

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE February 11, 2015 MEETING

Commissioners Present—Jane Brown, Sheila Mondshein, Hattie Kerwin Derrick and Dianne Chilingirian

Commissioners Not Present - Holly Ryan,

Advisory Council Present—Lt Bruce Apotheker and Frank Wolpe

Student Representatives Present— None

Guests – Betty Chan, Cecilia and Brian Barash

Staff to the Commission – Linda Walsh

The meeting was called to order by Hattie Kerwin Derrick, Interim Chair, at 7:34p.m. in room 222 in Newton City Hall.

1. Introductions –
 - Guests present had submitted paperwork to be either an Committee member or an Advisory member.
2. Student Reports
 - No students were in attendance.
3. Approval of Minutes from January 2015
 - The minutes were accepted as presented
4. Lt. Apotheker reported that there were no hate crimes to report although, there have been some issues at the local schools.
5. Asian Festival Proposal for funds (Betty Chan)
 - Betty Chan of the Newton Asian Pacific American Network described planned activities to celebrate Asian History in May. The date has been set for May 16th 4p – 8:30p at a Evans Park, a Senior Living Center in Newton.
 - She presented a budge totaling \$570. After discussion regarding what was left in the HRC budget it was voted upon by the Newton HRC to fund \$175 for the event. Any remaining funds would be left for a June event and a note yet identified event.
 - Discussion regarding space alternatives as Evans Park only holds up to 60 and they need to allow for residents to attend.
6. Discussion/Vote – procedures for filing housing complaints (Sheila Mondshein)
 - Discussion regarding what is currently in place and recommendations for edits.

- The forms are online need; however, complainants need to come in for an important intake (screening).
- The number of complaints per year varies. On average perhaps three there could be some that go to MCAD or HUD.
- Issues are mostly housing related.
- Discussion regarding establishing a Grievance Committee
 - Composition
 - Could it be interdisciplinary with other Newton City Committees?
 - Housing Lawyer – someone who understands ordinance – could it be any type of Lawyer
 - Social Worker
 - mediation
- Recommendation for training by MCLE
- Vote to accept the changes as presented. Linda will move forward to the City Lawyers.

7. Status of New Appointments

- Four Commissioners are not continuing
- Four Openings for Commissioners
- Meeting with the Mayor to discuss appointments
- Currently, there are eight people who are interested in a position of either Commissioner or Advisory Council
- How do we acknowledge those who have left the HRC?
 - Book to the library in the name of Commissioner leaving?
 - Plaque?
 - Bring any and all ideas to the March 11th meeting

8. New Business

- Frank Wolpe – Crime Prevention Task Force is sponsoring an ISIS discussion. Discussion regarding whether this should be a future event co-sponsored with the HRC.

The next meeting will be March 11, 2015 at 7:30 pm in room at City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Hattie N. Kerwin Derrick