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Human Rights Commission Minutes 05/22/2003

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES-FINAL
May 22, 2003

IN ATTENDANCE

Cecilia Akuffo
 Sheri Baron
 Marlissa Brigggett
 Chris Deshler
 Kevin McGann
 Sue McHugh
 Nick Minton
 Nancy Rhodes
 Bill Shea
 Nancy Sweeney

ABSENT

Chris Carney
 Kim Lam
 Jim Webster

Kevin McGann called the meeting of the Human Rights Commission to order at 8:02 PM at the Jefferson-Cutter House.

REVIEW MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the April minutes with unanimous acceptance.

ARTICLE #82 DISCUSSION

Kathleen Wolfe presented Article #82 to the Commission explaining this is not legal but is a thought statement. It's a motivator for better parent behavior. She believes this should be supported by the AHRC just as the policy on diversity. It would make this subject matter more visible. If a Town Commission supports it then there would be reason to enforce/utilize by the school system (ie. Great Body Shop Topic, School Handbooks, or send literature home). Currently no Town Agency wants to own this policy, even though the Selectmen passed a vote of support. The goal would be to publicly post at schools, Town Offices, and Doctor's offices. It would start the discussion and communication to look for alternatives to disciplining children instead of physical hitting.

The discussion of the Commissioners included cons and pros such as:

- This should not be a town policy due to not legislating morality or parenting.
- There are already avenues in place to handle this subject matter; this is very gray area.
- If it isn't voted on as a Commission policy it doesn't mean you're for corporal punishment.
- This is a resolution to encourage good behavior. This is different than most Town Meeting Articles. Yet if Town Meeting supports resolutions than why not this one.
- This is a statement that is important and would support it.

The motion: Will the AHRC support this article?

The vote: YES-2

NO-6

ABSTAIN-1

Therefore the Commission will not support Article #82.

COMPLAINTS AND INCIDENTS

There are no new complaints and incidents reported. Sue McHugh reported that the complaint she was working on was withdrawn. The woman was going to take it up with the apartment management. Sue McHugh will send a letter to her to close the case.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- The operating budget of \$4500. for next year still needs to be approved by Town Meeting.
- The \$900. Donation for the 10-year anniversary needs to be deposited into the donation account then an amount (still to be determined) needs to be transferred to the payment account.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Policies and Procedures: There was nothing to report.
- Education: The career fair at the Ottoson will be May 28th or 29th, Sue McHugh will confirm which date. It is a career fair of nontraditional workers in the job force.
- 1) Dialogues/Book Groups: There is nothing to report.
- Rapid Response/ Publicity: There was nothing to report.
- Town Day: Is September 13, 2003. The sub-committee needs to meet to start planning the day's events.
- Fund-raising: There are plans to sell through a mailing and at Town Day to sell a card offering discounts to local establishments. All Commissioners must contact 3 businesses and ask for their support in this fundraising event.

NEW BUSINESS

-Kevin McGann made a suggestion that the Commission should perhaps look into applying for grant monies to help support the Commission. Nick Minton responded that he fundamentally objected and philosophically opposed to letting the Town off the hook concerning supporting the Town Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Submitted by:

MaryAnn Sullivan