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AHRC Meeting Minutes 9/18/2013

Arlington Human Rights Commission Minutes

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

Senior Center – Conference Room

8:00 p.m.

Robin Varghese, Chair

Meeting Minutes

Present: Sheri Baron, Marlissa Brigggett, Kelly Bruneau (Admin), Christine Carney Ghanda DiFiglia, Mel Goldsipe, Sharon Grossman, Gary Horowitz, Jorje Loayza, Nick Minton, Nancy Rhoads (Vice Chair) and Robin Varghese (Chair)

Absent: Stacy Davison

Citizen's Open Forum: None.

Administrative Assistant: Kelly Bruneau will be the new administrative assistant for the commission starting 9/18/13.

Correspondence received:

- R. Varghese received a phone call from a mother looking for services for her children. Mother stated she obtained the AHRC phone number from the Arlington Police. Although this call was not appropriate for the AHRC, R. Varghese returned the call and provided some local resources.
- R. Varghese received phone call from a member of the Church of Ladder Day Saints interested in volunteering at the Arlington Food Pantry. The food pantry uses an old phone number for the AHRC and thus the AHRC occasionally receives calls regarding the food pantry. R. Varghese will provide potential volunteer with contact information for the Greater Boston Food Bank and for Laura Munsey for information regarding the possibility of shopping for the Arlington Food Pantry.
- R. Varghese received an e-mail from Michael Byrne at Arlington High School regarding the need for possible volunteers for the play Deadman Walking. This play is only available to middle and high schools with school and community involvement. November 14 through 16. S. Grossman e-mailed Michael Byrne back and asked for more information about the nature of the volunteer tasks.
- G. Horowitz wondered if the town manager could come to commission meetings. R. Varghese stated he would forward a list of questions put together by G. Horowitz to K. Bruneau.

Subcommittee Reports:

- **Town Day:** C. Carney stated that the booth application for Town Day was never submitted and now, there is no space left in the event. Solutions discussed included sharing a space with another organization such as the Diversity Task Force, using a space offered by the town in front of the Whittemore Robbins House, waiting to see if another organization drops out of the event and using that space or skipping Town Day this year. A motion was made by G. Horowitz to skip town day this year and attend the next town day with better planning. The motion was seconded by S. Baron and C. Carney. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried. K. Bruneau will follow up with Laura Munsey to find out if the \$50.00 fee for Town Day was taken out of last

year's budget.

- **School Liaison Program:**S. Grossman provided and discussed talking points for commission members to utilize when communicating with school principals, PTO members and school staff. All commission members assigned to a school were encouraged to meet with their school principal before the November meeting. The importance of a brochure to give schools was discussed. The R. Varghese will check on the brochure inventory and e-mail the tally and an electronic version to the commission to decide if more need to be ordered and if updates are necessary. M. Goldsipe will update the brochure as needed. Possibly, the November deadline for meeting with school principals will be pushed back due to brochure updates. Additionally, S. Grossman will create a list of schools and school principals and e-mail to commission members. R. Varghese will e-mail drop box file with commission materials to K. Bruneau. School assignments can be found in the June 2013 minutes. S. Baron suggested that the commission obtain business cards.
- **20th Anniversary/10 year anniversary of Marriage Equality/Bill Shea Every Day Hero Award:**C. Carney stated that the sub-committee did not meet but did secure a room for the event at the Whittemore Robbins House from 11am to 5pm on May 4, 2014. The event will either be from 1pm to 3pm or 2pm to 4pm. C. Carney will follow up on the cost for room rental. M. Goldsipe suggested that in support of marriage equality, the Equal Access bill for Gender Equality be included in the event. M. Goldsipe will e-mail information on the bill to the commission members.
- **Dialogues Schedule: Rescue in the Philippines & Miss Representation:** M. Briggett wondered if the Miss Representation film was purchased. K. Bruneau will follow up with Laura Munsey to find out if \$300-\$350 was taken out of last year's budget for the film. K. Bruneau will also find out if the film was ordered and if so, the location of the film. C. Carney stated that it is unclear when the first dialogue would take place due to lack of materials, room and scheduling. Possibly, the commission could charge for showing Rescue in the Philippines if a large turnout is anticipated.
- **Massachusetts Association of Human Rights Commissions (MAHRC):**C. Carney attended the MAHRC meeting on September 13, 2013. She stated a representative from the United States Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation were in attendance as well as many human rights commission members from neighboring towns. Cambridge Human Rights Commission received a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide LGBTQ training for landlords and others in the housing supply business. K. Bruneau will look into grants for the AHRC. Judy Shepard, the mother of Mathew Sheppard, a gay youth that was tortured and beaten in Wyoming is speaking somewhere in Massachusetts. C. Carney will provide the commission with a date and location for the speech once she has it. The MBTA has reported a variety of LGBTQ violent incidences with no apparent pattern. It is possible that the violence is unrelated to sexual or gender identity.

