

Human Relations Commission
Tuesday, December 12, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Call to order at 7:30 PM sharp: Leah Jiorle

Attendees: Nicole Blankiet, Sophie Falkenstein, Richard Green, III, Leah Jiorle, Hazel-Anne Johnson, Linda Koskoski, Kevin McPeek, Asela Mourao, Aiden Nelson, Ozair Omarzai and Reena Wade

Welcome to any members of the public/public comment: Leah Jiorle advised that Kevin McPeek, present at the meeting, is the super-intendant designee. Richard Green, III, also present at the meeting, was appointed as resident member of the Commission. Ben Small is the Board of Education liaison for the Commission. Lastly, Ms. Johnson advise that per Rabbi Veisberg, Father Ed Zelle of St. Luke's will represent the Metuchen/Edison Area Interfaith Clergy Association.

Review & Approval of November minutes: November 2017 Minutes approved.

Report from the Council Liaison: Councilwoman Koskoski advised the HRC meetings will move from the second Tuesday of the month to the first Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 2, 2018.

Comments sent from the public:

The HRC will obtain an official email address to receive comments from the public and for other official communication purposes. The HRC will follow up with Traffic Committee to understand how the Committee obtained their email address. There was also a discussion to have an HRC microsite/section on Metuchen site.

Old Business

Winter Festival, November 26, 2017 HRC agreed participation by the Commission would be annual and discussed the highly favored option of inviting the public to walk with the Commission in the parade next year.

Human Rights Day Celebration, December 10, 2017 HRC agreed the event by the Commission would be an annual, family friendly event. The event was successful with over 43 attendees. There was a suggestion to look at small, similar type events throughout the year. One suggestion was to have HRC participate in Junebug 2018.

New Business

Human Relation Commission 2018 Meetings The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 2, 2018. The first meeting of the year is a reorganization meeting. At the reorganization meeting, terms will be discussed, all 2018 meeting dates and the re-elections positions will be held.

Bylaws Discussion The HRC by-laws will be drafted. Members brought templates and examples. The HRC will focus our review next month the state of NJ Human Relations Council by-laws. Ms. Wade to circulate NJ HRC by-laws.

Information Sharing /Social Media Short discussion on the Metuchen Social Media Policy that was circulated electronically with the agenda and November minutes and hard copies were provided. There was internal agreement that due to the nature of social media, there should be a rapid response sub-committee to address time-sensitive matters. The make-up of the sub-committee will be Richard Green, III, Hazel-Anne Johnson, Nicole Blankiet and Leah Jiorle.

LGBT Policy The state has new requirements and the question arose as to compliance of Metuchen's to the new state policy. The discussion was tabled until the January 2018 meeting.

Fundraising As a commission, the HRC is not permitted to raise funds for causes. In regards to raising funds for HRC activities, appropriate grants may be requested and obtained. There are no funds set aside for the Human Relations Commission in the 2018 budget.

Workshop (#MeToo) Discussion A resident educator submitted a project regarding a workshop for high-school seniors to educate on sexual harassment/abuse with trained speakers/counselors and present research/statistics. The decision was to for the HRC to provide relevant and direct potential contacts within the schools to the resident as they may be able to directly work with the resident educator to create such a program, and best reaching the intended audiences.

Genesis The statewide school student database, Genesis, may have fields that can capture immigration status and/or citizenship of students. If the version the Metuchen Schools utilize is capturing such information, the Metuchen HRC would request such fields be removed and any data previously captured as to immigration status and/or citizenship, deleted. The HRC will follow-up to first understand what is being captured in this regard. This follow-up will be discussed at the January 2018 meeting.

Brief discussion of potential future events/topics International Day of Girl Rising – Fall 2018, Human Relations Commission Reading Hour for Children and educational workshop based on race.

Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates

- January 2, 2018

Current Commission Members

1. Nicole Blankiet
2. Sophie Falkenstein
3. Richard Green, III
4. Leah Jiorle
5. Hazel-Anne Johnson
6. Linda Koskoski
7. Kevin McPeek
8. Asela Mourao
9. Aiden Nelson,
10. Ozair Omarzai
11. Ben Small
12. Reena Wade
13. Ed Zellely