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Human Rights Commission Minutes 02/11/2004

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES-FINAL

FEBRUARY 11, 2004

IN ATTENDANCE

Cecilia Akuffo

Sheri Baron

Marlissa Brigggett

Chris Deshler

Kim Lam

Kevin McGann

Nick Minton

Bill Shea

Nancy Sweeney

ABSENT

C.Carney

S.McHugh

N.Rhoads

J.Webster

Bill Shea called the meeting of the Human Rights Commission to order at 8:10 PM at the Whittemore Robbins House.

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM

There were no matters presented during the Open Forum.

REVIEW MINUTES

The January minutes were unanimously accepted.

COMPLAINTS AND INCIDENTS

Bill Shea reported that the Parks and Rec Commission denied an application request from the group Northern Knights to meet at Robbins Park on Saturday February 14, 2004 at 4:30 am. This group has links to other known hate groups. The Commissioners decided after much discussion to be prepared with a public response denouncing hate groups if the group meets and it becomes a public issue. There was no information on the purpose of the meeting. Mary Ann Sullivan will research more on this request and e-mail the information to the Commissioners. She will also book the Community Safety Room for Monday February 18, 2004 for Commissioners to meet and decide on a response message. Nick Minton will run that meeting in Bill Shea's absence.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1) Education:
- 2) Dialogues/Book groups: A dialogue on "same sex marriage" is scheduled for 3/30/04 at the Fox Library meeting room from 7:00-9:00 PM. Marlissa Brigggett is also working on the next AHRC article and will send a draft copy out to all by the end of February.
- 3) Rapid Response/ Publicity: Sheri Baron has been trying to contact Titus Shandoah for information on their R.R. system. She will also try another person and report back to the Commission.

REVIEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The Commission looked over the 18 month strategic plans and felt they had completed many of the goals. Bill Shea summarized the current plan highlighting achievements. The April 21, 2004 AHRC meeting will be designated as the meeting to develop a new strategic plan. The meeting will be at the Whittemore Robbins House at 7:00-10:00PM.

Flipcharts will be used for brainstorming ideas and refreshments will be served.

Cecilia Akuffo will check with a person she knows who could facilitate the meeting and what the cost would be. Mary Ann Sullivan will send out a strategic plan packet for everyone to review. Nancy Sweeney will talk to Steve of the Metco program to see if he could attend a future meeting. Kevin McGann reported that Diane McLeod is in contact with people who made a documentary film about "The Lost Boys" in Lewiston Maine where the mayor did not want the boys there yet the whole experience turned out well. It will be coming to the East Coast soon and possibly the AHRC could have a showing. Mary Ann Sullivan will contact Diane McLeod to let her know we want to keep in touch. Sheri Baron asked Nancy Sweeney to talk to the other human rights commissioners to poll other communities on the number of complaints they receive. Nancy Sweeney suggested a dialogue around The Laramie Project, the murder of Matthew Shepard. It was also discussed inviting appointing bodies to future AHRC meetings in order to establish better relationships with town officials.

WEBSITE STATUS

This discussion is tabled until Jim Webster is present for the discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

For minute packet distribution send both hard copy and e-mail to Chris Deshler, Nancy Sweeney, and Jim Webster.

Kevin McGann asked to have the AHRC member list e-mailed to him.

The Commissioners want a process to announce the chair and vice-chair changes yearly.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.