

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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COMMISSION ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF  
BLACK MEN AND BOYS  
BUSINESS MEETING

+ + + + +

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2023

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The Commission convened via  
Videoconference at 1:08 p.m. EDT, Frederica Wilson,  
Chair, presiding.

PRESENT:

- REP. FREDERICA S. WILSON, Chair
- REP. JOYCE BEATTY, Commissioner
- JACK BREWER, Commissioner
- THOMAS M. COLCLOUGH, Commissioner
- DR. MARSHALL DILLARD, Commissioner
- LAURENCE ELDER, Commissioner
- ALEXIS HOLMES, Commissioner
- DR. JOSEPH E. MARSHALL, Jr., Commissioner
- TINA-LOUISE MARTIN, Commissioner
- REP. LUCY McBATH, Commissioner
  
- MARK K. SPENCER, Staff Director

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 1:08 p.m.

3 I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

4 MR. SPENCER: Well, good afternoon,  
5 everyone. Thank you for taking time out of your busy  
6 schedules to attend the Second Quarterly Business  
7 Meeting of the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of  
8 Black Men and Boys.

9 II. BUSINESS MEETING

10 A. QUORUM

11 This is a business meeting, so we  
12 anticipate it will be fairly short. It is 1:08  
13 Eastern Standard time.

14 And, at this time, again, I want to extend  
15 a warm welcome to all of our Commissioners and our  
16 Chairwoman, Congressman Frederica Wilson.

17 Per the Statute, a majority of the members  
18 of the Commission, which is ten members, constitutes  
19 a quorum. To establish the quorum, I will now call  
20 each member by name. Please note your presence by  
21 saying here.

22 Chair Wilson?

23 CHAIR WILSON: Here.

24 MR. SPENCER: Secretary Sharpton?

25 (No Response.)

1 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Beatty?  
2 (No Response.)  
3 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Bowman?  
4 (No Response.)  
5 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Brewer?  
6 COMMISSIONER BREWER: Here.  
7 MR. SPENCER: Thank you. Commissioner  
8 Cesar?  
9 (No Response.)  
10 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Clarke?  
11 (No Response.)  
12 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Colclough?  
13 COMMISSIONER COLCLOUGH: Here.  
14 MR. SPENCER: Thank you. Commissioner  
15 Dillard?  
16 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Here.  
17 MR. SPENCER: Thank you. Commissioner  
18 Elder?  
19 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Here.  
20 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Horsford?  
21 (No Response.)  
22 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Jeffries?  
23 (No Response.)  
24 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Johnson?  
25 (No Response.)

1 MR. SPENCER: Commissioner Marshall?

2 COMMISSIONER MARSHALL: Present.

3 MR. SPENCER: Thank you. Commissioner

4 McBath?

5 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Present.

6 MR. SPENCER: Thank you. Commissioner

7 McIlver?

8 (No Response.)

9 MR. SPENCER: And, Commissioner Holmes?

10 COMMISSIONER HOLMES: Here.

11 MR. SPENCER: Okay. For the record, by my  
12 count, we have ten commissioners present. And that  
13 constitutes our quorum.

14 And now, I will turn the proceedings over  
15 to our Chair, Chairwoman Wilson. And, the first order  
16 of business will be the election of the Chair. Thank  
17 you.

18 Chairwoman Wilson?

19 B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

20 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The  
21 next order of business is the adoption of the Agenda.  
22 May I have a motion to approve the Agenda?

23 Commissioner Beatty?

24 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: So moved.

25 CHAIR WILSON: A second?

1 COMMISSIONER ELDER: Second.

2 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. It has been properly  
3 moved and second that we will move forward with the  
4 Agenda.

5 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: Madam Chair, can you  
6 note that I am now in the meeting? I'm sorry, we were  
7 in CBC.

8 CHAIR WILSON: Yes. I need for all of the  
9 Commissioners to know that the Congressional Black  
10 Caucus has a meeting every Wednesday at noon. And, it  
11 goes until approximately two o'clock.

12 And, later whenever we do not have votes,  
13 and this just happens to be a day that the votes are  
14 at five o'clock. So, the Commission, so most of the  
15 Commission is our members of the Congressional Black  
16 Caucus are still in the meeting, even though three of  
17 us are present today.

18 C. NEW ORDER OF BUSINESS

19 I. RE-ELECTION OF CHAIR WILSON

20 CHAIR WILSON: According to this Agenda,  
21 and the Business Meeting, we are supposed to reelect,  
22 or we're supposed to elect a Chair.

