

Glendora.Hughes: There are some management side firms that are beginning to do both

285

00:50:18.930 --> 00:50:28.689

Glendora.Hughes: to address, particularly if they don't have Federal contracts, and they're not involved with the Federal

286

00:50:29.910 --> 00:50:34.749

Glendora.Hughes: representing Federal agencies or the Federal Government. Then they are

287

00:50:35.180 --> 00:50:43.069

Glendora.Hughes: looking at trying to take on some of these cases there has been organizing among attorneys who

288

00:50:43.370 --> 00:50:48.730

Glendora.Hughes: even attorneys who normally don't do civil rights or don't do this kind of work.

289

00:50:49.319 --> 00:50:52.009

Glendora.Hughes: I've gone to a meetings meeting where they are

290

00:50:52.190 --> 00:50:59.239

Glendora.Hughes: attempting one is to protect the the Constitution and protecting

291

00:50:59.470 --> 00:51:06.750

Glendora.Hughes: the law and holding looking in terms of holding attorneys accountable for their oath of

292

00:51:06.860 --> 00:51:15.010

Glendora.Hughes: of take that we take to protect the Constitution, and seeing some of the

293

00:51:15.230 --> 00:51:24.660

Glendora.Hughes: behavior that has been taking place by attorneys, looking into bringing grievances in some of the States. They have brought grievances against

294

00:51:24.850 --> 00:51:44.860

Glendora.Hughes: attorneys for lying to the court, for misrepresenting the facts to the court for disobeying orders of the court. Those are clear violations of the oath that you took, and also, for you know, a grievance. You can file with the Bar Association. So

295

00:51:45.080 --> 00:51:47.290

Glendora.Hughes: there are a lot of things that are happening

296

00:51:48.057 --> 00:51:53.040

Glendora.Hughes: on the on the ground, and and I attempt to

297

00:51:54.330 --> 00:52:09.729

Glendora.Hughes: be involved to see what's going on to hear what's going on to see where we can be a part of. And one of the thoughts was, is educating the public about their rights. And I think our know your rights book is right on point.

298

00:52:09.870 --> 00:52:38.209

Glendora.Hughes: because a lot of people are, because this you know of the massive amount of executive orders and attacks. People don't know what to do and where to go. And there. And there's a lot of confusion. And one of the things is to let people know what their rights are. So those are some of the things, and I will dive into the case when we go into executive session. But I do want to say that

299

00:52:38.640 --> 00:52:42.649

Glendora.Hughes: Terrence, artist, who's the attorney who had that case?

300

00:52:43.910 --> 00:52:49.179

Glendora.Hughes: That was a 2 year, and still ticking battle.

301

00:52:49.857 --> 00:52:58.690

Glendora.Hughes: And as I go into the details that you, you have no idea what a frustrating thing, and I also have to give kudos to the entire

302

00:52:59.580 --> 00:53:06.010

Glendora.Hughes: legal team because it was a team effort as well, particularly our our paralegal, Jaya

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00:53:06.140 --> 00:53:10.969

Glendora.Hughes: Underwood, who did a lot of the good, the work, the

304

00:53:11.490 --> 00:53:17.809

Glendora.Hughes: the gut work that needs to be done when you're in litigation and assisting Terrence in

305

00:53:18.454 --> 00:53:33.170

Glendora.Hughes: many of things. And then we also the complainants counsel Omar, who represented the complainant. He also contributed a great deal in terms of moving this case along, so I will

306

00:53:33.700 --> 00:53:37.069

Glendora.Hughes: provide you more details when we go in executive session.

307

00:53:37.300 --> 00:53:38.849

Glendora.Hughes: Any questions.

308

00:53:41.586 --> 00:53:43.013

Kimberly Prescott: I have a question.

309

00:53:43.730 --> 00:54:07.739

Kimberly Prescott: You stated that we should provide education to the public about their rights. Is there any consideration to providing education to employers and other entities, so that we can be proactive in making sure that they're aware of their obligations, because there's 2 sides to the coin.

