

Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday –November 20, 2010

7:30 pm – Newton City Hall – Room 222

Present:

Jane Brown, Peter Brown, Judy Fischbach, Marianne Ferguson, Carol Kelley, Brenda Krasnow, Susan Thomas, Bruce Apotheker, Lillian Backman, Dianne Chilingerian, Samuel Glass, Nazik Kazimi, Norman Lazarus, Frank Wolpe, Lily Konowitz (student representative)

Absent:

Sheila Mondshein, Sona Petrossian, Ann Capoccia, Carleton Merrill, Viviana Planine, Susan Rosenthal, Joan Rubin

Meeting called to order at 7:35 PM

School Updates

Newton South High School has 2 programs happening this month; invisible children (about child soldiers) and a speaker on the holocaust.

Hate Crime/Incident Reports

No hate incidents to report this past month. Information about the ‘silver alert’ program was given. This is a national program that is used to alert the city or town about a missing elderly person.

Open meeting law and public records review

Open meeting law issues were discussed. Meetings must be posted 48 hours in advance and include agenda items. Committee meetings would be included and subject to the same notification and posting.

Brochure and website update

Members are encouraged to view the website and send any suggested changes or corrections to Linda Walsh. The brochure is being reviewed by Sarah Ecker in the mayor’s office. A draft copy should be available to the commission soon.

Future Project Ideas

Carol Kelley

Carol would like to explore immigration issues to see if they are any areas of concern here in Newton. Members discussed various ways of eliciting that information from the community at large.

Peter Brown

Peter has given a bullying DVD to Marianne to view to see if it would be of any interest for the group. Issues of bullying occur in many places. Recent legislation has forced schools and businesses to develop policies to address bullying.

Peter also reported on a recent complaint filed with the commission. There was successful mediation, and a compromise was worked out. There appears to be a good resolution to the problems raised. Details are confidential.

Judy Fischbach

Youth awards can be given to deserving high school students identified by the school principals. The commission can offer certificates or letters of commendation. Various ideas for honoring high school youth this year were discussed. More discussion will occur at December meeting. The group plans to revisit the idea of an adult and a youth award recipient at December meeting.

Committee Reports

Program committee

November 18th meeting may be postponed/rescheduled

Membership

Human Rights Commission reappointment discussion.

Anyone interested in appointment to the commission should send a letter of interest and resume to Sarah Ecker, Director of Communication for the mayor's office. Sarah reviews all requests and puts name/s forward to the mayor for consideration. If term is expired, or due to expire, and if interested in staying on the commission, the same process should be followed. There has been no time frame given but Sarah is working on these requests.

MAHRC (Mass Assoc. of Human Rights and Human Relations Commission)

Next meeting to be held Friday November 19, 2010.

Other Business

October 13, 2010 minutes approved with one name correction
October 26, 2010 minutes approved with one last name correction.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 PM

Next meeting date December 8, 2010