23 And so, all of those in favor of the  
24 reelection of Chair Wilson, please let it be known by  
25 raising your right hand.

1           It seems like a majority of us are in  
2 favor. So, Congresswoman Wilson is now the Chair, and  
3 will proceed now to, I suggest at this time, that we  
4 proceed to the business meeting or the report of our  
5 Director.

6           ii. ELECTION FOR SECRETARY

7           CHAIR WILSON: We will not elect a  
8 Secretary today. So, Mr. Mark, Chair Mark, will you  
9 proceed with your report?

10          iii. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

11          MR. SPENCER: Yes, ma'am.

12          CHAIR WILSON: Okay.

13          MR. SPENCER: So, very quickly, we are  
14 proceeding on a number of fronts here at the  
15 Commission.

16          iv. COMMISSIONER'S SURVEY

17          MR. SPENCER: We would ask and remind all  
18 of the Commissioners to take a look at our brief two  
19 question survey. And, we still are trying to collect  
20 those.

21                 And, that's an opportunity for you to  
22 speak to us on those elements and issues you would  
23 like to see us raise and investigate. Some of you  
24 have done that and thank you. And, we're still asking  
25 for everyone to add to that.

1 v. CSSBMB JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

2 a. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

3 MR. SPENCER: The Commission has developed  
4 its hiring plan that follows an Independent  
5 Consultant's Report. We are hiring an administrative  
6 officer. Those interviews will take place tomorrow.

7 b. SOCIAL MEDIA SPECIALIST

8 MR. SPENCER: We have developed a vacancy  
9 announcement for a social media specialist, which fits  
10 in with our overall media strategy.

11 And, that vacancy announcement will be  
12 made, well actually, it's been made, and we've  
13 received a certified list of candidates. And, we're  
14 about to schedule interviews for that.

15 c. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

16 MR. SPENCER: I want to thank the  
17 Williams-Skinner Institute. We've been working with  
18 two outstanding fellows in developing a media  
19 strategy.

20 And, our roll out of our own dedicated web  
21 platform with a technology and content strategy, which  
22 we hope to be announcing to the Commission very  
23 shortly.

24 vi. PROPOSED/CURRENT INITIATIVES

25 MR. SPENCER: We are working on a series



1 of project proposals that we will present to the  
2 Chair. And, we will share with the Commission.

3 And, at this time, that's really the bulk  
4 of the report as it exists at this moment.

5 III. CHAIR COMMENTS

6 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you, Commissioner  
7 Mark. And now, we have, we're going to make sure that  
8 any new business.

9 I want you to know that we are planning an  
10 onsite meeting with police and youth. And, it will  
11 coincide with the Congressional Black Caucus in  
12 September. So, just put a pin in that and we'll give  
13 you more updates on that as we proceed.

14 Would any of the members or the  
15 Commissioners like to make any comments or suggestions  
16 or have any questions before we conclude the meeting?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIR WILSON: I'm so happy to welcome all  
19 of you back, everybody. We're going to start having  
20 in person meetings.

21 We have a great budget that now has given  
22 us the opportunity for travel. And, I hope to welcome  
23 you here on Capitol Hill as we proceed to have  
24 hearings. And, let everyone know that we do exist.  
25 And, that we do have a Commission that's doing good

1 work.

2 Most of our work has been on Zoom. You  
3 know, we went through the pandemic and at first we  
4 didn't really have the funding.

5 But, now we have the funding. We have a  
6 directive. And, we're going to move forward in a  
7 wonderful direction.

8 If you have any suggestions, please  
9 forward them to me directly. Or, you can forward them  
10 to our Director. And, we will follow up with you.

11 Any questions or concerns? Commissioner  
12 Beatty?

13 COMMISSIONER BEATTY: I don't have a  
14 question. But, I would like to just say thank you.  
15 Reading through the documents and looking at our  
16 federal action during the pandemic, and the materials  
17 that have been provided, has been most helpful.

18 As a matter of fact, I have a young black  
19 American who works in my office. He's very interested  
20 in the legislative process.

21 So, I've also assigned him to be like a  
22 staffer on this so he can see firsthand things that  
23 affect young men, younger than him, but also himself  
24 and his peer group.

25 And so, I think that could be very helpful

1 to many of our young staffers who are just barely out  
2 of college, you know, 23, 24 years old.