310

00:54:08.520 --> 00:54:13.149

Glendora.Hughes: Well, we have our education and outreach unit, and our director, Candace

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00:54:13.520 --> 00:54:21.429

Glendora.Hughes: Crenshaw, can tell you specifically what they are doing, but that is part of their charge of their mission is to

312

00:54:22.760 --> 00:54:31.210

Glendora.Hughes: go out, and not only provide rights and information to persons who may be potentially

313

00:54:31.380 --> 00:54:35.049

Glendora.Hughes: victims of discrimination, but to

314

00:54:35.350 --> 00:54:43.150

Glendora.Hughes: a large portion is to go into the community and and educate landlords and employers, and of

315

00:54:43.290 --> 00:54:53.659

Glendora.Hughes: nonprofits as to what the laws are and what is prohibited, and on and and specific substance substantive areas.

316

00:54:54.195 --> 00:54:58.650

Glendora.Hughes: That we covered such as you know, our protected classes and

317

00:54:58.840 --> 00:55:09.569

Glendora.Hughes: and title 20. And they're constantly weekly out in the community and taking requests and going to those

318

00:55:09.850 --> 00:55:12.809

Glendora.Hughes: employers who reach out and want training

319

00:55:12.970 --> 00:55:22.609

Glendora.Hughes: and doing each month doing a general training on particular subject matters particular groups.

320

00:55:23.090 --> 00:55:25.470

Glendora.Hughes: and they do a great job in

321

00:55:25.730 --> 00:55:34.789

Glendora.Hughes: providing an enormous amount. When she gives a report, you'll see some of the work that they do in terms of educating and outreach to

322

00:55:35.030 --> 00:55:45.120

Glendora.Hughes: not only potential victims of discrimination, but protect potential offenders and noncompliance. And I appreciate.

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00:55:45.120 --> 00:55:52.770

Kimberly Prescott: I appreciate that. And I will just say, as someone who works with employers on a regular basis. I

324

00:55:53.410 --> 00:56:08.600

Kimberly Prescott: would be interested to know how employers become aware of that, because that's not something that I've seen in my work. So I would definitely like to see that so that I can help the people that I work with be able to

325

00:56:08.730 --> 00:56:12.840

Kimberly Prescott: access that and and utilize that. If that's a resource that's available.

326

00:56:13.010 --> 00:56:25.909

Glendora.Hughes: Absolutely. And we do try to put a lot of things on the website and a link that connects you to Candice. But she will give you a lot of information when she does her report

327

00:56:29.990 --> 00:56:33.977

Glendora.Hughes: no questions. Then. I guess I'll toss it over to Candice.

328

00:56:34.650 --> 00:56:39.169

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Thank you, Miss Glendor. Good morning, everyone. How are you all today?

329

00:56:41.490 --> 00:56:43.249

Cleveland L. Horton II: We're doing great. We're doing.

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00:56:43.250 --> 00:56:45.529

Janssen Evelyn: We are doing great thanks for the.

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00:56:45.530 --> 00:56:46.060

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Thank you.

332

00:56:46.060 --> 00:56:46.810

Janssen Evelyn: Pandas.

333

00:56:47.120 --> 00:57:10.790

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Yes, absolutely welcome, Commissioner Prescott. We're so happy to have you join us today and thank you to our guests from the public as well again. I am Candace Crenshaw, Director of Education and Outreach here with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. So, as you've seen in our report during the month of April, fair housing month, we hosted a fair housing Webinar series every Wednesday of the month.

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00:57:10.790 --> 00:57:23.670

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: and we also hosted our fair housing Forum. So our audience were realtors, real estate agents, realtor professionals, brokers, appraisers.

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00:57:23.670 --> 00:57:46.689

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: lenders, and we were really happy to have our audience to be who they were, so that we can ensure that they're aware of their rights and fair housing. So we served a total of 276 individuals via Webinar and in person. So that was a huge success. We had a great group of panelists that are always willing to work with us, and as Ms. G. Just mentioned.

336

00:57:46.850 --> 00:58:15.970

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: we've been facilitating trainings and workshops about 2 to 3 times a week, and Commissioner Prescott to your point as well. We have, if you can. If you see on our report we facilitated training, sexual harassment, prevention. Know your rights. This is MCCR. To a couple of businesses and entities, so that their staff were aware of their rights as well. But we do have one pagers. We also, as Ms. G. Mentioned, have links on the website, so

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00:58:15.970 --> 00:58:32.989

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: we can always send that out to the Commissioner, so that you all can share with your networks of any organizations or employers that are interested or need to, you know, be aware of what we're doing, because people are still learning who we are. So we also for

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00:58:33.000 --> 00:58:56.760

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: the month of May, you know, is Asian, American Pacific Islander Month, and we are collaborating with the Asian Pacific Legal Resource center, and we'll have a webinar on May 21st during lunchtime, and then we also have a tour the week after on May 27, th at the Smithsonian.

