

**NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
*May 28, 2020*

The Human Relations Commission met on Thursday, May 28, 2020 via Video and Phone. Commissioners present were Toussaint Romain, Linda Jackson Barnes, Nicholas Byrne, Edith Chance, Henry Eddleman III, Jameesha Harris, Matthew Hughes, Immanuel Jarvis, Toni King, Angelo Mathay, TR Nunley, Amelia Stinson-Wesley, Charlotte Williams.

OAH Staff members present were Lamont Goins, Richard Boulden, Gene Troy, Elouise Williams, and by phone Judge Julian Mann.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 a.m. with Chairman Toussaint Romain presiding. Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, and Welcoming Remarks led by Chair Toussaint Romain.

**ROLL CALL**

The Roll was called by Administrative Specialist Elouise Williams. The Commissioners present via video and phone were noted. Quorum was met.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the January 28, 2020 meeting were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Angelo Mathay. The Commissioners unanimously seconded and accepted the minutes to be approved.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER**

The new commissioner was not present.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

Subcommittees did not meet prior to meeting. Commissioner Angelo Mathay gave a brief review on the Housing Committee. There will be Fair Housing Training for the committee for three commissioners and proposed one or two speakers that will address the Fair Housing topic.

**UPDATES AND INFORMATION FROM OAH STAFF**

**Report on Activities of Local HRCs and Update on Next Regional Meeting**

Program Manager Gene Troy gave a report on changes in the state and local HRCs due to the COVID-19. The office is still operational with the paid staff teleworking from home. The regional state-wide meeting has been postponed due to the Governor's statewide mandate of staying at home. There will possibly be virtual realms of upcoming meetings for local HRCs.

Commissioner Angelo Mathay had questions about the HUD process in tracking COVID-19 cases. Program Manager Gene Troy reported that the contracted agency will track the information and have it available for HUD. Presently, not enough information is available to report on.

Attorney Richard Boulden discussed the Fair Housing HUD/FEO cases research process of housing and gave the website for those that wanted more information. COVID-19 would be considered a temporary disability and could not be investigated under Fair Housing. That information is also considered a statistic.

Director Lamont Goins discussed the HUD Fair Housing information on the OAH website. The COVID-19 banner will be added to the website and other updates to make it more user friendly.

**Staff Vacancy Recruitment**

Director Lamont Goins reported that the Human Relations Specialist vacancy will be reposted and followed up with the Human Resources Director. OAH has requested a position dedicated to 50 percent to Fair Housing and 50 percent HRC and other community relations support activities.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no Public Comments.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Draft Bylaws Update**

Director Lamont Goins reported the Review and Approval of Draft Bylaws by the Rules Review Staff and Attorneys have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The review results will possibly be available at the next meeting in July.

### **Discussion of Potential Speakers for Future Meetings**

Commissioner Angelo Mathay spoke on proposed one or two speakers that will address the commissioners on various HRC topics.

Director Lamont Goins spoke on behalf of Judge Julian Mann. There have been no recent discussions with Judge Mann and he will follow-up with him on this on a later date. Director Lamont Goins reported on a state local meeting they attended in Durham, NC. The speaker gave a presentation on the housing in Durham that many of the commissioners would find interesting and informative about how water and sewage lines were put in and the history behind housing and living and how it impacted that part of the community in Durham.

### **Purchase of HRC Commissioner ID Badges**

Director Lamont Goins and Attorney Richard Boulden reported that the order was placed and names were submitted for the badges to the vendor. Presently, we do not have a target date of the arrival of the badges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will follow-up with the company at a later date.

### **Fair Housing Training For Commissioners**

Director Lamont Goins reported that the training sponsored by HUD has been placed on hold due to COVID-19. The budget for this year for training will be rolled over to next year's budget.

### **HRC Meeting in Charlotte**

Report given by Program Director Gene Troy that state travel is on hold right now due to COVID-19. Commissioner Amelia Stinson-Wesley suggested a church in Charlotte for the meeting. She was thanked for her suggestion. The regional state-wide meeting and travel has been postponed due to the Governor's statewide mandate of staying at home.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Future HRC Meetings by Teleconference**

Director Lamont Goins spoke on this being the first time the HRC are teleconferencing and videoconferencing. The issues will be addressed. The process will be started to solve the issues that went wrong with the available technology. DIT and Microsoft have been contacted.

### **COVID-19 Impact on Housing and Services**

Director Lamont Goins reported that tracking guidance from HUD on how they are studying the issues of COVID-19. Housing cases are presently postponed from doing physical inspections. The issues will be addressed via phone calls to complaints. Commissioner Angelo Mathay spoke on concerns he had. His concerns will be followed-up by Director Lamont Goins and Program Manager Gene Troy.

### **HUD 2020 Guidelines for Emotional Support Animals**

Attorney Richard Boulden reported since January the Service Animal Rules are different per animal category and per different housing category. Typical household pets, indoor/outdoor and Housing - rental, owned home, HOA. Medical therapeutic reasons from medical professionals are needed to have service animals.

## **CLOSING REMARKS AND Q & A**

Closing Remarks were made by Chair Toussaint Romain. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

## **ADJOURN**

The HRC Meeting adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

Submitted by,  
Elouise Williams, Civil Rights Division Administrative Specialist

Minutes approved by,  
The Human Relations Commission  
Toussaint Romain, Commissioner (Presiding Chair)