



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission**  
**Thursday, February 2, 2023**  
**Virtual Public Meeting**

**Present:** Chair Joshua Stadlan, and Commissioners Katie Stack, Stephen Curran, Stefanie Haug, Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Kaileigh Callender, Mercedes Evans, Olinda Marshall, Judith Laguerre, Deputy Superintendent Fredrick Cabral, and Chief Equity Officer Manuel Fernandez of Cambridge Public Schools

City Staff: Executive Director Jennifer Mathews, Attorney Investigator Carolina Almonte, and Language Access Manager Crystal Rosa.

**Absent:** Commissioners Sabrina Selk and Bonita Cox.

**Documents Used:**

- November 3, 2022, Minutes
- Rules of Procedure

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Stadlan called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**2. Public Comment**

No one was recording the meeting and no members of the public were present.

**3. Introductions and Presentation - Chief Equity Officer (CEO) Fernandez**

The members of the Commission shared their backgrounds with CEO Fernandez. CEO Fernandez provided a comprehensive summary of his work in Cambridge Public School District. CEO Fernandez transitioned his work as the Upper School Founding Principal to launching the Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEIB) in July 2021. CEO Fernandez explained the steps OEIB took to have the district-wide initiative center the voices of Cambridge youth. CEO Fernandez helped launch the first Equity Youth Leadership Summit that was co-developed with CRLS students. The OEIB met with students in focus groups and planned the summit during the summer. At the summit, students led and facilitated spaces for student attendees to share their views regarding their educational experiences in CPS and what equity should look like in grades JK-12. The outcomes of this summit informed further planning at the school and district levels. The OEIB instituted an online reporting system for Title 9 complaints at the high school, which requires school leadership to investigate the complaints within 5 days of a report. School leadership has 10 days to close or refer the complaint if it needs more than administrative review. Members of the Commission engaged CEO Fernandez with follow up questions regarding the complaint process, School Resource Officers, caregiver feedback, and student conflict resolution.

#### 4. Review and approval of November 2022 Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the meeting on November 3, 2022. Commissioner Callender moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Evans. Minutes were approved unanimously.

#### 5. Staff Reports

##### ED Report

- **Miscellaneous updates.** We have hired a Director of Operations to support the work across the different commissions. They start on Monday, February 13.
- **The Coalition to End Housing Discrimination.** With the 2023-2024 legislative session underway, Representatives Adrian Madaro & Carlos González and Senator Adam Gomez, filed a new version of An Act to end housing discrimination in the commonwealth. The docket numbers (temporary bill nos.) are [HD.3786](#) and [SD.2034](#). The legislation adds new pathways to ensure enforcement against real estate brokers who discriminate. The Suffolk University Law School Discrimination Testing Center reached out the Commission to sign on to a letter of support of the legislation. The members reviewed the letter of support during the meeting. The legislation would benefit the Commission since only CHRC and the MCAD are dual filing agencies in Massachusetts. Commissioner Evans moved to approve the Commission sign in support of the letter, seconded by Commissioner Callender. Commissioner Marshall abstained; all other members voted to approve.
- **Attorney-Investigator Case Report.** AI Almonte provided case updates. There are 14 cases currently pending. No cases have closed since January. AI Almonte is currently reviewing multiple intakes that will likely progress to newly filed cases next month. Commissioner Haug and Commissioner Evans will review two determinations together in person.

#### 6. Old Business

- **Review and approval of CHRC Rules Updates.** The Commission reviewed and discussed the redline edits provided by the Law Department. Commissioner Evans noted some typos. Besides the corrections to address the typos, Commissioner Evans moved to approve the updates to the Rules of Procedure, seconded by Commissioner Curran. The Rules of Procedure were approved unanimously.
- **Commissioner Reports on Connecting with Other Commissions.** Commissioner Evans has connected with Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO) Advisory Group. ED Mathews acknowledged needing to connect Commissioner Curran with the Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship (CIRC). ED Mathews explained CIRC has struggled with obtaining a quorum and has not met since 2022.

- **Fair Housing Month Event (April 23) & CHRC Panel Ideas.** ED Mathews explained that the planning is underway and there will be two panels this year: 1) Fair Housing Basic and 2) Advocacy Opportunities. Language Access Manager Rosa will meet with the Community Engagement Team from DHSP and CDD to gather feedback for improvements for inclusion and creating a welcoming event.

## **7. New Business**

- **Chair Elections**  
Commissioner Laguerre expressed her interest in being the new Chair and nominated herself, Commissioner Callender seconded. Commissioner Laguerre was unanimously voted to be Chair of the Human Rights Commission. Members of the Commission expressed their gratitude to Commissioner Stadlan for his service and leadership.
- **Bathroom Access Map & City Open Data Portal**  
ED Mathews reported that the Commission of Persons with Disability and the LGBTQ+ Commission thought a GIS story map to note all gender restrooms in the city was a great idea. There can 2-3 commissioners on a working group to help with the project. Since there is not a quorum needed for a working group to communicate amongst itself, commissioners can use email to coordinate and plan. Commissioner Stadlan will follow up via email.

## **8. Adjournment**

Commissioner Haug moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Padamsee Forbes seconded. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

**The next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, March 2, 2023, virtually on Zoom.**