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00:58:56.760 --> 00:59:03.370

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: So we invite everyone out to come and join us as we celebrate and highlight Asian, American, Pacific Islander month

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00:59:03.410 --> 00:59:19.680

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: during the month of April. With our trainings I left this part out, but I also wanted to highlight that. I facilitated a training around inclusive language and dimensions of diversity with Frostburg State University, with Dr. Alicia Ruminski's class.

341

00:59:19.680 --> 00:59:44.680

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: and it was about a class of about 20 to 30 students, so it was great to highlight our training and around some civil rights issues, just so that they are aware because people are still continuously learning who we are outside of facilitating our trainings. We are still building our listening sessions as well as you may know, we started our listening sessions

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00:59:44.680 --> 01:00:00.060

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: since last April, in Western Maryland. We've been to. We facilitated a virtual listening session with the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland. So you will receive information on our listening sessions coming up with Anne Arundel County and Baltimore City.

343

01:00:00.060 --> 01:00:24.550

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: We also are working nonstop with the gala, and, as you know, we do encourage each of our commissioners to purchase tables and tickets so that people can be aware of what we're highlighting around civil rights. We do want to highlight that. It's not just a celebration. We're not just having a party. But we want to highlight what's going on in the community and in our state around civil rights. So it is important that we have everyone

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01:00:24.550 --> 01:00:34.009

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: all hands on deck to ensure that we can get our ticket sales up so that we can celebrate together, and then just highlight everything that we're doing

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01:00:34.417 --> 01:00:38.899

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: also, we are in the midst of all of those things.

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01:00:38.900 --> 01:01:03.769

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: planning our Maryland leadership and advocacy program mlap. As you know, in the past we've had our Maryland equity and inclusion leadership program with University of Baltimore. We cut ties. So now we are facilitating our own Maryland leadership and advocacy program. I will ensure that everyone receives our one pagers because we do have a form for individuals who are interested in participating

347

01:01:03.770 --> 01:01:28.620

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: if they want to be a participant, or if they want to be a sponsor or a speaker. And the same with our civil rights leadership program and our young scholars program. So our education. Outreach associates are working tirelessly to ensure that we are staying on top of everything and putting out our programs. We want to make sure that we are facilitating everything that is on our websites.

348

01:01:30.250 --> 01:01:43.890

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: I can't think of anything else. I'm trying not to read everything that I put on our report, but if you have any questions, now is the time, and if there's anything that we need to dive into offline, I'm open to that as well.

349

01:01:45.910 --> 01:01:47.399

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Any questions.

350

01:01:51.450 --> 01:02:05.729

Magdalena Navarro: That's a comment, Candace. Thank you so much for your great report. This is Magdalena, and I

just wanted to ask you to please send us a little more information about the I think it was the.

351

01:02:05.730 --> 01:02:06.750

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: The Asian American.

352

01:02:06.750 --> 01:02:07.300

Magdalena Navarro: Pacific.

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01:02:07.300 --> 01:02:08.080

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Islanders. Yeah.

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01:02:08.080 --> 01:02:37.169

Magdalena Navarro: And in particular, many of you know that all the agencies are prohibited to celebrate diversity. Therefore the groups that we're putting these events together cannot do it. But it is a great opportunity for this commission putting these events together, and then bringing the celebration to those that cannot do it themselves. So is there a fee for that event that you were mentioning.

355

01:02:37.790 --> 01:03:01.510

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: No, there's no fee. So our webinar, there's no fee. Everyone can log in. And then when we visit the Smithsonian, there's no fee, and we have a Tour guide, but there is no fee, and and also Commissioner Prescott. I know I wanted to highlight. Our trainings are free also, but I can ensure that you have details so that you know we can connect around employers and employees that you work with.

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01:03:02.230 --> 01:03:04.579

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: And thank you, Commissioner Navarro.

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01:03:08.610 --> 01:03:10.340

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Any other questions.

