

Arlington Human Rights Commission Minutes-Final
April 26, 2016

Present: Christine Carney (Chair), Mel Goldsipe, Sharon Grossman, Sheri Baron, Nick Minton, Gary Horowitz, Chris Huvos

Absent: Jorge Loayza, Marlissa Briggett, Yawa Degboe, Ghanda DiFiglia, Bill Logan

Guests: Duncan Vinson

Meeting Called to Order: 8:05 p.m.

Citizens' Open Forum:
None

Minutes:

Commissioner Horowitz moved to accept the February 17, 2016 minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Goldsipe. The motion passed with 2 commissioners abstaining.

Correspondence: Received an email from Arlington resident, Carla Gates, sharing with the Commission information about a documentary about Syrian refugees produced by a friend of hers. The Commission discussed exploring the possibility of hosting a public showing of the documentary, "Salam Neighbor", in the fall of 2016. Commissioner Carney will respond to Ms. Gates and begin planning for the event.

Incidents & Complaints: Received one police report informing the Commission of a Black Lives Matter banner stolen from Calvary Methodist Church. Commissioner Carney will reach out to the Calvary Methodist Church and offer assistance if needed.

Complaint: Commissioners Goldsipe and Huvos will meet with the complainant on Wednesday, April 27, 2016 to discuss their complaint. A letter has been drafted explaining to the complainant no action can be taken by the Commission as the complaint falls outside of the four month deadline to file.

Ottoson Middle School Incidents: Commissioner Carney reported on a meeting she attended at the OMS with OMS staff and representatives from the ADL (Anit-Defamation League) and Principal Tim Ruggere. The discussion at the meeting focused on the recent graffiti and the school's response to the incidents. Commissioner Baron reported on the meeting held by the Response Coordination Team. Commissioners Grossman and Horowitz both reported on discussion they have had with their faith communities regarding a response, and one idea discussed was to have all the faith communities serving Arlington residents coordinate a public response to the recent incidents. Commissioner Grossman has also been in communication with members of the School Committee and a joint collaboration between the AHRC and the ASC to work on ways to change the current culture in the schools with regards to bigotry and discrimination will be worked on during the summer, 2016. Vote: Commissioner Goldsipe moved that Commission Grossman draft a letter to the Arlington School Committee regarding the current climate related to the hate incidents in the school and ask them to examine how policy and curriculum changes might possibly impact the school culture. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Huvos and passed.

Vote: Commissioner Grossman moved that the AHRC request that the Arlington Public Schools and the Arlington School Committee co-sponsor the May 17, 2016 Facing History And Ourselves event. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baron and passed.

Also discussed were ways to make the AHRC more visible and to educate the public on forms of bigotry and discrimination. Ideas ranged from weekly columns in the local newspaper, collaborations with other human rights groups, education events, and utilizing social media.

Trans 101 Training: Commissioners Goldsipe, Carney, Huvos and Minton attended the Trans 101 Training organized by Commissioner Goldsipe for the AHRC and town and school personnel. The Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition conducted the training, and it was well attended. Attendance included representatives from many Town offices including the Board of Selectmen, the Arlington Police Dept., Council on Aging and Human Resources. In all there were approximately 25-30 people at this event. A future training for department heads unable to attend an evening meeting will be planned in coordination with the Town Manager.

Warrant Article 18-April 14 Event & Pct. Meetings: Commissioner Goldsipe reported that April 14, 2016 event the AHRC sponsored had a smaller turn out than expected because of a zoning bylaw change discussion was happening at the same time. However, the event was very moving and ACMi has made a video of a portion of the discussion. It is available online at <http://vod.acmi.tv/2016/04/expanding-equality/>

Facing History and Ourselves: Commissioners Grossman and Horowitz have been working with Dustin Tenreiro of Facing History And Ourselves coordinating the May 17, 2016 interactive community dialogue, Arlington-Building an Inclusive and Welcoming Community. This event will take place in the Community Room of the Robbins Library from 6:45 to 8.45pm, and is open to the public.

Sub-Committees: Schools: Commissioner Grossman reported that the joint AHRC and School Committee subcommittee will be preparing a summary of findings that will be presented to the School Committee upon approval of the joint subcommittee.

METCO Liaison & Meeting with Margaret Credle Thomas, METCO Director: Commissioner Carney reported that she will be meeting with Ms. Thomas on Thursday, May 5, 2016 to discuss way in which the AHRC can support the METCO program and students in Arlington.

Massachusetts Associations of Human Rights Commissions: The monthly meeting of the MAHRC will take place on Friday, May 13, 2016 at the Medford City Hall. Commissioners Carney and Horowitz plan on attending.

Meeting with Town of Reading's Human Relations Committee: Commissioners Carney and Baron have been invited to attend a meeting of the Human Relations Committee for the Town of Reading on Thursday, May 5, 2016. The HRC is in the process of forming a Human Rights Commission and have asked for information about the AHRC, how it was formed and how it operates.

Cultural Sensitivity & Civil Rights in Education: Commissioner Carney and DiFiglia will be attending the training on Thursday, May 26, 2016.

Re-Appointments to the AHRC: Commissioner Goldsipe has compiled a list of expiring terms and has requested that commissioners contact their appointing bodies and inquire about reappointment to the Commission.

Election of Vice-Chair: Commissioner Horowitz nominated Commission Goldsipe for Vice-Chair, Commissioner Baron seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Budget Update: The budget balance was not available at the time of the meeting. It was suggested that we ask the Comptroller if it would be possible to spend some of FY16 remaining funds on a security camera that could be shared by faith communities that have been targeted with vandalism this past year. Commissioner Carney will follow up with the Comptroller.

Diversity Task Group Upcoming Events: Commissioner Goldsipe moved that the AHRC co-sponsor the following DTG events:

May 10, 2016-Stories of Stigma

My 18, 2016- Meet Fannie Barrier Williams

May 25, 2016- Being an Active Bystander

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grossman and the motion passed.

Adjournment: Commissioner Baron moved to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Minton seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:55PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Carney