

**Arlington Human Rights Commission
Minutes – Draft, November 15, 2017
Jefferson Cutter House 8:00 pm**

Present: Co-Chair Mel Goldsipe, Commissioners Kristina Fontanez, Sharon Grossman, Gary Horowitz, Christopher Huvos, William Logan, and Nick Minton

Absent: Co-Chair Christine Carney, Commissioners Sheri Baron, Naomi Greenfield, D’ondria Maxwell, and David Swanson

Guests: Betsy Carlton-Gysan, Daniel Levenson

Citizen Open Forum: An invited guest, Daniel E. Levenson, Associate Regional Director, Anti-Defamation League (ADL), made an informal presentation about the recent work of the ADL during the political campaigns and elections of 2016 and during the current year. He noted that the ADL would like to arrange one or more programs in Arlington focusing especially on “hate” issues. A folder of ADL materials was made available to commissioners. In the follow-up discussion commissioners expressed interest in working with ADL in some meaningful way. Several ideas relating to the focus for one or more events were put forward, including LGBTQ issues, anti-Semitism, racial discrimination, criminal justice reform, immigration issues, and transgender issues. Discussion included the possibility of partnering with other towns in the area to share and host events. One commissioner suggested that the anti-Semitism issue might be the focus of the first event. In keeping with this suggestion another commissioner noted that perhaps there could be three events: the first dealing with the history and meaning of “hate” symbols, the second dealing with the history of anti-Semitism, and the third being some sort of “action” related event, possibly utilizing True Story Theater.

A motion was made by Commissioner Huvos and seconded by Commissioner Horowitz to create a subcommittee to explore ways the AHRC might work with the ADL and to propose topics for and dates of three events. Commissioners Gary Horowitz and Sharon Grossman as well as Arlington resident Betsy Carlton-Gysan agreed to be members of the proposed subcommittee. The Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Daniel Levenson agreed to attend the January 17, 2018 meeting of the AHRC as a follow-up to this discussion.

Correspondence received: Co-Chair Goldsipe noted an email was sent by Chief Ryan of the Arlington Police Department relating to an eviction issue. Evidently it is not a discrimination issue but Commissioner Carney will seek to contact the party involved.

Incidents and Complaints:

- It was reported that in Arlington Center an individual was threatened by a person described as a “neo-Nazi.” Arlington Police were notified.
- It was reported that an Asian woman walking on an Arlington street was harassed by a man who used threatening language. The victim does not wish to pursue the matter beyond her report of its happening and does not want AHRC to contact her.
- It was reported that a person of color who wished to post a sign for the Arlington International Film Festival in an Arlington business, which already advertised other things and therefore clearly allowed postings, was refused permission to post the sign and told to leave the store.
- It was reported that a person of color who was seeking service at an Arlington gas station was seemingly ignored while others were given attention by the personnel on duty. Commissioner Huvos will seek to speak with the individual and will report any additional information to the Commission.

- Commissioner Logan reported that an individual who is a resident of a group home in Arlington has been involved in some of the “hate” incidents reported on the bike path and in other locations. Commissioner Logan plans to contact the staff at the group home to seek information about the offending resident.

It was proposed that the Commission review its process of following-up on incidents that do not become formal complaints. A motion was made by Commissioner Fontanez and seconded by Commissioner Grossman that a subcommittee be created to study the process. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioners Logan, Goldsipe, and Fontanez will be the members of this subcommittee.

Review and Approve Minutes: Minutes of October 17, 2017 and of October 18, 2017 were reviewed and approved.

Double-Take Storytelling Event: There was discussion about the upcoming event and what needed to be done in preparation. It was agreed that the “Arlington for All” banners would be placed in Arlington Town Hall for the event.

School Initiatives:

- **Draft Guidelines for Responding to Hate Incidents:** The draft document was circulated and reviewed. Suggestions were made for some changes in the wording of the document.
- **Superintendent’s Diversity Advisory Committee:** Commissioner Huvos reported on the meeting of October 30, 2017. He noted that the new Assistant Superintendent, who is African-American, was able to present at the meeting only briefly. It was proposed that the AHRC invite the Assistant Superintendent to an upcoming Commission meeting.
- **Arlington School Committee Community Relations Subcommittee:** There was a brief discussion about this subcommittee and a desire was expressed that there be further clarification about the relationship of this subcommittee to the AHRC.
- **ADL Partnership:** (see the examination of this subject in “Citizen Open Forum” section)
- **Lesley Ellis School:** (tabled for the December 2017 meeting)

Rainbow Commission Update: Commissioner Goldsipe noted that no applications to serve on this Commission have been received by the Town Manager.

AHRC Vacancy Update: It was reported that four applications for appointment have been made to the Town Manager.

Finance Committee Planning: There was discussion about staff support for the Arlington Human Rights Commission, how the staff support and the cost for such might be shared by other Town Commissions and how the budget for the AHRC might be enlarged and possibly separated from the cost of staff support.

Cultural Competency Training: There was discussion of the costs involved for training of the members of the AHRC. Further discussion of this matter and choosing dates for training would be moved to the December 2017 meeting of the Commission.

Subcommittee Reports: There were no additional reports beyond those already noted.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm

Respectfully submitted
 Nick Minton, Commissioner
 Arlington Human Rights Commission