

## Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, January 4, 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Call To Order:** 6:35 pm

Attendance of Commission Members & Liasons

✓	1. Joel Branch (Council Liaison)	✓	2. Khalila Cruz (Member)	✓	3. Shannan Gonzalez (Member)
	4. Rebecca Greenbaum (Member)	✓	5. Laura Hermans (Member)	✓	6. Jacqueline Ho (Member as of 1/24)
	7. Dylan Jaques (HS Junior Liaison)	✓	8. Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus (Chair & BOE Liaison)	✓	9. Abdullah Khan (Member)
✓	10. Amanda Lin (Member)		11. Joanne Cruz Lora (Member)		12. Andrea Orlando (Member)
	13. Edward Porowski (School District Liaison)	✓	14. Michelle Tang (HS Senior Liaison)	✓	15. Nadia Tariq (Secretary)
✓	16. Bobbie Theivakumaran (MDA Liaison)		17. Edmund Zelle (MEAICA Liaison)		

### Welcome & Introductions

**Reorganization meeting:** Council Liaison - Dr. Joel Branch

Nomination and election of officers: Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary

- Nadia Tariq nominated Hazel-Anne as Chair of the HRC - Motion seconded by Bobbie and Amanda. Approved by all HRC members present.
- Hazel-Anne nominated Nadia Tariq for Vice Chair - Seconded by Shannan and approved by all HRC members present.
- Hazel-Anne nominated Laura Hermans for Secretary - Seconded by Amanda and approved by all HRC members present.

**Welcome to any members of the public/public comment:** Jacqueline Ho was present. No comments from members of the public.

**Review & Approval of December minutes:** December minutes were not approved as a quorum of HRC members who had attended the December meeting was not certain. Seven current members of the HRC attended in December, so we need four of the seven present in February to approve December 2021's minutes (Shannan, Hazel-Anne, Andrea, Ed P., Michelle, Nadia, Ed Z.)

### Old Business:

- **Windows of Understanding:** The Metuchen Arts Council has asked us to continue our partnership with them for the Windows of Understanding series this year. Hazel-Anne and Nadia will attend a meeting with Bob Diken and Grace Shackney to discuss details and report out at the next HRC meeting.
- **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Virtual Service via New Hope Baptist Church:** This will be a virtual event that the entire community is invited to attend. The date and additional information will be shared with HRC members as soon as it is made available.

### **New Business:**

- Partnership with Temple Emanu-El for The Trial of Adolf Eichmann Documentary screening & discussion, February 15, 2022 @ 7:30 pm, at Temple Emanu-El & on Zoom. HRC members are encouraged to join this event (held in-person and via Zoom as of now).

### **Liaison Reports:**

- **Metuchen School District:** Principal Porowski while absent, shared that MHS staff will engage in a presentation on Supporting Transgender and Gender Expansive Students on 2/7/22 with Samantha King from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.
- **MDA:** Bobbie reported on several events in the planning stages
  - There is a Lunar New Year celebration being planned for the Plaza and Downtown. The tentative date is 2/12. The HRC is asked to support the event and promote it.
  - Black History Month, the MDA has developed a large BHM poster for display at the Plaza. They are also hoping to create an event and would like to partner with the HRC.
  - Holi: The MDA is planning an event to educate others around the cultural significance behind Holi.
  - Juneteenth & Hispanic Heritage Day: There are plans to continue these celebrations this year.
  - Holocaust Remembrance Day is on Jan. 27th and the HRC may want to plan a social media post about it.
  - Many Afghani refugees are moving into the area. This may be something that the HRC can partner with Interfaith RISE to bring awareness to and educate the community on how to help families feel included and offer help. Perhaps a Community conversation on how to be a better ally?
  - Thomas Mundy Peterson Day of Democracy in early October: A day to promote the power of the vote and educate others on the achievements of Thomas Mundy Peterson. Possible planning should begin around May/June.
- **Metuchen High School:** Michelle joined the Student Equity Committee at MHS. She shared that the committee is working on ways to revise the ELA & Social Studies textbooks to ensure that various perspectives are considered.
- **Metuchen Council:** Joel reported that Jason Delia is the new Council President
- **Board of Education** Hazel-Anne reported that the District will have virtual learning for 1/3 - 1/5. In-person learning will resume on 1/6.

### **2022 Event Planning:**

- Future events to think about and begin forming sub-committees for: Black History Month, World Day, Community Conversations, Indigenous Peoples Day, Human Rights Day. HRC members should start to consider which events they would like to take the lead or work on for the year.

### **Other New Business:**

- HRC will work to create a living Excel or Google Docs spreadsheet to house information on events, planning start dates, and subcommittee leaders & members, etc.

### **2022 Meeting Dates:**

Feb 1 | March 1 | April 5 | May 3 | June 7 | July 5 | Aug. 2 | Sept. 6 | Oct. 4 | Nov. 1 | Dec. 6

**Adjourned:** 7:45