

# **MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS**

**April 25, 2025**

## **Public Session Meeting Minutes**

**Commissioners Present:** Rebecca Alpert, Tue Ho, Sarah Ricks, Donald Tibbs and Kareem Thomas

**Quorum present?** Yes

**Exec. Director:** Randy Duque, Acting Executive Director

**Staff:** Pamela Gwaltney, Karen Forman, Lynette McClain Satteria Kersey and Karla Acosta-Pizarro

**Minutes transcribed by:** Jorge L. Pagan

**Others Present:** Ryan McSherry, Esq. and Mathew Webster, Esq.

**Location:** Zoom Virtual Hearing

### ***I. Welcome and Introductions***

Acting Executive Director, Randy Duque opened the meeting. Commissioner Kareem Thomas welcomes everyone.

### ***II. Approval of Minutes:***

The Commissioners unanimously accepted the Minutes for February 2025.

### ***III. Compliance Division Report***

#### ***a. Case closings for March 2025***

Commissioners Sarah Ricks and Donald Tibbs reviewed the cases recommended for closing for the month of March.

Case Closings for the Month of March are as follows:

#### ***Employment cases***

1. Matthew Brown v. Philadelphia Police Department
2. Melissa Turner v. Walgreens
3. Dani J. Arroyo v. Hessert Chevrolet
4. Charles E. Brown v. Brightside Academy
5. Robert Block v. Clear Channel Outdoor LLC; Clear Channel Outdoor America
6. Jasmine Curtis v. Caliber Fleet Solutions
7. Wendy Diedrichson v. City of Philadelphia

8. Kathryn Licata Deschaine v. Thomas Jefferson University
9. Sharon King v. Duane Morris LLP
10. Matthew Kerszko v. U.S. Facilities, Inc.
11. Ember Beckary v. AAA Distributors
12. Leslie Sampson v. Vito Canuso Law Offices
13. Gregory L. Chalson v. John Wiley & Sons
14. Tina L. Corley v. ATM Home Health Care Services

Commissioner Kareem Thomas asked for a motion to accept all cases recommended for closing for the month of March. Commissioner Ho, Ricks made the motion to accept all cases recommended for closing. Commissioner Tibbs seconded the motion. All Commissioners approved and unanimously voted to close the cases pursuant to the staff recommendations.

#### ***IV. Executive Director's Report***

##### **Executive Director Monthly Report 2025: April**

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The following report highlights activity from March 21st to April 25th 2025

The PCHR welcomes its newly appointed Commissioner, Darelee Hamilton, who was officially appointed by the Mayor on April 7, 2025.

##### **Legislation**

- No legislative updates at this time.

##### **Compliance**

- The Compliance team secured dollar amount is \$30,000 for 4 cases with 1 private settlement for an undisclosed dollar amount.

##### **Prevention & Education Highlights**

- On March 22nd, the Community Relations Division staff participated in the annual Block Captain Rally at the PA Convention Center by providing information to hundreds of block captains from across the city.
- On April 9th, Acting Executive Director Randy Duque met with a delegation from Uzbekistan to discuss increasing engagement with the growing local Uzbek community.
- On April 17th, AED Randy Duque, Principal Assistant Karen Forman, and Fair Housing Commission Attorney, Ali deMedeiros, met with representatives from the Welcoming Center to discuss immigrant housing concerns and potential collaborations to inform immigrant communities of tenant and civil rights for housing.

## **Noteworthy Conflict Response**

- Due to downsized personnel in the Community Relations Division, CRD HR Representatives Tierra Thompson and Carlos Aviles, who are assigned to Southwest Division and East Division of the Philadelphia Police Department respectively, have recently started working to bolster relations with police districts in the Northeast to improve the referral rate of cases. While they are able to take on additional neighbor disputes and community tensions from these districts, prevention work remains limited due to their responsibilities to their primary police districts.

## **Other Noteworthy Events this Reporting Period**

- On March 31st, PCHR partnered with the Office of LGBTQ+ Affairs to host a flag raising ceremony for Trans Day of Visibility at City Hall where AED Randy Duque was among a number of speakers that included elected officials (including the Mayor) and members of the Trans community.

## **Upcoming events during the next reporting period (April 25th to May 15th 2025)**

- On April 30th, AED Randy Duque will participate on a panel discussion at Temple University entitled, "Being Asian in America: Navigating AAPI Identity, Representation, and Political Advocacy Today."

## **To 31MAR2025**

Monthly

In the month of March 2025, there were 8 incidents of hate reported to PCHR of which 4 were confirmed acts of hate; 3 were unconfirmed; and 1 was not.

## **Confirmed acts of hate:**

- LGBT (Trans discrimination) - Person repeatedly mis-gendered during a number of phone calls to a pharmacy regarding medication.
- Anti-immigrant and political harassment - Complainant working abroad for a US company received an ongoing harassing political and anti-immigrant messages from a local number.
- Antisemitic graffiti - Building in Center City vandalized with the antisemitic message "kill all Jews" spraypainted on a door.
- Racist (anti-Black) harassment - College student belittles a cafeteria worker by calling the employee an anti-Black slur stating that the person was there to serve him and if they didn't like it, they can go back to where they came from because the student can get them fired.

**CYD**

From January 1 to March 31, 2025, there were 21 incidents of hate reported to PCHR of which 16 were confirmed acts of hate; 3 were unconfirmed; and 2 were not hate-related.

The next Executive Session is scheduled for May 9, 2025 and the Public Session will be held on May 16, 2025.