358

01:03:11.350 --> 01:03:25.839

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Candace, I just put in, and for the Commissioners and I just put in the link to our events page, which takes you right to the webinar, the registration for the webinar and the afternoon at the Smithsonian.

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01:03:26.720 --> 01:03:28.150

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Thank you. Yolanda.

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01:03:29.120 --> 01:03:33.410

Kimberly Prescott: So I do have a quick question and I guess

361

01:03:35.830 --> 01:03:53.239

Kimberly Prescott: the events Page. That's great. The fact that things are happening is great. But how do people know to go there? How do they know that this is the place that they need to go to look for it? How is that getting in front of people proactively, because, in order for me to go to this page and register, I have to know it's here.

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01:03:53.240 --> 01:04:00.779

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Absolutely so. Lately a lot of our information has been disseminated, word of mouth and our events. So.

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01:04:00.780 --> 01:04:25.419

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: for example, word of mouth, we post on LinkedIn, Instagram X, Slash, Twitter, Facebook. We also our education and outreach associates. We have 2 education and outreach associates and myself. We visit nursing homes, we collaborate with schools, we reach out to them. Once we connect with them, then they let other people know word of mouth and inform them so that they can connect with us.

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01:04:25.420 --> 01:04:49.149

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: We also have our listserv. We send out information on our listserv, and then a lot of people find out from other people on our eventbrite. Our eventbrite is public. So when we post something on eventbrite, whether or not someone is in our. If they followed our page or not, it still pops up publicly. But we really we're visiting. We literally

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01:04:49.150 --> 01:04:55.980

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: our team. They'll drive to White Plains. We'll drive to Western Maryland. We'll drive to Frederick, so we are literally just

366

01:04:56.220 --> 01:05:25.779

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: the last couple of years we've been putting ourselves out there on a greater scale by physically going to different places. We're going to libraries in the different counties. So word of mouth via social media, and we are doing our best to ensure that we're visiting different entities and places so that people are aware of us. A lot of people, again, are still learning about who MCCR is. Some people don't know where to go, but we have been putting our faces out there

367

01:05:25.780 --> 01:05:35.309

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: physically, literally, at festivals, reaching out to individuals and organizations, so that we are making sure our presence is known.

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01:05:35.780 --> 01:05:37.780

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: I hope that answers your question.

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01:05:38.210 --> 01:05:57.299

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: and I see in the comments how the education and outreach information activities distributed to other State agencies. So we collaborate with other State agencies and reach out to them. For example, we collaborate with the Attorney General's office, the Governor's office, and also in our local jurisdictions in each county.

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01:05:57.300 --> 01:06:20.280

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: They usually have a Human rights agency. So Howard County, Southern Maryland, Prince George's County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County. So we connect and collaborate with other agencies and share information with them. I meet with agencies and collaborate and just schedule meetings so that people are aware of who we are. So

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01:06:20.280 --> 01:06:39.130

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: we're literally just putting ourselves out there a couple of years ago, and I know that everyone is not on social media. But a couple of years ago we had about 300 followers. Now we're over a thousand followers. So you can see that our data has increased and changed with us, just spreading education and awareness more.

372

01:06:39.280 --> 01:06:49.169

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: And if anyone has any suggestions, I'm free and open to that as well, if you want to email me. But we have been hitting the ground running in a major way.

373

01:06:53.420 --> 01:06:55.940

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Thank you for your questions. Anyone else.

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01:06:59.040 --> 01:06:59.810

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Thank you.

375

01:06:59.810 --> 01:07:15.199

Stephanie Suerth: To the mute. I just wanted to also add that one of the things that, as commissioners we tried to do and should be doing is making sure that we're amplifying those announcements and messaging across. And I'm sorry. Hold on.

376

01:07:15.670 --> 01:07:16.139

Eileen Levitt: See you.

377

01:07:16.140 --> 01:07:18.709

Stephanie Suerth: I have allergies. And so I get that

378

01:07:19.260 --> 01:07:40.449

Stephanie Suerth: trip across our social networks, across our professional networks, across. You know the different groups that we are aware of and work with and everything else. So while obviously Candace does an amazing job and is out there and active, you know, I think one of our biggest roles as commissioners is to make sure that we're doing that supportive work

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01:07:40.580 --> 01:07:42.810

Stephanie Suerth: and helping to push that out.

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01:07:44.920 --> 01:07:46.370

Stephanie Suerth: Sorry soapbox.

