

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Minutes of April 3, 2018

Commissioners Present—Hattie Kerwin Derrick, Jane Brown, Brooke Foucault Welles, Bryan Barash

Advisory Council Present—Lt Bruce Apotheker, Viviana Planine

Student Representatives Present— none

Guests – Steve Hassan, Eli Ingraham, Rabbi Eric Gurvis, Becca Schulman Havemeyer, Tamika Olszewski, Cindy Greene, David Kuppenheimer, Carol Connolly, Dana Hanson

Staff to the Commission – Linda Walsh and Shin-Yi Lao

1. Hate Incidents

- Nothing to report since last meeting
- New full-time Social Worker has started. She will focus on prevention, jail diversion, and connecting residents to resources.

2. Student Reports

- No student representatives present. V. Planine reported that 4/4 will be Black History Day in the schools (rescheduled from earlier in the year).
- Discussion regarding current process for bringing on student representatives and possibility of formalizing the process. Suggestions for the future:
 - Post information on HRC website
 - Reimburse students for transportation
 - Make it a formal application process
 - Offer a teleconference option for students

3. Programming

- Debrief recent co-sponsored events:
 - Interfaith panel went well
 - *Unveiled* drew record-breaking attendance. Looking into possibility of bringing the show to NPS.
- Genocide exhibit
 - Video presentation up in City Hall and on HRC website
 - Posters will be up in NSHS next week. NNHS dates TBD.
- Mayor's Prayer Breakfast
 - Speaker: Dr. Amey Victoria Adkins-Jones from Boston College
 - Discussed confusion around name and whether it is a religious event
 - Email H. Derrick if interested in attending and being part of an HRC table
- Pride
 - Starting in 2019 we will solicit nominations from the community
 - Discussed nominees and selected Rev. Brandon Thomas Crowley
 - Will speak to Quinn Etchie, Director of Youth Services, on how to incorporate youth in this year's ceremony.
 - Discussion on how to incorporate young people in future ceremonies:
 - Youth speakers/performers
 - Youth honoree
 - Difficult time of year to get students to attend

4. New/Other Business

- Membership: We received 14 applications and completed interviews on 4/2/18. Names will be sent to Mayor Fuller who will appoint the commissioners.
- Ordinance review. HRC was assigned a lawyer in early March to review the ordinance and make recommendations with a focus on:
 - Structure and function of Advisory Council

- Discrimination complaint process
- Discussion of the discrimination complaint process
 - Currently the HHS office receives calls every month. Depending on the nature of the complaint, callers may be referred to the Newton Police Department or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination. Starting next meeting, HHS staff will report the number of calls received and the general nature of the calls. Additional information cannot be given due to privacy issues.
- Recognizing Sheila Mondshein:
 - Post her eulogy on the HRC website
 - Write-up in the TAB
 - Coordinate with the Fair Housing Committee
 - Book donation to the Newton Public Library – E. Ingraham suggested *Healing Our Divided Society* edited by Fred Harris and Alan Curtis
- Newton Nomadic Theater
 - Possibly collaborate to show *Unveiled*
 - K. Norsigian working with them to bring a *Moth*-style story hour where residents share their stories around a theme, such as race or identity. Would like to make the program multi-generational.
- Author night/Reading list
 - B. Welles and C. Greene collaborating with Newtonville Books to sponsor a social justice-related reading/book-signing event
 - B. Welles putting together a social justice reading list for young people
 - Suggestion to include talking points for parents
 - Possibly collaborate with library to co-sponsor book clubs focused on the list
- E. Ingraham suggested a community screening of *American Creed*, a PBS special that explores “whether a unifying set of beliefs, an American creed, can prove more powerful than the issues that divide us” followed by a moderated discussion.

5. Next meeting dates:

- May 1st in room 211 of City Hall
- June 5th – Pride
- July 17th in room 211 of City Hall
- December 4th – HRC award night