



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 22-1475A, Version: 1

Subject:

Proposed initiation of litigation in the case of Aquatania Colbert v. Pueblo Village Apartments, LLC and Phillip Tracy; HUD Case No. 04-22-9238-8; PC Case No. 22-014 - alleged housing discrimination.

Recommended Action:

Approval and authorization for the County Attorney to initiate litigation on behalf of Aquatania Colbert through outside counsel retained for these legal services.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Summary:

On December 3, 2021, Complainant Aquatania Colbert filed a housing discrimination charge with the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights (PCOHR) alleging Complainant was subject to intimidation, interference, coercion, discriminatory refusal to rent, sell or deal, deny or make housing unavailable on the bases of race and color under the Fair Housing Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. §3601, et. seq.). Specifically, Complainant and other witnesses complained to Respondent that Complainant and her daughters were subject to a racially hostile environment (harassment, intimidation, racial slurs) due to their race and color by another tenant and Respondent took no action to address the complaints. Following the investigation, on July 12, 2022, PCOHR issued a finding of reasonable cause that Aquatania Colbert was subject to a racially hostile and intimidating environment in violation of Chapter 70 of the Pinellas County Code and the Fair Housing Act, as amended. Attempts to conciliate the matter were unsuccessful.

In accordance with Sections 70-146 and 70-147 of the Pinellas County Code, the County Attorney's Office is required to file a civil action on behalf of an aggrieved party seeking appropriate relief, and if a timely election is not made, to have the charge decided in a civil action.

Background Information:

The Determination issued by the PCOHR setting forth the facts and applicable law that led to the reasonable cause determination is attached, as well as the Final Investigative Report.

Fiscal Impact:

Unknown.

Staff Member Responsible:

Jewel White, County Attorney
Keiah L. Townsend, Assistant County Attorney

Partners:

Office of Human Rights

Attachments:

Determination dated July 12, 2022.

Final Investigative Report dated June 30, 2022.