381

01:07:47.153 --> 01:07:56.200

Kimberly Prescott: Really quickly. To that point are, do you tag commissioners in post? Do you? Forward events? How? How does that happen?

382

01:07:56.830 --> 01:08:18.199

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Yes, Commissioner Prescott, we do. So. We tag a lot of times when we collaborate on events. I'll let them know, like, Hey, we want to collaborate, because on social media, when you collaborate, it pops up on both pages. But yes, we tag, we email, we'll message, and we just we do our best to connect in every way. When we do have events. For example.

383

01:08:18.200 --> 01:08:39.899

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: April was fair housing month. We'll have everyone's headshots connect with everyone, send it to them so that they can post it as well highlighting us as we highlight them. Our gala is, we're 102 days away from our gala. So we're going to put the headshots up of our guests and tag everyone. And it really works. We've increased our followers

384

01:08:39.899 --> 01:09:03.740

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: on all platforms, over 600 followers, and you know, in the last year and a half or so so. Yes, we do tag, and we get on meetings. So a lot of times our staff on Fridays we have get to know E. And O. So we invite everyone to meetings to collaborate with us if they want to sign up for trainings and collaborate via social media as well.

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01:09:05.700 --> 01:09:29.030

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: And again we do visit nursing homes. We were in Hartford, Cecil County, and also in Severn, Maryland because a lot of our older Americans are. They're like, Hey, I'm not on social media. How can I find out about you? So we'll just go. We'll go there, make sure we're dropping off flyers and just informing them or calling their front desk and

386

01:09:29.029 --> 01:09:36.119

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: emailing them information so that they can print it out because we want to make sure we're hitting everyone. Everyone is not on social media.

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01:09:40.060 --> 01:10:02.320

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: Commissioner Navarro, I see you said, who is going to be the main speaker at the gala. So this year we are changing our approach. We're not going to have a specific keynote speaker, but we're doing a fireside chat. And at this time we are finalizing the contract to have Tamika Mallory as one of our fireside chat guests.

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01:10:06.050 --> 01:10:09.710

Candice Crenshaw-MCCR: and that was just confirmed. So you will see the flyers soon.

389

01:10:14.180 --> 01:10:15.760

Stephanie Suerth: Y'all gonna make me talk again.

390

01:10:16.480 --> 01:10:21.143

Cleveland L. Horton II: No, I I there are no other questions, I think.

391

01:10:21.910 --> 01:10:26.309

Cleveland L. Horton II: Madam Chair, that concludes the staff reports.

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01:10:26.710 --> 01:10:27.570

Stephanie Suerth: Excellent

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01:10:28.640 --> 01:10:33.199

Stephanie Suerth: one quick. Second again, I have way. Too many things open. You guys are used to me by now.

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01:10:33.200 --> 01:10:37.869

Yolanda F. Sonnier: Madam Chair, were you talking about? Talk again in this one, or at the gala?

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01:10:38.100 --> 01:10:41.007

Yolanda F. Sonnier: I was just joking around. Don't worry about it.

396

01:10:42.430 --> 01:10:45.112

Stephanie Suerth: Everybody knows I love to speak.

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01:10:45.730 --> 01:10:52.630

Stephanie Suerth: So now we're going to move into old new business. Obviously, I hope we've done a good job of letting everyone know that we have a new Commissioner.

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01:10:52.790 --> 01:11:04.620

Stephanie Suerth: And I hope you guys join me in welcoming Commissioner Prescott and I very much look forward to working with her again. I apologize. I will make sure I get some time on our calendar. It's just been a little crazy

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01:11:04.780 --> 01:11:08.899

Stephanie Suerth: right now. I work in a higher ed. So there you go.

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01:11:09.976 --> 01:11:17.310

Stephanie Suerth: and then, Cleveland, I would like for you to introduce the topic that we talked about as far as

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01:11:17.420 --> 01:11:21.299

Stephanie Suerth: what our goals are, and then I'd like to talk very briefly about.

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01:11:21.420 --> 01:11:29.140

Stephanie Suerth: We will follow up. We're not going to try to schedule it now on scheduling our Commission meeting commissioners meeting to discuss

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01:11:30.550 --> 01:11:32.280

Stephanie Suerth: Our priorities.

