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Human Rights Commission Minutes 06/20/2003

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes, June 20, 2003

IN ATTENDANCE

Cecilia Akuffo
 Sheri Baron
 Marissa Briggert
 Christine Carney
 Chris Deshler
 Kim Lam
 Nancy Rhodes
 Bill Shea

ABSENT

Kevin McGann
 Susan McHugh
 Nick Minton
 Nancy Sweeney
 Jim Webster

Cecilia Akuffo called the meeting of the Human Rights Commission to order at 8:00 PM at the Jefferson-Cutter House.

REVIEW MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the May minutes with two administrative changes – unanimously accepted.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Chris Deshler reported back to the commission regarding the disposition of Articles 81 (Patriot Act) and 82 (Corporal Punishment) at Town Meeting. Article 81 passed (Town Meeting voted to support the Patriot Act) and Article 82 failed (policy regarding child punishment) with a substantial negative vote. Ms. Wolfe, in her presentation of Article 82, characterized the Human Rights Commission as insensitive and dismissive. According to Chris Deshler.

COMPLAINTS AND INCIDENTS

Marissa Briggert reported that an individual contacted our office about an alleged violation at Leon & Company, a Belmont hairdresser. The individual was told that we could not handle a claim for an incident outside of our town. She did report the incident to the owner of the shop, who took the accusation very seriously and assured her he would handle it.

Christine Carney is going to see if there is a human rights organization in Belmont and then the information will be forwarded to the individual who contacted our office.

Sue McHugh was to send a letter to a woman who asked for her case to be closed – we will check on this next month.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The operating budget of \$4500 for next year has been approved by Town Meeting, and we are in receipt of a \$900 grant. These monies will be credited to our account after July 1, 2003.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Policies and Procedures: There was nothing to report.

Education: No one was present to report on the Career Fair at the Ottoson.

Dialogues/Book Groups: The next Book Group will focus on Have No Fear, written by Charles Evers and Andrew

Szanton. Mr. Szanton, a Somerville resident, will attend and read from his book and answer questions. This is planned for the week after Town Day – no definite date yet. Christine Carney will try and get space in her church for this event.

Rapid Response/ Publicity: There was nothing to report.

Fund-raising: Sheri Baron will follow-up with John Maher to make certain it is permissible for us to sell the “discount card” proposed by Marlissa Briggett. If we get the go-ahead, Marlissa will send us all names of restaurants to contact. We will sell this card at Town Day.

Cecilia has been searching for potential grant money and has found three possibilities. She will discuss these with Kevin and bring the information to our next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Christine Carney reported that someone who claimed to represent the “Human Rights Commission” solicited a friend of hers and was looking for a donation. Discussion followed about what is the Town’s policy regarding solicitors registering with the police. Bill Shea suggested that Christine’s friend should call the police and report this incident. Kevin McGann will contact the police and request that a joint announcement be published in the Advocate clarifying the solicitation policy in town.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Submitted by:

Sheri Baron