3 So, I just really wanted to say thank you.  
4 I've learned a lot and enjoyed being on the  
5 Commission.

6 A. NEW INITIATIVE WITH NFL

7 CHAIR WILSON: Thank you. And, you need  
8 to know that Commissioner Beatty and I had the  
9 opportunity to go to the NFL in New York.

10 And, while visiting with the NFL, I  
11 brought up to them the fact that sneakers played a  
12 major role in crime in the African-American community  
13 as it relates to black men and to black boys  
14 specifically.

15 And so, Commissioner Beatty has agreed  
16 that she would chair an initiative with the NFL and  
17 with, there was someone else you told me about.

18 And, we kind of like had a long  
19 conversation and tried to determine how many black  
20 boys we had in public schools across the United  
21 States, in all schools just across the United States,  
22 little black boys.

23 And, it wasn't that many. And, we're  
24 going to present a proposal to provide these children  
25 with sneakers. Because sneakers, and the condition of

1 sneakers, play an important role in dropout prevention  
2 in our schools. Especially in middle school.

3 Okay. So, any other suggestions? Yes?

4 COMMISSIONER DILLARD: Well, just maybe an  
5 introduction of the new members?

6 B. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

7 CHAIR WILSON: Well, we don't have any new  
8 members. Or do we? Oh, we have a new member? Okay.

9 And, who are you replacing? Tell us who  
10 you are and who are you replacing?

11 COMMISSIONER HOLMES: Good afternoon  
12 everyone. My name is Alexis Holmes. And, I'm here on  
13 behalf of the U.S. Department of Education.

14 And, Chair Wilson, I'm replacing Christian  
15 Rhodes. So, I am just so happy and grateful to be a  
16 part of the work here.

17 And, we're looking forward to working with  
18 all of you.

19 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Thank you. All  
20 righty. I see someone else raising their hand. Um-  
21 hum?

22 COMMISSIONER MARTIN: Hello. My name is  
23 Tina-Louise Martin. I'm with the U.S. Commission on  
24 Civil Rights.

25 I'm the appointee of the Staff Director

1 Mauro Morales. And, I'm taking the place of Gerald  
2 Fosten.

3 CHAIR WILSON: Okay. All right. Welcome.  
4 And, we'll add you to the roster and make sure we have  
5 contact information for you.

6 And, when we see each other in person, I'm  
7 going to give everybody a great big Commission hug.  
8 Yeah, we haven't had a chance to do that. And, I miss  
9 all of you.

10 So, thank you so much. Thank you. And,  
11 if there is no further business, this meeting is --  
12 Lucy? Commissioner Lucy?

### 13 C. FIELD HEARINGS

14 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Thank you so much,  
15 Chairwoman. I really appreciate it. And, I know that  
16 we were taking about, you know, actually doing field  
17 hearings. And, I think that is an admirable and  
18 wonderful idea.

19 As you said, we need to let our  
20 communities know that we exist and that we're doing  
21 the work. And, that our Commission is actually law.

22 I would like to suggest maybe since we  
23 know that, you know, of course gun violence is really  
24 crucial to our communities, I would love to be able to  
25 host in Georgia, the Commissioners for a field hearing

1 on gun violence.

2 Because not only is it affecting, you  
3 know, just you know, African-American communities,  
4 but, you know, communities of color, AAPI communities,  
5 Hispanic communities as well, are also affected.

6 So, I would love to be able to host in  
7 Georgia.

8 CHAIR WILSON: That would be just  
9 absolutely phenomenal. And, we experienced a school  
10 shooting, another school shooting in Tennessee.

11 So, gun violence is something that we all  
12 are concerned about. And, we need to address that.  
13 And, we know your leadership role in that particular  
14 area, you have led this entire nation in that effort.

15 And, we appreciate that and are so lucky  
16 to have you as a part of our Commission. And, we look  
17 forward to working with you.

18 And, we will work with you to come up with  
19 a good date so all of our Commissioners can be present  
20 at this particular summit or whatever you decide to  
21 have when we come to Georgia.

22 COMMISSIONER McBATH: Okay. Thank you.

23 IV. ADJOURN MEETING

24 CHAIR WILSON: Yes, thank you. Um-hum.

25 Okay. If not, this meeting stands adjourned. Thank

1       you.

2                       MR. SPENCER: Thank you.

3                       CHAIR WILSON: Okay. Bye bye.

4                       (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went  
5 off the record at 1:23 p.m.)

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This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Commission on the Social  
Status of Black Men and Boys

Before: USCCR

Date: 03-29-23

Place: teleconference

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