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01:11:32.660 --> 01:11:38.410

Stephanie Suerth: both from last planning session and then moving forward. So, Cleveland, may I turn it over to you, please.

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01:11:38.410 --> 01:11:40.880

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yeah. And we're talking about the legislative piece. Right, madam, chair.

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01:11:40.880 --> 01:11:42.350

Stephanie Suerth: Yes, exactly.

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01:11:42.350 --> 01:11:50.070

Cleveland L. Horton II: So part of what me and Madam Chair discussed was trying to make sure that we start engaging in this conversation around

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01:11:50.160 --> 01:12:18.049

Cleveland L. Horton II: legislative priorities earlier and earlier right. We do want to make sure that we have a defined legislative priority agenda as we enter into the summer and are approaching the next session, because what that does for all of us is, it gives us the opportunity to enter into conversations with legislators, organizations around our priorities, and to be able to establish those collaborations that we need

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01:12:18.050 --> 01:12:31.379

Cleveland L. Horton II: to move forward in different areas. We recognize that last year when we met and created our legislative priorities, we weren't really able to address those particular priorities because the State was in a budget deficit, right? So

410

01:12:31.380 --> 01:12:52.559

Cleveland L. Horton II: the priority was just maintaining a status quo and making sure that our agency didn't get cut, and that was really the gist across the board with most major initiatives was that if there was a fiscal note. Most of those bills died on arrival right? So this year we were hoping to. We thought that when me and Madam Chair discussed

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01:12:52.700 --> 01:13:21.000

Cleveland L. Horton II: establishing our legislative priority agenda for this year that we may not need a long conversation around the priorities. We thought that it'd be a great opportunity for us to potentially just reaffirm what our legislative priorities were for last year, and duplicate them again for this year, so that we can move forward in that particular area. So I will go through the ones that I have.

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01:13:21.000 --> 01:13:23.519

Stephanie Suerth: Cleveland. Let's do that. When we schedule the meeting.

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01:13:23.520 --> 01:13:52.460

Cleveland L. Horton II: Okay, no problem. So so we madam Chair, we'll schedule a meeting to kind of go through what those legislative priorities were from last year, so that you all can hopefully reaffirm those. Our goal was, you know, we did last year we met in person. It was always a good opportunity for us to anytime we can be in front of each other. We love to see each other and sit across from each other. If we're going to do, I guess a reaffirming, Madam Chair. It's up to you whether you want to do that virtually or in person. You can decide what's the best way to do that.

414

01:13:52.760 --> 01:14:04.090

Stephanie Suerth: I would actually like to, unless anybody has a significant concern about it. I would actually like to have that in person. I think those conversations are great to have, they tend to be interactive.

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01:14:04.200 --> 01:14:33.580

Stephanie Suerth: even if it is just a reaffirmation and thinking about what we want for this year. But then we can also start really laying the groundwork for thinking about 5 year and long term goals. Strategically, we also want to talk a little bit and revisit some of the conversations that we had that we didn't necessarily get to as far as data collection to be able to make some ongoing decisions about priorities. So I think those conversations are best in person. If Mccr. Will open its doors to us.

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01:14:34.040 --> 01:14:35.499

Cleveland L. Horton II: Of course, of course.

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01:14:35.890 --> 01:14:45.390

Stephanie Suerth: I, personally, am not going to be able to do this until starting in June. Just because of travel plans. I recognize that we're going into the summer.

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01:14:45.510 --> 01:14:57.050

Stephanie Suerth: So if everybody can sort of start looking at their calendars, see if there are any hard nos that are out there, and then we can facilitate getting that meeting together.

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01:14:57.400 --> 01:15:09.760

Stephanie Suerth: I'm I'm excited. I I really am. When you know, Cleveland said, let's actually do the reaffirmation and and meet about this. I I'm really, really delighted that we're moving these things up

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01:15:09.880 --> 01:15:15.329

Stephanie Suerth: and that we can have a more meaningful conversation that we can start thinking about implementation operationalization.

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01:15:16.540 --> 01:15:17.710

Stephanie Suerth: Thank you. Greenland.

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01:15:18.020 --> 01:15:41.090

Cleveland L. Horton II: No problem. Thank you, Madam Chair, and again, we'd like to have the meeting as soon as possible. So the earlier in June, the better. We do want it to try to be as accommodating to everybody's schedule as possible, but it is important for us to engage in the conversation as early as possible, so that we can get started with again approaching folks, having conversations.