Finances review:

- **Budget for the Year (\$4500):** K. Bruneau will check on last year's and this year's budgets. C. Carney will check on the cost of the Whittemore Robbins House for the 20th Anniversary/10 year anniversary of Marriage Equality/Bill Shea Every Day Hero Award event.

Augustminutes:

- A motion was made by C. Carney to approve the August minutes. S. Baron seconded the motion. Seven approved the minutes and four abstained. Motion carried.

Incidents & Complaints:

- R. Varghese sent a letter to neighbors of 22 Marion Road concerning vehicle vandalism. Residents of 22 Marion Road approved the letter. R. Varghese will follow up with the family one more time and will e-mail a

copy of the letter sent to the commission.

- R. Varghese stated that the family that received the letter stating, “we’re watching you Jews,” has not responded to several outreach attempts so outreach attempts will cease.

Paratransit Program:

- The MBTA has a new wheelchair subsidy program coming out this month for use to and from destinations outside of the normal service area and for emergencies during nonoperational hours. R. Varghese will reach out to the Disability Commission again to try to coordinate the dissemination of information regarding this new resource. If MBTA comes to a commission meeting to do a presentation on the new resource, the Disability Commission will be invited and a larger room will be booked.

Bill Shea Memorial Library Dedication at Thompson School 9/29:

- Nine of ten books have arrived. C. Carney will have the books inscribed. S. Baron will provide C. Carney with verbiage for the inscription.

Book Donation in Honor of Nancy Sweeney:

- C. Carney stated that the library does not take individual book donations but does take money. A motion was made by C. Carney to budget for \$100.00 for a donation of books to Robbins Library in memory of Nancy Sweeney. Motion was seconded by G. Horowitz. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Website/Facebook/ Twitter:

- **Webpage:**Commission discussed the possibility of listing resource links on the webpage. R. Varghese stated that this would be too difficult to maintain due to links often changing and not having adequate staffing to maintain the links. R. Varghese suggested adding a link to the AHRC webpage with a resource list such as the attorney general webpage. The AHRC webpage can be found at www.arlingtonhumanrights.org.
- **Facebook:** National Day of Peace was added. Dialogues for Miss Representation and Rescue in the Philippines will be added once dates are confirmed.
- **Twitter:** M. Goldsipe will follow up on Twitter account creation. No other Town of Arlington commissions use Twitter at this time.

Outstanding Deliverables:

- **FAQ's:** C. Carney stated that she asked the Cambridge Human Rights Commission if she could use their FAQ's. Since Cambridge Human Rights Commission stated this would be okay, C. Carney will review the AHRC bylaws and procedure for how to file a complaint to create answers to the FAQ's and post on the website. S. Baron will check questions submitted at a past town day for possible addition to website FAQ's.
- **20th Anniversary highlights of Commissions Activities:** N. Minton stated he might have a draft for the November meeting. M. Goldsipe offered to assist N. Minton with the draft.
- **Phone/Contact/Mailing List:**R. Varghese stated that a very outdated list was found. K. Bruneau will work on updating the list once R. Varghese sends her the drop box file containing the list. C. Carney will e-mail K. Bruneau with information on how she created the list.

A motion was made to adjourn at 9:50 pm by G. Horowitz. The motion was seconded by M. Goldsipe. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Submitted by:
Kelly Bruneau
Administrative Assistant