

Human Rights Commission and Advisory Council Minutes

Wednesday, July 10, 2013
7:30 p.m., Newton City Hall, HHS

Present: Peter Brown, Lt. Bruce Apotheker, Jane Brown
Holly Ryan, Brenda Krasnow, Hattie N. Kerwin Derrick, Sheila Mondshein

Absent: Carol Y. Kelley, Dianne Chilingerian, Sona Petrossian, Nazik Kazimi, Frank
Wolpe, Viviana Planine

Students: none

Guests: Vincent Farina

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Introductions

Public Comment

None

School Updates

None

Approve Minutes

June minutes were approved as written

Hate Crimes

None

Peter said Dianne McCloud from Medford has a program for boards and commissions on civility. Peter wrote to the mayor to see if this program would be of interest.

Holly suggested a program that would designate the month of June as LGBT month. If interested, the HRC could sponsor and promote a flag raising at Newton City Hall similar to other communities such as Cambridge, North Hampton and Boston. The ceremony would take place outside City Hall and there would be an opportunity for residents, politicians, school officials and others to give speeches. Holly would like to begin the conversation and planning now with the mayor and executive office.

Brenda said she attended the "gen silent" movie and program at the senior center. It was well attended and included a man who wrote poetry about his experience. She has talked to Jayne Colino about repeating the program for the community, perhaps at the library. She would like to plan this event for October 2013.

Possible Program

Homeless Shelter in Newton

Jane read a prepared statement about the recent public meeting regarding a homeless shelter on Beacon St. Bruce talked about his experience at the public meeting. Sheila said the fair housing committee was interested in this issue and it will be on the agenda for their Friday meeting. At this point, future public hearings have been cancelled and the mayor has not allocated the funds. There was discussion about writing an open letter to the editor. Peter asked if this was an opportunity to have a program to educate the public. Sheila will let Peter know about any action taken by the fair housing committee (if any).

A vote was taken on the following motion. The HRC (Peter) will write a letter to the editor advocating for human rights for everybody. 4 approved, 1 opposed. Motion carries. Peter will send the letter out on email for everyone to review and comment before it is sent to the newspaper.

Commemorative Months

The calendar of commemorative months was distributed to the group. Possible programs were discussed to be held during those months. Peter said he had been in touch with the new chair of the clergy association and he expects we will be included in any meetings in the future.

Adjourn 9:00 p.m.

