

MINUTES

CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS (CCHR) BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING February 11, 2021

Attendance

Commissioners Present:

Nancy Andrade
Joanna Borowiec
Ryan Dunigan
Naderh Elrabadi
Kim Fountain
Simon Gordon

Emanuel Johnson, II
Reyahd Kazmi
Ray Koenig, III
Leisa Mosley
David Mussatt
Esther Nieves

Nabeela Rasheed
Julio Rodriguez
Michelle Shang
Butch Trusty

Staff Present:

Kenneth Gunn
JoAnn Newsome

Gloria Vu
Karen Wallace

Call to Order

Commissioner Nancy Andrade called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m. and Gloria Vu recorded the minutes. A quorum of board of commissioners was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business. Nancy introduced herself to the Board and thanked the CCHR staff as well as the Board of Commissioners for their commitment to the CCHR's mission.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Andrade presented the minutes of the January 2020 Board meeting to the Board for approval, where upon motion was duly made by Julio Rodriguez to adopt as written, seconded by Ray Koenig, III and unanimously adopted. The minutes were approved as presented.

A motion to move into Executive Session was duly made by Julio Rodriguez, seconded by Leisa Mosely and unanimously adopted.

Adjudication Review Committee Report

An'Nurah Muhammad v Nina Dimitropoulos and Delta Kappa Realty and Property Management, CCHR No 18-H-50
Karen Wallace provided a summary of this source of income discrimination case. Ken Gunn stated there would be two items the Board of Commissioners will need to vote on. Karen stated the two rulings that need to be voted on will be the ruling on the request for review and the Hearing Officer's recommended ruling of liabilities and damages. Karen also clarified that there are typos on the recommended ruling of liabilities and damages.

The Hearing Officer recommended the following relief:

- Respondents are ordered to pay Ms. Muhammad \$794 for out-of-pocket damages;
- Respondents are ordered to pay Ms. Muhammad \$2,500 for emotional distress;
- Respondents are ordered to pay Ms. Muhammad \$4,000 in punitive damages;
- Respondents are ordered to pay pre- and post-judgement interests as specified above to Ms. Muhammad;
- Respondents are ordered to pay a fine of \$500 to the City of Chicago; and
- Respondents shall include on any business website they use and in all advertisements for rental housing in which it is the leasing agent the statements "EHOP" (equal housing opportunity provider) and "Section 8 recipients are welcome."

Commissioner Andrade opened the session to move forward with the following motions.

Ray Koenig, III made the first motion to accept the Hearing Officer's order to deny the motion to disqualify the Hearing Officer by the respondent; it was seconded by Esther Nieves and unanimously adopted.

Ray presented a second motion to accept the Hearing Officer's recommendations of the following relief with the following revisions:

- Due to a typo, Respondents are ordered to pay Ms. Muhammad \$594 for out-of-pocket damages;
- Respondents are ordered to pay Ms. Muhammad \$6,000 in punitive damages;
- Due to a typo, Respondents are ordered to pay a maximum fine of \$1,000 to the City of Chicago.

The Adjudication Review Panel discussed and agreed that Ms. Muhammad should be awarded \$6,000 in punitive damages given the situation and past rulings. The City of Chicago's maximum fine was raised to \$1,000 and the panel believed that the respondents should pay the maximum fine because the respondents did not respond to the Commission's orders on several occasions. Ray Koenig made a motion to accept the Adjudication Review Panel's recommendation; it was seconded by David Mussat, and unanimously adopted.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Andrade has stated that this is her third week as Commissioner and is looking forward to working and speaking with the Board of Commissioners individually to strategize and raise awareness of the CCHR to increase the CCHR's profile.

Esther Nieves welcomed Commissioner Andrade and asked what she envisions for the Commission and how will the Commission continue to combat hate and discrimination in the city during the pandemic. Commissioner Andrade stated that the CCHR has pivoted to work on a virtual platform. This enables the CCHR staff to network with multiple groups rather than having time to only meet with one or two groups physically. The CCHR staff have been working towards embracing the virtual platform with upcoming webinars. The CCHR will have a webinar to discuss the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance on April 7 with a following Spanish webinar on April 14. Conducting webinars will also cater to the CCHR's goal to have a virtual library for the public to access online.

With the public interest in mind, the CCHR is also working towards collaborating with members of the legal community. Nancy has been strategizing with board member Ray Koenig, III to have a program available for attorneys to become aware of how they can represent those in need of an attorney when they come before the Commission. Along with that, Nancy's goal is to also continue to do outreach with law schools and build a relationship with schools that have experiential learning programs to engage their students. Nancy has also expressed that she will use CCHR's social media platforms to utilize Spanish media as an outreach effort as well as other languages to reach out to those with limited English proficiency.

Julio Rodriguez also wanted to bring attention to the Board of Commissioners on spreading awareness on worker's rights. He stated, the pandemic has created a need for people to understand their rights. Nancy and Julio will further discuss outreach efforts regarding worker's rights in the following weeks.

Old Business

First Deputy Commissioner, Ken Gunn reminded the Board of the January 2021 follow up meeting with Executive Director, Laurence Bolotin and Jason Rosensweig from the American Jewish Committee (AJC). The AJC provided a draft resolution calling for an adoption of the working definition of Anti-Semitism in November 2020. Upon discussing in January 2021, the Board recommended having a more in-depth discussion of the issue to look at the resolution more thoroughly and more equitably before voting. The AJC stated that they would like to withdraw their request after the January 2021 follow up discussion. Moving forward, the AJC would still like to collaborate with the CCHR on spreading awareness and education on anti-Semitism.

Next Meeting

March 11, 2021 at 3:30 p.m., via Zoom

There being no further business to come before the board, a motion to adjourn was duly made by Esther Nieves and was seconded by Reyahd Kazmi and was unanimously adopted at 4:37 p.m.