

Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2008
7:30 PM in the Newton City Hall cafeteria

Attendance:

Commissioners present: Jane Brown, Muriel Esdale, Marianne Ferguson (Chair), Judy Fischbach Sheila Mondshein

Commissioner absent/regrets: Peter Brown, Brenda Krasnow, Sona Petrossian, Susan Thomas

Advisory Council Members present: Lt. Bruce Apotheker, Dianne Chilingirian, Sam Glass, Nazik Kazimi, Carol Y. Kelley, Myrna Offen, Viviane Planine, David Rosen, Armando Rossi, Joan Rubin, Frank Wolpe

Advisory Council Members absent/regrets: Ann Capoccia, Marcia Cruz Redding, Norman Lazarus, Matt McBride, Carleton Merrill, Sharon O. Stout

Students present: Julijana Englander, David Fisher, Ali Zaidi,

Students regrets: Isaac Zarsky

Staff present: Beverly Droz

Guests: Homer Franck, Tony Muchugia

The meeting opened at 7:35 pm

Everyone was welcomed and introductions were made around the room.

The minutes of the February 13, 2008 meeting were approved and accepted.

School Updates:

Newton South High School:

David Fisher reported:

- V-Day on March 7 by Feminist Club was successful: This was an event to Stop Violence Against Women and Girls. Friendship bracelets were sold and a film "Daughters of Afghanistan" was shown.
- Social Awareness showed the film "Winter's Soldier."
- STAND planning Days of Remembrance – Middle schoolers are coming. They will plan workshops.
- WA I- Water Aid International - will have a comedy fest in April

Viviana Planine also reported and brought the school newspaper with Katie Sander's front page article about the "Black Gap"

Newton North High School:

Julijana Englander reported:

- Human Rights Board working on Days of Remembrance for 4/9/08 – contacting speakers. They are trying to represent most countries that have experienced a genocide.
- Leadership class getting ready to go to New Orleans to do work related to Katrina clean-up.

Ali Zaidi reported:

- Black Leadership Council is still working and raising funds for Jenna-6 group and their legal fees.

Hate Crimes/Incidents

Lt. Bruce Apotheker reported:

- New trainings are coming up at the end of the month in Portsmouth for officers.

New BUSINESS:

Women's Commission Meeting

Jane reported on the 3/11/08 Women's Commission Meeting (co-sponsored by HRC). The main concern discussed was health issues and advocacy. A flyer was passed around about the other upcoming events. There will be a summary after the 3 meetings. Jane, Brenda and Bev have been attending the Women Commission meetings this year, along with the Community Social Worker in Bev's office. The Women's Commission is conducting needs assessment in our community of women with pressing economic needs. Our Community Social Worker sees these women and knows their issues. The assessment discussion meetings will take place at these 3 locations during March and April: Senior Center, Newton Community Service Center, and the Weeks House. The HRC is co-sponsoring these meetings.

COMMITTEES:

Committee sign-up:

Bev once again handed out committee sign up sheets that were passed around for members to confirm what committees they are working on or interested in. All members should sign up for at least one committee.

Membership:

Muriel congratulated Homer Franck for becoming an Advisory Council member.

Fair Housing:

Sheila reported that the Task Force is still working on the Action Plan which is expected in June.

Program: No report.

Education:

Muriel reported that the Days of Remembrance exhibit will be at NSHS. There isn't good space at NNHS to have the exhibit but it is being explored.

Communications: No report.

MAHRC:

MAHRC meeting is this Friday, 3/14 from 9-10:30am at the Boston Public Library. Following the meeting will be a tour of the "Choosing to Participate" exhibit. Julijana reported that Leadership Group members from NNHS are going.

Multi-Cultural:

Muriel thinks they're exploring a program with HERvoices, Inc., who had presented at last month's meeting.

Newton Clergy Association:

Sam reported that Bev Droz and Teresa Wood came to this month's meeting and gave out much helpful information about Human Services and Emergency Preparedness. Both are staff in the City's Dept. of Health and Human Services.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- The display case idea has been tabled.
- A motion was made and approved to order a new banner.
- For the budget, we should set aside \$50 for the June event we'll co-sponsor with Newton Dialogues.
- Brochures – Bev will update and reprint as soon as possible, after NewtonSERVES (4/13/08).
- Sam asked if anything was new with ADL. No, because their policy has not changed.
- Sheila asked that we plan ahead for next year for Martin Luther King Day. The 40th anniversary of his death is coming soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday April 9, 2008 at 7:30pm in the City Hall cafeteria.

Respectfully submitted, Beverly Droz, HRC staff director