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01:15:41.090 --> 01:15:50.989

Cleveland L. Horton II: getting folks together to talk about how we accomplish this, as we continue to move forward. So if you all can let us know what your schedules are like

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01:15:51.040 --> 01:16:01.399

Cleveland L. Horton II: for for June. Hopefully, early June, we can get that again scheduled on the calendar for folks to come here to the Commission and and have that meeting.

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01:16:01.880 --> 01:16:15.239

Stephanie Suerth: And I'd I'd like to have us look at it like a half a day. I don't wanna schedule a full day. We will do it in person, and then adjust as necessary. As everybody recalls. The last one was supposed to be in person, and I was virtual because I had Covid.

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01:16:15.380 --> 01:16:19.055

Stephanie Suerth: So we all recognize things happen, and

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01:16:19.760 --> 01:16:23.739

Stephanie Suerth: we will be as accommodating, for you know everybody to participate as possible.

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01:16:24.220 --> 01:16:31.299

Cleveland L. Horton II: Yeah, I think the last time, actually, we, I think we did 9 to 12, and then we had lunch afterwards. So we can kind of do it the the same way.

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01:16:31.460 --> 01:16:32.540

Stephanie Suerth: Yep, perfect.

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01:16:34.410 --> 01:16:50.530

Stephanie Suerth: So like, I said. If you have any hard nose, those 1st 2, and then into the 3rd week of June, please let us know, so we can avoid that, and then we can send out a poll and find the time where it is most convenient for critical mass. For most of us to attend.

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01:16:50.530 --> 01:16:54.870

Cleveland L. Horton II: I'll have Spencer send something out to coordinate the schedule so that we can get that done asap.

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01:16:55.490 --> 01:16:57.169

Stephanie Suerth: You guys are amazing. Thank you.

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01:16:59.620 --> 01:17:01.779

Stephanie Suerth: Alright. Any other new business.

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01:17:02.810 --> 01:17:20.870

Cleveland L. Horton II: The only other thing, madam. Chair, that we well, we can talk offline. We'll talk about because we will. We will need to add something to that conversation that has presented itself recently. But I think that me and you need to have the conversation first, st and then we can talk about it with the larger group.

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01:17:21.120 --> 01:17:26.849

Stephanie Suerth: That sounds great, and Jensen just put in the chat that he has a 1130. So if we need to do a closed session.

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01:17:27.335 --> 01:17:30.880

Stephanie Suerth: I would like to move forward with that unless there's anything.

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01:17:31.010 --> 01:17:34.119

Stephanie Suerth: any questions, concerns, comments that we need to address you.

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01:17:37.160 --> 01:17:48.961

Stephanie Suerth: I absolutely was just about to say for our guest speakers. Is there anything you'd like to add? Any questions that you have before we would move into closed session? Magdalena, you are you read my mind?

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01:17:52.590 --> 01:17:58.979

Stephanie Suerth: Thank you very much, Natalie Holder, for joining us. We hope you come back and join us again in the future as well.

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01:17:59.170 --> 01:18:00.430

Stephanie Suerth: Have a great day.

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01:18:02.940 --> 01:18:03.990

Crystal F-Mitcheltree: Thank you.

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01:18:04.500 --> 01:18:10.120

Stephanie Suerth: Thank you, and we appreciate you coming as well. I hope you enjoyed it, and please do come back and join us again.

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01:18:11.230 --> 01:18:12.380

Crystal F-Mitcheltree: Will do.

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01:18:12.380 --> 01:18:14.020

Stephanie Suerth: Wonderful. Thank you.

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01:18:15.060 --> 01:18:20.720

Spencer Dove: Okay. So for executive session, if I could get a motion a second and a vote then I can end the recording.

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01:18:21.340 --> 01:18:22.240

Janssen Evelyn: So moved.

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01:18:23.610 --> 01:18:24.530

Angela Scott: Second.

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01:18:25.470 --> 01:18:28.020

Stephanie Suerth: All in favor, bye.

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01:18:28.020 --> 01:18:28.500

Eileen Levitt: Okay.

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01:18:28.920 --> 01:18:34.680

Stephanie Suerth: Any opposed motion carries. Can we please move to executive session?