

## **Metuchen Human Relations Commission**

### **December 2018 Meeting Minutes**

**Call Meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. by Ms. Jiorle on December 4, 2018.**

Attendees: Sophie Falkenstein, Jordan Valliquette, Ozair Omarzai, Rob Facchini, Leah Jiorle, Kevin McPeek, Hazel-Anne Johnson, Richard Green III, Linda Koskoski, Asela Mourao, Reena Wade, Ben Small and Nicole Blankiet.<sup>1</sup>

**The October 2018 Meeting Minutes were approved.<sup>2</sup>**

#### **Report from the Council Liaison**

Ms. Koskoski reported that a human resource professional will assist Hazel-Anne Johnson with the upcoming diversity workshop. The Chamber of Commerce has agreed to participate. In regards to MHRC member (Nicole Blankiet and Leah Jiorle) terms expiring, if there is continued interest they will be re-instated and renewed in January. Both Ms. Jiorle and Ms. Blankiet expressed their continued interest in participation in the MHRC. Ms. Reena Wade noted she is not interested in continuing in the role of Secretary for the MHRC in 2019, however, is interested in continued involvement with the Commission.

**There were no comments from the public.**

#### **Old Business**

2019 Diversity Training Workshop- Ms. Johnson updated the Commission as to the development and plans for the workshop. Ms. Johnson is meeting with the Accessibility Committee to discuss. There was discussion about advertising the workshop at the January 24, 2019 MDA meeting and then schedule workshops for February. Ms. Johnson will follow up with the MDA.

Communications – The Metuchen HRC webpages have been updated with event photos and resources. We will have additional updates made to the webpage in the future such as adding the current intern's name to the page. The group discussed Instagram and Twitter accounts. Ms. Jiorle will create a Twitter account.

#### **New Business**

December Human Rights Day MHRC Event The subcommittee provided an update and advised as to the details regarding the event. The date is Sunday, December 9, 2018 at the Metuchen Library beginning at 4pm. The attendees will then carry electric candles while walking from the library to a local coffee shop, Cai's. Cai's is supplying hot cocoa for the attendees and there will be activities for the kids, including book readings and arts/crafts.

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<sup>1</sup> Ben Small and Nicole Blankiet participated by telephone.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Green and Linda Koskoski abstained from voting on November 2018 minutes.

Book Club/Speaker Series – Ms. Jiorle presented a new initiative where the MHRC will partner with the Metuchen Library to bring a book club/speaker series to Metuchen in 2019. There was a discussion related to which books would be appropriate and the Commission members present voted on three books: 1) A More Beautiful and Terrible History; The Uses and Misuses of the Civil Rights Movement, Jeanne Theoharis; 2) The Color of Law: A forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America, Richard Rothstein; and 3) Rising out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist, Derek Black. The series will be held on Wednesday evenings 7-9pm in April, July and early November. Next steps are to create subcommittees for management of the series and to select speakers for each event.

Additional 2019 Initiatives – The Commission reviewed other ideas presented at the November 2018 meeting and decided to move forward with a brochure explaining what MHRC does. Reena Wade and Richard Green will work on the brochure. Mr. Green has designed an MHRC dedicated logo and will work on the design of MHRC business cards. There was continued interest in creating welcome packets for businesses which would include information on NJLAD, the MHRC brochure and other human rights related information and resources.

February Black History Month Event – The subcommittee, consisting of Hazel-Anne Johnson, Ozair Omarzai, Jordan Valiquette and Richard Green, will spearhead discussion, generate ideas and select a date.

Proposed meeting dates for 2019:

- January 8 (Reorganization meeting and regular meeting)
- February 5
- March 5
- April 2
- May 7
- June 4
- July/Aug (TBD)
- September 3
- October 1
- November 5
- December 3

### **Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates**

- Next meeting – Tuesday, January 8, 2019
- HIB Update at MHS – December 2018
- Metuchen Menorah Lighting – December 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. Jordan Valliquette
10. Ozair Omarzai
11. Ben Small
12. Reena Wade
13. Ed Zelle

**Current MHRC Intern:** Rob Facchini