

Minutes of the Cook County  
Commission on Human Rights – Open Session  
August 19, 2021

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Attendance:

Present: Chairperson K. Gunn; Commissioners J. Block, C. Eatherton, A. Hamada, G. Orr, A. Smock, H. Ratner, Rev. R. Tolliver

Absent: Commissioners C. E. Harris II, K. Ayala-Bermejo

Staff: Director S. Baker, Legal Counsel J. King, Investigator A. Cahn, Administrative Analyst K. Johns

Absent: J. Jones

**I. Open Session**

**A. Call to Order**

Chairperson Gunn called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

**B. Statements by the General Public**

Gianna Baker with Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance (CAFHA) discussed that CAFHA is in the process of preparing for the implementation report on the JHA. She stated that the reason for the report is to see if people are still getting housed after undergoing the individualized assessment. She mentioned that it is often difficult to fully evaluate whether or not people are being housed after going through the individualized assessment due to barriers with housing providers not being compliant with the law. She highlighted common trends in terms of violations of the JHA and that based on those violations, it is key to provide education for housing providers. Ms. Baker inquired if the Commission would initiate a complaint with a housing provider.

**C. Agenda Approval**

The agenda was approved and adopted by unanimous voice vote.

**D. Approval of the June 10, 2021 Regular Meeting Open Minutes**

The meeting minutes to the June 10, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes were approved and adopted by unanimous voice vote.

**E. Welcome of New Outreach and Training Coordinator – Julia Epplin-Zapf**

**F. Commission 180-Day Extension for Investigation**

- a. **Markel v. Drummond LLC, BJB Partners 2019E007A**

Director S. Baker stated that there is a lot of motion practice between the parties and therefore, staff needs additional time. The request for extension was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**G. Proposed Rule Amendment to CCHR Pro. Rule §700.100**

Director S. Baker discussed that she had requested an extension on a report on the implementation of the rules related to the Just Housing Amendment (JHA), and had asked to move the deadline to September. She noted that as staff works on developing the report and speaking to community groups, there still isn't information to come to a meaningful conclusion. She further noted that the department hasn't had enough JHA cases. Director S. Baker mentioned that the sentiment from talking with several community organizations is that there seems to be a lot of violations and therefore staff is at the threshold and not at the individualized assessment front. She explained that staff has decided to conduct a survey and send it to community groups in hope that they will extend it to their networks. Finally, she that from that survey, staff hopes to have some articulable conclusions and/or suggestions and she requested for an extension until November 19, 2021. The proposed rule amendment was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**H. Director's Report**

Director S. Baker reported that there has been an increase in number of cases. She stated there are 28 open cases, 7 cases had been closed, and additional 7 had been opened. She explained that most dismissed cases were due to a withdrawal and settlement. Outreach and Training Coordinator J. Epplin-Zapf mentioned she had been meeting with various organizations with the goal of collaboration for workshops and new communications. She also mentioned that she is working on making the departments website and social media sites more accessible.

**I. Adjourn**

By unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 10:45am.