

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Minutes of October 5, 2021

Commissioners Present – Brooke Foucault Welles, Sue Lowcock, Tamika Olszewski, Rabbi Keith Stern

Commissioners Absent – Jane Brown, Cindy Greene, Eli Ingraham

Advisory Council Present – Bruce Apotheker

Student Representatives Present – Ryan Chitty (NSHS)

Guests – Kathy Laufer, Eric Rosenbaum, Katani Sumner

Staff to the Commission – Shin-Yi Lao

The meeting was called to order by Brooke Foucault Welles, Chair at 7:03pm

1. Minutes from September 14 meeting - no quorum, vote deferred
2. Newton police report – Lt. Apotheker and Officer Rosenbaum
 - Increasing community outreach efforts, including with new Community Resource Dog Leo
 - 9/9: Resident reported witnessing the occupants of a vehicle yelling at people walking to temple during the Jewish holiday. Later in the day there was a second similar incident witnessed, it is believed to be the same vehicle.
 - 9/15: Graffiti stating “Muslim must die” found in a women’s bathroom stall at NNHS.
 - 9/24: A resident reported that she hung a Black Lives Matter sign in her window and someone spray painted the window black. She reports that the sign has previously been vandalized several times.
3. Complaints received – Shin-Yi Lao
 - None received this month
 - Discussion around complaint form and complaint process. Shin-Yi will add information to the HRC website indicating what to expect when you file a complaint. Sue will create flyers to publicize the complaint form.
4. Student reports – Ryan Chitty
 - This month: Latinx and Hispanic American heritage month events
 - November: Indigenous People’s heritage month events
5. Updates from the Mayor’s Office – report sent from Hattie Kerwin Derrick
 - Indigenous People’s Day Celebration 10/11: ceremony at City Hall at 8:00am and event 12-5pm at Albemarle Park
 - New library website can now be translated into different languages. The City website already has this capability. The City is working on increasing access to interpreter/translation services.
6. Updates from Commissioners
 - Tamika: Would like to have a dedicated HRC representative at MLK Day Celebration planning meetings. Rabbi Stern volunteered.

7. HRC Leadership

- Brooke will step down as chair in January 2022

8. Annual Report Discussion

- Existing sections: Events/Awards, Reports, Liaisons/Co-sponsorships
- Human rights related trends from the last year in Newton to include in the report: vandalism (damaging BLM signs, drawing Swastikas, etc.), violence/hateful acts against AAPI community, Zoom bombing, virtual hate speech, section on NPS
- Lt Apotheker will share NPD data
- Include a resource page

9. Upcoming Events Updates

- Indigenous People's Day
- Harvest Fair on 10/17 - Brooke will circulate signup sheet
- HRC Awards – 12/2 on Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm

Next meeting November 9 at 7:00

Respectfully submitted by Brooke Foucault Welles