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LOCAL LAW NO. 5 - 2015

A LOCAL LAW REGARDING THE ONONDAGA COUNTY/SYRACUSE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

BE IT ENACTED BY THE ONONDAGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF THE COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Purpose and Intent

Historically, Onondaga County has collaborated with the City of Syracuse in administering a Human Rights Commission for the purposes of, among other things, furthering harmony, understanding, and mutual respect among all persons within the diverse communities that comprise the County and the City. By Resolution No. 330-1997, the Onondaga County/Syracuse Commission on Human Rights ("Commission") was established. This body was tasked with performing a number of activities, including conducting studies, investigating incidents, and providing education around human rights issues to the community.

From time to time, it is necessary to examine the roles of public agencies within the context of current community needs. The Commission must be renewed and strengthened to meet such needs. Specifically, this local law is intended to formalize the relationship that Onondaga County's human rights specialists have with the jail and to provide for administrative involvement in connection with federal civil rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Section 2. Commission Appointment, Structure, and Functions.

- (a) The Commission exists to foster the growth and development within Onondaga County in the field of human rights and to examine the ways in which various groups of persons within the community relate to each other. The goal is to facilitate communication among such groups, creating a climate in which citizens can understand and respect each other, resulting in the elimination of conditions leading to discrimination against members of any such groups.

The Commission shall be continued for the purposes found within the provisions of General Municipal Law Article 12-D, Executive Law Articles 15 and 15-A, and related provisions of federal civil rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

- (b) Appointments to the Commission shall be as stated in Resolution No. 330-1997, as amended.
- (c) In furtherance of such purposes stated herein, the Commission shall be empowered to perform the following acts:
  - 1. Foster mutual respect and understanding among members of various groups in the community.

2. Make such studies in any field of human rights in the community as in the judgment of the Commission will aid in effectuating its general purposes and, where desirable, to make the results of such studies public.
  3. Inquire into incidents of tension and conflict among or between members of various groups, and to take such action as may be designed to alleviate such tensions and conflict.
  4. Conduct and recommend such educational programs as, in the judgment of the Commission, will increase goodwill among inhabitants of the community and open new opportunities into all phases of community life for all inhabitants.
  5. Recommend to such elected officials as may be appropriate such legislation as the Commission deems necessary or desirable in carrying out the purposes for which the Commission was appointed.
  6. Submit an Annual Report to the County Executive, the Mayor, the County Legislature, and the Common Council.
  7. Make written reports to the County Executive, the Mayor, the County Legislature, and the Common Council setting forth the facts found by it and its recommendations after the completion of any public hearing.
  8. Perform such other and related duties as shall be required or delegated by the County Executive or County Legislature.
  9. Employ such attorneys, experts and employees as may be necessary, within the amount made available within the annual budget process.
  10. Receive, accept and use and expend public grants and private gifts, donations or bequests and other payments, goods and services, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to the extent permitted by General Municipal Law.
- (d) Within annual appropriations made therefor, the County may employ an executive director, human rights specialists and other personnel as may be needed to perform work for the Commission on behalf of the County, with such personnel being responsible for assisting the Commission with accomplishing its duties, as stated herein. In the event that appropriations are made available for an executive director, such official shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Legislature.
- (e) The executive director, human rights specialists, and other personnel shall provide administrative assistance to any committee investigating conditions for inmates held within the County's jail, as such may be created from time to time. Further, any such human rights specialists shall provide administrative assistance to County personnel in connection with federal civil rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

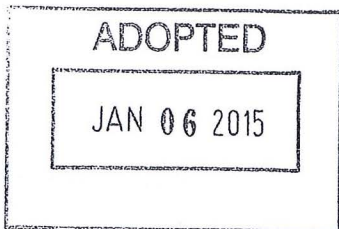
Section 3. Severability

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part of this local law shall be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which the judgment shall have been rendered.

Section 4. Effective Date

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing and in a manner consistent with Municipal Home Rule Law.

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF LEGISLATION DULY ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY ON THE

6th DAY OF January, 2015.

*Deborah A. Maturo*

CLERK, COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

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ONONDAGA COUNTY  
LEGISLATURE