

Louisiana Commission on Human Rights (LCHR)  
Minutes

Wednesday July 11, 2012  
11:30 a.m.

Louisiana Workforce Commission  
1001 North 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Members Present:

Tamara K. Jacobson, Chairwoman  
Marshell Brumfield  
Angela Faulk  
Eursla Hardy  
Reverend Willie Littleton  
Reverend Kirby Verret

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Loyce Pierce Wright, Christa Davis, and Dr. Leah Raby

Chairwoman Tamara Jacobson called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. and requested a roll call. Mrs. Davis conducted the roll call. There was a quorum.

Chairwoman Jacobson began the meeting requesting that the Commissioners review minutes from the April 30, 2012 commission meeting; following with a request for a motion of approval. Commissioner Brumfield moved to accept the April 30, 2012 minutes. It was seconded by Commissioner Verret. The motion carried.

Chairwoman Jacobson then proceeded with her remarks. She indicated that she had been in communication via email with Mr. Ginn, Governor's Office Director of Finance, and that a meeting was scheduled, but failed to transpire. Chairwoman Jacobson stated that she informed Mr. Ginn that she would be present at the July 11, 2012 meeting and if available they could meet then to speak about filling the vacant seats on the board. Chairwoman Jacobson concluded her remarks and asked that Mrs. Wright begin the Executive Director's report.

Mrs. Wright began her report with a brief synopsis of personnel changes that included Lauren Grundy, part-time employee's recent resignation and acceptance of a full-time position as a Human Resources Assistant and Stella Cziment, EO Specialist has accepted a full-time position with the New Orleans Public Defender's Office. Mrs. Wright stated that Ms. Cziment will be allowed to continue existing inventory only. She also mentioned that she will work to fill Ms. Grundy's position. Moreover, she indicated that George Simpson, EO Specialist, who has been with LCHR for seven years, has reached his maximum allowable contract limit of \$49,000.

Because of the shift in employees, Mrs. Wright asked the Commissioners for any recommendations of attorney's who might be interested in investigating complaints. She indicated that EO Specialists receive \$400 for a completed case investigation.

Continuing her discussion on cases, Mrs. Wright stated that the New Orleans Field Office Director of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Attorney Keith Hill extended commendations to the LCHR's staff for a job well done with case investigations.

Reflecting on the last meeting, Mrs. Wright had reported that EEOC contract for this year, which ends on September 30, 2012, was for 95 cases. She was pleased to report that LCHR had met and exceeded the expectations of the contract by closing 105 cases prior to the September 30, 2012 deadline. This accomplishment would allow LCHR to request an upward modification. Even more, she reported that LCHR's collection of compensatory damages increased from \$81,000 to \$109,000 for the constituents of the state. Mrs. Wright stated that LCHR's current case inventory was 159 cases.

Thereafter, Mrs. Wright provided an update on House Bill 637, which sought to add retaliation to the LSA RS 51: 2231 et seq. She reported that House Bill 637, though carried by Representative Walt Leger; failed before the Senate after attempts to modify the statute occurred by the Senate Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations. Mrs. Wright stated that LCHR will attempt to present the statutory changes at the next legislative session. Nonetheless, Mrs. Wright provided that Complainant's rights are still protected under the federal statutes and because of the existing worksharing agreement with the EEOC, LCHR can still process claims of retaliation.

Mrs. Wright reported that she attended the EEOC/FEPA training conference in St. Louis, Missouri at the end of May, 2012. She highlighted topics covered at the conferences such as arrests and convictions, reentry programs for convicted offenders and the recent opinion issued by the EEOC and the U.S. Attorney General, that Title VII does provide protection for the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgendered (LGBT) community. She stated that EEOC will start investigating LGBT complaints.

Mrs. Wright continued the report stating that Dr. Raby had the opportunity to serve as a concurrent speaker for the Louisiana State Chapter of the Society of Human Resource Managers conference in New Orleans and that Dr. Raby also had the opportunity to speak before the Acadiana Society of Human Resource Managers on various EEO topics.

Mrs. Wright carried on the report with a discussion on the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) conference. She provided a copy of the agenda for the Commissioners and indicated that the conference was scheduled to occur August 5-8, 2012 in New Orleans at the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Ms. Wright stated that the IAOHRA conference theme was "Strengthening our Network through Human Rights". She stated that it is projected that 125 conferees will attend. Mrs. Wright reported that the Commissioners had been registered to attend the conference on Monday, August 6 for the Human Rights Day and that hotel reservations had been made for the Commissioners traveling a distance.

Commissioner Faulk indicated that her company could pay for the printing of the program booklet for the IAOHRA conference. Mrs. Wright thanked her, but indicated that it would likely be less expensive to have the printing done through the state office. Commissioner Faulk agreed and said she would approach her company regarding making a donation toward refreshments. Ms. Wright thanked Commissioner Faulk.

Concluding the report, Mrs. Wright stated that the scanning project of digitalizing the files had begun.

Chairwoman Jacobson asked if there was any unfinished business. There was none. She then asked was there any new business. There was none.

The meeting ended at 12:20 pm.