

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Article I: Name and Incorporation**

This body is an independent advisory body operating by appointment of the Mayor with the advice and consent of Borough Council. The name of this body shall be the Metuchen Human Relations Commission.

### **Article II: Affiliation**

The Metuchen Human Relations Commission, or MHRC, was created by the Borough of Metuchen, New Jersey, and reinstated via Ordinance 2017-14, passed and adopted by the Borough Council of Metuchen, New Jersey, on October 2, 2017.

### **Article III: Purposes**

The purpose of the Metuchen Human Relations Commission is to foster good will, cooperation, and conciliation, and to diffuse tensions among Borough residents, specifically by addressing issues or acts of bias based on a person's race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or abilities.

### **Article IV: Mission Statement**

The goal of the Metuchen Human Relations Commission (MHRC) is to advise the Mayor and Borough Council on ways to promote social and cultural harmony among all Metuchen Borough residents. In so doing, the MHRC will propose educational and multicultural programs to raise awareness and foster an inclusive sense of community in the Borough. The MHRC will also provide guidance to the Mayor and Council on ways to encourage goodwill, cooperation, and unity among the residents of our town.

The Commission is dedicated to cultivating an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance in Metuchen that ensures residents and visitors of all backgrounds and circumstances can feel safe and welcome here. Metuchen is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise our families, in large part because of our wealth of diverse bodies, minds, and backgrounds. The MHRC hopes to facilitate opportunities for residents to recognize, appreciate, and celebrate the many people, cultures, and histories that make up our town.

### **Article IV: Membership**

The Commission shall be made up of fifteen (15) members, who shall be representative of the various ethnicities, religions, nationalities, races, genders, sexual orientations, and abilities present in the Borough, as follows:

- a. Seven (7) residents of the Borough of Metuchen whose terms shall be for a period of three (3) years on a staggering basis;
- b. One (1) member of the clergy to be annually designated by the Interfaith Council;

- c. One (1) member representative of the business community to be annually designated by the Metuchen Downtown Alliance;
- d. Two (2) high school students of the Borough of Metuchen to be selected by the Metuchen High School Principal, one of which shall be a senior and one a junior whose term shall expire upon their graduation;
- e. One (1) educator from the Edgar Middle School of the Borough of Metuchen to be designated by the Superintendent of Schools;
- f. One (1) member of the Metuchen Board of Education to be annually designated by the President of the Board of Education;
- g. One (1) member representative of the Metuchen Police Department to be designated by the Police Chief; and
- h. One (1) member of the Council of the Borough of Metuchen who shall act as a liaison to be designated by the Mayor

#### **Article V: Officers**

1. The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and other officers as the Commission may designate as needed.
2. Officers shall be elected for terms of one (1) year and shall serve until their successors are elected. All officers shall be elected at the reorganization meeting that will take place during the first meeting of the calendar year.
3. The **Chair** shall:
  - a. Preside over all meetings of the Commission;
  - b. Exercise general oversight and direction of the officers of the Commission;
  - c. Call special meeting of the Commission as needed;
  - d. Serve as ex-officio member of all sub-committees;
  - e. Form and appoint members to subcommittees as needed to carry out the duties of the Commission;
  - f. Notify the Mayor and the Borough Council of any vacancy which occurs on the Commission;
  - g. Serve as the public spokesperson on behalf of the Commission and shall speak only on issues and policies on which the Commission has deliberated and adopted a position. The Chair may designate an alternative spokesperson from among the Commission members to speak on behalf of the Commission on specific issues.
4. The **Vice Chair** shall:
  - a. Perform the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence, resignation, or inability to perform the duties of the Chair'
  - b. Assist the Chair in the performance of their duties.
5. The **Secretary** shall:
  - a. Establish an agenda in conjunction with the Chair for meetings of the Commission and ensure compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act;

- b. Direct the taking of minutes and maintenance of correspondence and records of the Commission.

#### **Article VI: Amendments (not currently applicable)**

### **BYLAWS**

#### **Article I: Meetings**

##### **Meetings of the Commission:**

1. The Commission shall meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in Metuchen Borough Hall. The Chair shall prepare the agenda for each meeting.
2. The public will be notified of the meetings in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
3. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the Chair or by a quorum of the Commission.
4. Commission meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, except that such rules may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting.

#### **Article II: Quorum - Votes Required**

1. Not less than 51% of the members holding office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
2. The adoption of any motion shall require a quorum.
3. No member shall be permitted to vote on a motion unless present.
4. Voting on all matters shall be made by voice. A roll call vote may be called at the direction of the Chair. Members may request a roll call vote which will be considered by and at the discretion of the Chair.

#### **Article III: Fiscal Year**

The Fiscal Year shall run from January 1 through December 31.

#### **Article IV: Sub-Committees**

1. In order to facilitate the activities of the MHRC the Commission may create sub-committees at the discretion of the Chair and by order of a quorum vote of the Commission.
2. Sub-committees may also be dissolved at the discretion of the Chair and by order of a quorum vote of the Commission.

#### **Standing Sub-Committees**

1. Executive Sub-Committee
  - a. Consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary

- i. To provide problem resolution for urgent issues brought to MHRC
  - ii. To delegate issues for resolution to standing or special committees
  - iii. To become informed about possible human relations issues within Metuchen or the larger Middlesex County area
  - iv. To create and distribute the agenda and record minutes for all meetings
- 2. Educational Outreach Sub-Committee:
  - a. Consisting of 4 members
    - i. To promote the commission's vision and mission to the local community and to heighten awareness to create a better understanding of issues regarding specific cultural, ethnic, racial, gender age, disability, or diversity topics through partnership with other groups' events or initiatives, educational social media posts to Facebook et al., highlighting special dates in history, annual remembrances, historical figures, etc.
    - ii. To collaborate and continue to develop liaisons with other organizations to present cultural and educational activities to the Metuchen community
    - iii. To work with members of the MHRC in the role of Coordinators on events planning, and to delegate tasks and responsibilities, as necessary, among the larger Commission group
- 3. Social Media / Rapid Response Sub-Committees
  - a. Consisting of 3 members
    - i. To respond to comments from the public in real-time, as necessary, and to ongoing events on the national or international stage that require an immediate statement from the Commission
    - ii. To develop relationships, and partner with, local media outlets and to draft necessary letters, articles, or communication pieces to support the work of the MHRC
- 4. Other Sub-Committees
  - a. To be formed as needed with a focus on specific issues, including LGBTQ+ rights, Women's Rights, Race/Ethnicity, Religious freedom, Disability/Mental Health, or others.