

Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday – April 13, 2011

7:30 pm – Newton City Hall – Room 222

Present:

Jane Brown, Peter Brown, Susan Thomas, Marianne Ferguson, Carol Kelley, Brenda Krasnow, Sheila Mondschein, Sona Petrossian, Bruce Apotheker, Lillian Backman, Samuel Glass, Viviana Planine, Frank Wolpe, Joan Rubin, Lily Konowitz (student representative)

Absent:

Ann Capoccia, Carleton Merrill, Susan Rosenthal, Dianne Chilingirian, Norman Lazarus, Judy Fischbach, Nazik Kazimi

Guests: Robert Caruso and Girard Plante

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

School Updates

Viviana reported on 3 upcoming programs; Days of Remembrance, Day of Silence and Just Think Teen Expo

Hate Crime/Incident Reports

Bruce reported one hate incident at 100 Walnut St that involved a swastika drawn on the building. The incident is under investigation.

Speakers from Disabilities Commission

Robert Caruso and Girard Plante gave an overview of the work of the Newton Disabilities Commission (formerly known as the Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities). The work of the Commission focuses several areas; disability awareness, reviewing requests for handicap parking permits, assessment and recommendations for individuals or buildings in terms of accessibility. They are available for consultation on a variety of issues. They also gave an overview of the CDBG funded projects through HUD.

Human Rights Issues from the City view

Linda and Bruce discussed their jobs in City government. They described some weekly and monthly meetings that take place with all City departments to identify residents in need or issues that need to be addressed. The goal is to connect people with resources or identify a possible problem before a crisis happens.

March minutes approved without changes

Updates

Fair Housing

Sheila said the draft report from the consultant, Barbara Chandler, on architectural access in Newton has been completed. It is full of recommendations. The report will first be sent to department heads and commission chairs to elicit any feedback.

Village Program

Upcoming program to be presented on June 16, 2011 at the library is on track.

Food Bank

Schedule for volunteers needed is sent out on email. Greater Boston Food bank will be in June

HRC library

Linda and Judy met to identify HRC items in City Hall. Send Judy any items members have in their possession so she can compile a complete list.

Budget Review

Budget sheet shows a surplus of \$547.21 The money must be spent before the end of this fiscal year.

Other Business

HRC event was a success. There were very positive comments from participants and attendees who enjoyed an excellent evening. Thank-you letter was read from Mary Margaret.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM