

Seattle Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 7th, 2016, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
City Hall - Boards and Commissions Room

Commissioners Present: Danielle Wallace, Marcel Baugh, Ashley Miller, Margaret Babayan, Tammy Morales, Jason Poydras, Sarah Bishop, Jeremy Woods, Bill Dow, Yasmin Christopher (unconfirmed)

Guest: Ian Warner, Mayor's Legal Council, Ed Crouch, Lauren Oswald (Intern)

Commissioners Absent: Edlira Kuka, Lara Diaconu

SOCR Staff Present: Marta Idowu

Welcome and Introductions

Call to Order: By Margaret Babayan

Public Comment:

- Guest spoke of being stalked in the past and when she reported to the police, they sent her to VHS and diagnosed her as schizophrenic. VHS took her son away but feels her rights were denied due to VHS misdiagnosing her and ultimately separating her son; guest asking SHRC's support to look into human rights violation and prevent situations like this to happen to other people.
- Mayor's Legal Council, Ian Warner came to meeting to discuss about the OPA Director and Auditor Position: Warner states that recent news coverage are not accurate and wanted opportunity to clarify. On July 1st, 2016, the term of the OPA Auditor and Director expired. City put out a statement for both staff to stay on with current role and both accepted. Positions were not reappointed because job responsibilities will be shifted dramatically. OPA Auditor will now be an Inspector General. In the next few days, the City as well as the Dept. of Justice will make a file to the court. Between now through August 15th, the court will address the party to look at the legislative process. In summary: Director and Auditor will stay on until legislative process.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes approved with edits; Margaret Motion to approve, seconded by Ashley Miller

SOCR Report:

- Patricia Lally: SOCR is working on settling Fair Housing Tests and will soon embark on another phase for testing; new civil rights testing is being explored.

- SOCR is working on jurisdiction to file HUD and EEOC cases; SOCR closed 30 cases this month with settlements reaching an all time high; an upward of 40% which is a huge in financial compensation for those who have been harmed.
- The Enforcement Team is going very strong and working on workforce equity; the Mayor is working with City Council on paid family leave which is a new type of benefit for City of Seattle staff.
 - SOCR is excited to participate and integrate the RSJI toolkit
 - SOCR conducted listening sessions to help inform barriers that exist in City of Seattle and what strategies need to be implemented to eliminate those barriers in order to open more doors to employment, boost the career ladder and prevent people of color from being terminated.
- Transgender 101 Training: Working on a curriculum and training to support City staff on how to engage transgender people such as approaches, ensuring restrooms are protected and how it can be a safe place for all community members.
 - Parks and Recreation staff will start the training first and will integrate to more employees at a later time.
- SOCR is currently reviewing two pieces of Housing Anti-Discrimination legislation to eliminate the use of criminal history in housing.
- SOCR will engage with SHR Co-Chairs to discuss Human Rights Celebration.

Appeals and Hearing Update:

- Hearing that Marcel attended: Marcel was the only person that attended and had no decision making capacity due to not having another Commissioner present
- **Appeals from this month: Marcel, Edlira and Ashley attended. Sarah O'Conner-Kriss (See notes from Email), addressed the issue of Appeals needing to have at least one attorney present.**
- **July 25th Appeal:**
 - **Margaret Babayan, Danielle Wallace, Marcel Baugh will be in attendance**
- **July 27th (possibly July 28th) if necessary Hearing:**
 - **Amy Huang, Sarah Bishop will be in attendance**
- **August 29th Hearing:**
 - **Jeremy Wood, Fedaku, Bill Down**
- **September 7th Hearing:**
 - **No Commissioners yet**
- Jason Poydras, Appeals and Hearings Chair, is stepping down from the Commission and will support transition process; he is encouraging attorneys serving on Commission to take role seriously and be a resource for everyone.
- Lara has agreed to be the next Appeals and Hearing Chair. Motion by Margaret, Seconded by Jason Poydras; Ordinance state that chair should be an attorney but this is not possible for SHR at this time as candidates who are attorneys are still waiting to be confirmed by Mayor and City Council or have not yet had appeals training.

Updates:

Police Brutality- OPA: An Ordinance that discusses accountability about national police brutality:

- Should SHR expand to discuss on larger narratives about national police brutality?
- Should SHR hone in more on Seattle, locally?

SHRC's position on Civilian Oversight (Press Release):

- There is an opportunity for SHR to state a position; Commissioners will have further discussion around this.
- Edits to the press release: Instead of using "expressed continued support, change to "strongly urges on civilian oversight"
- Will get statement out by noon; edits must be formed during meetings or discussed within smaller task force--not through SHRC listserv
- Suggestion for press releases in general: encourage urgent matters to be sent out immediately; statements can be simple, three sentences to either stand in solidarity or in denouncement; strategy will be to follow-up with a more researched letter at a later time instead of letting urgent matters be slipped.

Divestment Resolution:

- Draft is still being developed and will be sent out to full Commission for edits
- Wants to focus first on broader resolution about divesting from companies benefiting from war crimes; let it be approved by commission first and then work on strategizing a more tailored, specific resolution.
- Taskforce will send to Commission for next meeting.

Succession for Co-Chair:

- Ideally the position will be a year
- By-Laws: must be elected by the Commission; responsibilities may include drafting agendas, coordinating meetings, logistic and administrative pieces, handle governmental affairs with City officials and Office of Civil Rights, working with different taskforce to strategize on work plan and responses to the community, working on Commission development committee for onboarding Commissioners and having stronger assessment of Commissioner's strength and facilitating Commissioner relationship with different entities and community members
- Ashley Miller expressed interest in working on the Commission Development Committee

SHRC Applications:

- Working more closely with Mayor's office to get candidates appointed
- Currently need to fill 2 openings, and Margaret's seat that is coming up
- Applications are now open on a rolling basis

Human Rights Day:

- Need to start setting up planning meeting dates with SOCR
- Commissioners can send names for keynote speaker
- Scheduled on December 8th, 2016 at Town Hall Seattle
- Will be the 20th Anniversary of Human Rights Day

Administrative Updates: NONE

Meeting adjourned at 7:10pm