

**Erie County Human Relations Commission (ECHRC) – Commissioners Meeting**

**Minutes– August 25th 2020**

**Call to Order/Roll Call:**

The Meeting was called to Order by Commission chair Shawnta Pulliam-Brown via zoom at 6:13 PM.

Commission Members Present: Shawnta Pulliam-Brown (Chair) Mary Jo Campbell (V-Chair) Christine Mitchell (Sec.); Tracy Leet, Connie Manus, Michael Martin.

Commission Members Not Present: John Steiner, Willy McAdory.

ECHRC Staff Present: Tony Logue, Wayne Harbison, Attorney Spry Attorney Sunwabe.

County Council/Erie County none

City Council Kathy Schaaf

Advisory Board Diana Ames

Guests Lydia Laythe

**Approval of Commissioners Minutes / Notes:**

The Minutes of the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting as amended approved by the Commissioners Motioned by Commissioners Campbell/Leet approved unanimously.

Minutes of July 28th Motioned by Commissioners Martin/Manus approved unanimously.

**Public Comment** none

**Chair Report / Commissioners Comment(s):**

There will be a special working session to discuss the annual report at 5:00 p.m. on September 2<sup>nd</sup> to work together on the annual report.

Checking the status of hearing dates the hearing panel and county council have provided availability dates. Attorney Spry is coordinating dates with both parties and attorneys for them. We are trying to meet timing requirements to have the hearings. Attorney Spry indicated he would respond on hearing dates within a week. Commissioner Martin indicated we should be controlling the dates to try to push this forward. Attorney Spry has dates available in September to propose to the parties and will report back shortly.

Attorney Spry confirmed that he was partaking in the fact finding investigation process and will be our Hearing Panel Attorney for that same case in the Adjudicatory process.

Chair Pulliam-Brown shared with Director Logue that this was a co-mingling legality issue, and unfair practice to the citizens and we must utilize each of our attorneys in each process separately fact finding/Adjudicatory piece. Directory Logue responded of it not being illegal and we are too small of an organization with limited funding to have separate attorneys and that he will continue to have one attorney run the investigation and adjudicatory process for the same case start to finish. Chair Pulliam-Brown indicated she would bring this to the attention of county council. There was discussion on this subject and how we use/train Wayne as an investigator.

Advisory Board member Ames has been volunteering for administrative duties in the office. Both chairs were given keys to the office but the keys have been changed with ADA compliance. Mr. Harbison indicated that both chairs were offered to come into the office but chair Pulliam-Brown indicated she was only given a key. Discussion of if there was a conflict with Advisory board chair being in the office and Directory Logue indicated no conflict. The commission chair indicated that the commission needs to know who is working in the office.

Zoom trainings Chair Pulliam-Brown will work with our needs and what is available to get some trainings scheduled for us. From Mr Harbison EEOC training via zoom is possible also.

The flyer is still in process with Advisory board members Sonya Byes and Freda Tepfer.

### **Director's Report:**

Director Logue.

We are holding steady with the 10 cases. Also there are several recent calls with up to 4 new cases potentially coming mostly on housing. Disruption to the office due to Cov19 we now have zoom and access to county council chambers to get fact findings and hearings scheduled and will move forward.

**Old Business:** Erie Reader ad. Mr. Harbison will send out the ad there was limited print publication due to Covid but it has been online and we have more coming. The ads were \$1200 for a year 6 hardcopy + online. We checked on the black yellow pages which had not been moving forward. The chair has proposed to reach out to the church bulletins as an alternative. Commissioner Manus and Chairwoman Pulliam-Brown will provide a list or some African-American churches. Director Logue proposed reaching out to a variety of large churches. So commissioners Manus and Pulliam-Brown will provide a list and director Logue and staff can also have a list to reach out to. Commissioner Martin proposed eventually expanding county wide.

**New Business:** Motions chair Tracy Leet to review a checklist of all the documents for the hearing. Chair Pulliam-Brown will send the duties from the ordinance to answer any questions on the responsibilities. Commissioner Leet discussed attendance policy and missing commissioners. Commissioner McAdory was appointed by City Council and Commissioner Steiner was appointed by Mr Anderson. We will reach out to the appointing members to move forward.

### **Adjournment:**

There was a motion to adjourn by commissioners Martin and Campbell and the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.