



**STATE OF ILLINOIS TORTURE INQUIRY  
AND RELIEF COMMISSION**

Meeting of the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission  
November 20, 2013  
1:00 p.m.

Michael A. Bilandic Building  
Auditorium C-500  
160 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:**

Commissioners

Chairman Cheryl Starks  
Leonard Cavise  
Charles Dahm  
Craig Futterman (Alternate)  
Doris Green (Alternate)  
John Mathias  
Hipolito ("Paul") Roldan  
Marcie Thorp  
Neil Toppel  
Rob Warden

Staff

James P. Sledge (Interim Executive Director)  
Francine Sanders (Paralegal)  
Stephanie Hunter (Private Secretary)

Attendees

Human Rights Commission

Dr. Ewa Ewa, Chief Fiscal Officer  
Donyelle Gray, General Counsel

Members of the Public:

- Nancy Dietrich
- Kenneth L. Gillis
- Aaron Goldstein
- Bertha Escamilla
- Barry Miller
- James Vanzant
- Kristy Shores
- Cynthia M. Hora
- Leslie Ramos
- Joseph Heinrich
- Mary Heinrich
- Marilyn Baldwin
- Sandra Blake
- David Thomas
- Mary L. Johnson
- Anabel Perez
- Jessica Katlin
- John Darragh
- Anne Goodwin
- Curly Cohun
- Wallace Gator Bradley
- Emily Stewart

## **I. Call to Order**

On November 20, 2013 at 1:08 p.m., Chairman Cheryl Starks called to order a meeting of the Illinois Torture Inquire and Relief Commission (TIRC). It was determined that a quorum was present.

## **II. Introduction of TIRC Commissioners in Attendance**

Present were Commissioners Craig Futterman, Doris Green, Marcie Thorp, Neil Toppel, Leonard Cavise, Charles Dahm, John Mathias, Hipolito (“Paul”) Roldan, Rob Warden and Chairman Starks.

Chairman Starks appointed ITIRC employee Stephanie Hunter to take minutes of Commission meetings and be responsible for taping the meetings.

### **III. Approval of Minutes**

September 25, 2013 and October 1, 2013

The Commission deferred this item until later in the meeting.

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

The Interim Executive Director, James Sledge, reported:

- As of September 2013, 149 open cases were before the Commission. As of November 2013 16 new cases were added for a total of 165 Open Claims. As of November, 16 cases were closed as denied and 14 cases were closed as granted.
  - Prioritizing cases will be discussed with the new executive director.
- Auditor General
  - One Auditor General suggestion concerns record keeping.
    - AG's Recommendation: Every single file in the Commission should look exactly the same; a draft checklist for all files has been developed in response to the AG's recommendation.
- Victim Notification:
  - Mr. Sledge has been in discussion with the Governor's Office on how to utilize the resources of other agencies to help the Commission identify victims.
  - State Attorney's Office suggestion:
    - State agencies should be involved to track raw data (i.e.; State Police, The Secretary of State, and Bureau of Vital Statistics). The agencies can aid in finding information on the victims.
  - Mr. Sledge spoke about the possibility of bringing in outside resources for victim notification.
    - This may involve hiring a law firm or an investigative agency that will perform this function.
    - Mr. Sledge has gathered proposals from different entities for the cost of service.
    - Mr. Sledge believes it is worth investigating what the Commission can do internally before further investigating outsourcing.
    - In response to a question from Cmsr. Futterman, Mr. Sledge estimated the cost will probably be less than \$5,000. This allows for either a formal or informal procurement process.

- Estimates range from \$250 to \$4,500 a case (depending on what the commission is requesting from the outside entity).
- In response to a question from Commissioner Toppel, Mr. Sledge confirmed the Commission has access to the victim databases of the State's Attorney's Office and the Attorney General's Office, but he would like to avoid shifting responsibility and burden to another agency.
- Ethics Training for 2013
  - New commissioners have not completed this training.
    - An email will be sent out with the materials to complete the training.

## **V. Report on Search for Executive Director**

Judge Starks reported Mr. Sledge has been filtering dozens of applications and the field has been narrowed to six for the Commission to interview. Judge Starks asked the candidates to publicly introduce themselves, but requested that Mr. Sledge first describe the search process.

Mr. Sledge reported he drafted a job description and posted it with the Chicago Bar Association (CBA) and area law schools. The CBA posting was viewed 1,811 times. Approximately 36 resumes were received. Of those, the chairman, Cmsr. Thorp, Dr. Ewa and Mr. Sledge interviewed 12 candidates. They narrowed the field to six candidates for interviews today with the entire Commission.

Executive Director Candidates then introduced themselves:

- **Barry Miller**
  - Currently employed at Harvard University in General Counsel's Office
  - Spent several years with the Civil Rights Division at the Justice Department in Washington working on a variety of civil rights matters
  - Worked at the law firm of Miller Shakman for 18 years
  - Worked with the U.S attorney's office; 10 years as a federal prosecutor; handled a number of corruption cases and fraud cases; worked on the John Burge case from its inception through preparing for trial.
- **Aaron Goldstein**
  - Attorney since 2000
  - Started out as a Cook County Public Defender for six and a half years
  - Now has his own practice dealing with criminal defense
  - Teaches at DePaul Law School and North Park University

- Criminal Justice and Criminal Law
- **Kenneth Gillis**
  - Retired Judge (18.5 years on bench)
    - Now does arbitration and mediation work
  - Worked at the States Attorney's Office for 10 years
    - First Assistant State's Attorney – No. 2 position in the office
  - Taught at Chicago Kent
- **James Vanzant**
  - Spent six years in the Marine Corps.
    - Staff Officer
    - Worked with the Criminal Authorities – conducted around 200 investigations
  - Deployed twice to Iraq
  - After Marine Corps he went to Law School at DePaul
  - Served as a Judicial Clerk for Mary Jane Theis
- **Kristy Shores**
  - Currently employed with the Office of Executive Inspector General
    - Extensive investigative experience
    - Became interested with the commission - read almost every decision that has been made
- **Sandra Blake**
  - Former Assistant State's Attorney for Cook County
  - Loyola Law School
  - Worked for the States Attorney's office for 14 years
    - Worked her way through the Criminal System
    - Worked for 14 months with Chicago Police investigating child sexual abuse
    - Did felony review as well

## **VI. Executive Session**

Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2(c) (1)), the Commissioners voted to close a portion of the meeting at 1:49 p.m. in order to discuss internal personnel matters. Motion made by Commissioner Toppel, seconded by Commissioner Futterman. Motion carried in a voice vote.

At 3:25 p.m. the Open Meeting resumed.

## **VII. Item(s) coming out of Executive Session**

The Commission returned to Public Session and the Judge stated that the Commission motioned that the Executive Director candidate be selected for hire. Commissioner Mathias made a motion that Barry Miller be selected as the new Executive Director; Commissioner Cavise seconded. The Commission approved the motion (8-0) by a voice vote.

## **VIII. New Business**

### **a. Setting meeting calendar**

TIRC next meeting date January 22, 2013

## **III. Approval of previously deferred minutes (taken out of order)**

Cmsr. Mathias moved to approve the September 25, 2013 and October 1, 2013 minutes; Cmsr. Thorp seconded; Motion carried in a voice vote (8-0).

## **VIII. New Business (resumed)**

### **b. Statements from the Public**

Public Speakers listed:

Bertha Escamilla

Anabel Perez

Mary L. Johnson

Wallace Gator Bradley

Joseph Heinrich

## **IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m. Motion made by Commissioner Toppel with a second by Commissioner Green. Motion carried (8-0).