

Call to Order

A commission meeting of the Louisiana Commission on Human Rights was held on July 1, 2020 via Zoom. It began at 11:05 a.m. and was presided over by Chairwoman Jacobson, with Dr. Leah Raby, as Executive Director.

Attendees

Commissioners ■ – Denotes Absent		
Tamara K. Jacobson, Chairwoman	Commissioner Angela Faulk	Commissioner Terry L. Jackson
Commissioner F. Clayton Latimer	■ Commissioner Julie Mendez Achée	Commissioner Roxanne Foret
Commissioner Courtney L. Hunt	Commissioner Richard Perque	
Staff		
Dr. Leah Raby, Executive Director	Christa Davis, MPA	Desha Gay, Esq.
April White, Esq.		

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous December 2, 2019, meeting was made by Commissioner Faulk and seconded by Commissioner Perque.

Chairwoman's Remarks

Chairwoman Jacobson's started her remarks by expressing condolences on behalf of the entire board to Dr. Raby on the passing of her beloved husband, Anthony.

Shifting the conversation, Chairwoman Jacobson felt compelled to express how inspiring it felt to be a part of the Commission, especially during this challenging time when we are faced with not only a pandemic but civil and human rights challenges. She also thanked the staff for representing LCHR as an enforcement agency and doing so professionally.

Considering the climate of heightened community unrest and discrimination, Chairwoman Jacobson's offered that the board presents a statement reminding the constituency that LCHR exists and laws to protect people from violations. Chairwoman Jacobson was opened to suggestions and recommendations.

Commissioner Perque inquired regarding more insight into the Chairwoman's considerations. She stated that since many of us are social media friends, people feel that you are not "sticking up" for a cause if you do not say anything. She does not want our organization to be silent or regarded as being silent.

Chairwoman Jacobson's thoughts resonated with other Commissioners, such as Commissioner Jackson, who conveyed that the Commission should be expressive in engaging the public, letting the constituency know that we are here to serve for not only racial discrimination but other forms of discrimination as well. Commissioners Hunt, Faulk, and Perque echoed this sentiment.

All Commissioners agreed that the statement would be neutral in context, sharing what LCHR provided services and not a position regarding the current events.

Chairwoman Jacobson inquired how do we get the message to the public. Dr. Raby provided that because LCHR falls under the Governor's Office, it would be presented to the Deputy Chief of Staff and the Governor's Press Office for approval. Dr. Raby also indicated that she could facilitate the meeting between the Chairwoman and the Deputy Chief of Staff, and Chairwoman Jacobson agreed that she would work on the statement.

After this discussion, the Commissioners determined that they would like other means of qualifying their position to assist the public. Dr. Raby communicated that she would contact the Governor's Office about business cards for the Commissioners. It was also determined that if the Commissioners encountered someone who needed assistance, they would provide them with the office's main number, and the staff would assist with jurisdictional concerns.

Commissioner Faulk stated that she has not formally been reappointed to the position of Commissioner. Dr. Raby said you are still appointed until you are replaced per the statute.

Commissioner Faulk asked if everyone completed the Personal Financial Disclosure statement? If not, it would be appropriate to do so as soon as possible. Chairwoman Jacobson concurred and concluded her Chairwoman's remarks.

Commissioner Latimer asked if the Financial Disclosure form, she filed in May 2019 was referenced in the current dialogue. Commissioner Hunt confirmed that she was correct, but it must be filed yearly and that an extension was provided because of the pandemic.

Chairwoman Jacobson proceeded with a request for the Executive Director's Report.

Executive Director's Report

Before engaging in the Executive Director Report, Dr. Raby showed and expressed thanks to the Chairwoman and Commissioners for the beautiful bouquet received upon her husband's passing.

Chairwoman Jacobson acknowledged that if it were not for the pandemic, they would have been physically present, and that was the least that could have been done.

Moving forward, Dr. Raby shared that LCHR is still working and has not stopped and had currently closed 53 cases.

Congrats were extended to April White for passing the bar and Christa Davis for settling her first case for \$2000.00.

Dr. Raby announced that Alexis Durio, a law clerk, worked for LCHR briefly but is now preparing for the bar and has received an offer for a Lafayette law firm.

It was also announced that the staff is migrating to Office 365 and had purchased two Microsoft Surface Pro computers for the full-time staff to help facilitate online migration and the ability to telecommute.

Dr. Raby shared and discussed the Legislative Auditors Evaluation of Parental Leave policies and practices for state employees and the response to HCR 93 of the 2019 Regular Legislative Session; provided a list of accomplishments that the staff achieved during the first four years as presented to the Deputy chief of staff and policy/legislative recommendations for the 2020 Legislative session.

The Commissioners were also able to view the mock of the retractable banner LCHR staff will use for outreach.

LCHR participated in several community outreaches as provided by Dr. Raby:

On January 30, 2020, LCHR participated in Scotlandville Magnet High mock interviews; the participating students will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcome;

- Explain the necessary knowledge and skills required for success in college and careers
- Connect individual skills and interests to career options
- Connect the academy experience to the workplace experience

On February 5, 2020, LCHR participated in City Year Networking Event to facilitate a dialogue about life after City Year and allow AmeriCorps members to meet and network with leaders who are established in their career. Two to three panelists specializing in a particular field anchor a table and lead a small group discussion about the journey to their career path.

In the future, LCHR will serve as an internship sponsor for Scotlandville Magnet – we only have to provide a place and opportunity for the students to learn.

Lastly, LCHR staff and EEOC staff participated in the DECA state career development conference.

Dr. Raby stated that our current EEOC contract is for 68 cases, 10 intakes and that an increase could be applied at the end of the fiscal year. To date, we've closed 53 cases, exceeding our mid-term goal.

Chairwoman Jacobson's asked if we had any problems closing the remaining cases would EEOC make an accommodation due to the pandemic.

Dr. Raby's replied that LCHR has a good relationship with the EEOC and that they work with us. We are confident that we will be able to close the remaining 15 cases. Dr. Raby concluded the Executive Director's Report.

The meeting ended at 12:10 pm.

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