

**State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Commission Meeting
October 8, 2024
Meeting Held Virtually via Zoom**

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Stephanie Suerth, MPA, CCEP, Chairperson; Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq., Vice Chairperson; Eileen M. Levitt, SPHR, SHRM-SCP; Angela Scott, Esq.; Noah Thomas Metheny, Esq., MPH; Jeff Rosen; Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA

Management Present: Cleveland L. Horton II, Executive Director; Nicolette Young, Assistant Director; Glendora C. Hughes, General Counsel; Candice Gray, Director of Education & Outreach

Staff Present: Alesha Bell, Investigative Supervisor; Tyest Hall, Administrative Specialist

Members of the Public: None

Meeting called to order at 10:03am

Minutes for September 10, 2024, Commission Meeting approved unanimously.

Chairperson's Report

The Commission discussed the upcoming elections and its potential impact on civil rights in Maryland, including voter access and what may be within MCCR's jurisdiction should a voter encounter an issue at the polls. Also discussed the impending hurricane and sent well wishes to those states impacted by it.

Chairperson had the opportunity to meet with Executive Director Horton. More news to come on that in the future.

Executive Director's Report

Staff offer congratulations to Commissioner Navarro for the addition to her family.

Discussed the Hate Bias Report recently released including the importance of the Commission staying involved in this very important issue. Highlighted the increase in reported incidents around Maryland, the top three reported types of incidents, and areas not reporting any incidents this year.

Executive Director attended the MD Realtors Commission to offer them insight into sexual harassment prevention and responding to incidents/allegations. Commission wants to request training from MCCR.

Hosted Attorney General's Commission on Hate Crime Prevention. Commission recently reorganized with new members. MCCR is a member of the Commission providing insight and expertise.

Met with MD Commission on African History & Culture. Invited to attend renaming event for the Banneker-Douglass Museum on November 1 to add the Tubman name onto the museum.

Leadership Team participated the annual Baltimore City Civil Rights Breakfast. Leadership Team also finalizing potential pillars that will serve as a sort of "strategic planning" for MCCR goals and initiatives moving forward.

Employment units met EEOC's contract. Offered congratulations to both units for this success.

Recruitment for Deputy Director position closes today. Commissioners invited to participate on interview panel. Also answered questions about interviewing and selection process.

General Counsel's Report

Reviewed submitted written report.

Attended annual NAACP Legal Defense Fund Civil Rights Lawyer Training Institute conference last month. Discussed some of the topics that were covered such as affordable housing, public utilities, and other important topics/issues being addressed nationwide.

Assistant Director's Report

Reviewed submitted written report.

Discussed pending budget amendment requests. Welcomed new staff that have joined MCCR.

Director of Education & Outreach's Report

Reviewed submitted written report.

Thanked everyone for the listening session in Howard County. There were approximately 30 guests in attendance.

During second week of September, MCCR collaborated with Associated Black Charities for event called "The Cookout". ABC also invited MCCR Executive Director and E&O Director to facilitate sessions at their Equity in the Workplace event on October 19.

Facilitated trainings every week in September. Implicit Bias was the most popular topic requested that month.

On September 19, facilitated a "lunch and learn" at MCCR which hosted a film screening for "Origin" by Ava Duvernay.

On November 15 and 16, Office of the Attorney General is planning its next Hate Bias Forum in Southern Maryland. MCCR is helping with setting up this meeting.

Continuing to facilitate the Civil Rights Leadership Program and the Maryland Equity & Inclusion Leadership Program. More news to come on those.

All staff meeting on October 15 at the Maryland Center for History & Culture. Commissioners invited to attend.

Old & New Business

Commissioners will be receiving additional information on the pillars being developed by Staff.

Commissioners look at potential quarterly in-person meetings so that monthly Commission meetings will be hybrid. Accessibility is a priority when determining how the Commission will meet, including alternative meeting times. Chair will be polling the Commissioners for input.

Commission moved to Executive Session at 10:56am. Motion made by Vice Chairperson Evelyn, seconded by Commissioner Metheny.