

Arlington Human Rights Commission Minutes 12/20/17
Jefferson Cutter House, 8-10 pm

Present: Co-Chairs Mel Goldsipe, Christine Carney, Commissioners Kristina Fontanez, Sharon Grossman, Gary Horowitz, Christopher Huvos, Nick Minton, Naomi Greenfield, D'ondria Maxwell

Absent: Commissioners William Logan, Sheri Baron, David Swanson

Guests: Betsy Carlton-Gysan, Jerri Newman

Meeting called to Order at 8:05 p.m.

1. Citizen Open Forum - no discussion
2. Review and approve minutes: A motion to accept the 11/15/17 minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Horowitz and seconded by Commissioner Fontanez; all in favor except for Commissioner Carney who abstained. Additional minutes to be approved were tabled for the next meeting with all in agreement.
3. Correspondence received:
A series of emails were received that included ones about diversity at the Robbins Library, the AHRC's partnership with the Arlington Center for the Arts' program/focus on immigration, thank-you from an applicant to be a Commissioner who was interviewed, Jennifer Susse (School Committee member) requested that there be a liaison with the School Committee, a request for a definition of anti-Semitic language in state politics, and one forwarded by Commissioner Greenfield from the principal of Needham High School about a hate incident that occurred there.

Incidents & Complaints: no new incidents were reported. Commissioner Carney will follow up with the individual who was evicted and contacted the Church of Our Saviour. Commissioner Huvos spoke to the person who previously reported an incident at a gas station but did not want to pursue the situation and will follow up again.

Draft Guidelines for responding to hate incidents

- Need for guidelines that are consistent across the school district and based on best practice
- Would a checklist for peer-to-peer verbal incidents be helpful?
- Need for adjustments to layout

A motion was made by Commissioner Huvos to accept the amended version of the Draft Guidelines for Responding to Hate Incidents to be presented to the School Committee and Department; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Fontanez, and all were in favor.

A suggestion was made that a cover letter should accompany the guidelines that includes the statement that the Arlington Police Department reviewed and approved the draft plan.

6. School Initiatives:

- a. Colonial Day/Indigenous education programs and initiatives: A discussion included the following points:
 - i. Commissioner Greenfield spoke with staff at the Indigenous education program at Harvard School of Education who would be interested in presenting a program for parents/guardians.
 - ii. The “Wax Museum” program and its background was described.
 - iii. Commissioner Greenfield will follow up with the Director of Social Studies to better understand what the context and goals for these programs are. If others are interested in joining this discussion they should let Commissioner Greenfield know.
 - iv. Commissioner Minton described the Commission’s attempts and work over the years to work with the schools related to diversity issues. It was pointed out that trust and confidence needs to be developed.
 - v. Commissioner Huvos noted that we should practice how to redirect people that come to the Commission to the appropriate places to have concerns and questions addressed, e.g., letting the schools know when we have heard from a parent/guardian/citizen and asking them to speak directly to the principal
- b. Superintendent’s Diversity Advisory Committee: there was not a meeting since the last AHRC meeting.
- c. Anti-Defamation League partnership: Commissioner Grossman and Betsy Carlton-Gysan will be speaking with Daniel Levenson tomorrow night to begin to firm up plans for the first event, which will be focused on Hate Symbols, as discussed at a previous meeting. A subcommittee meeting will be scheduled prior to the next AHRC meeting. It was suggested that a previously brainstormed list of ideas for future events be available at the event for community input.
- d. Lesley Ellis School: Commissioner Greenfield will reach out to them to better understand what they would like help with.
- e. Arlington School Committee Community Relations Subcommittee meeting: Commissioner Grossman reported on the meeting, which focused on how the schools and AHRC liaisons can better work together. The superintendent planned to discuss this with her leadership team and the AHRC “talking points” was shared. The draft of the hate incident guidelines was mentioned.

7. Rainbow Commission Update:

There were more applicants than spots; it is hoped that new commissioners will be appointed in February. It was discussed that since June is Pride Month and that this is the first year of the Rainbow Commission, it would be an appropriate time to plan an event that could be a collaboration between the two commissions. A suggestion was made to have the

crosswalk in front of Town Hall be painted in a rainbow and to have an unveiling event. Commissioner Goldsipe made a motion to reallocate up to \$800 for a collaborative event with the Rainbow Commission to be held in June 2018. Commissioner Horowitz seconded the motion and all were in favor.

8. Update on Commission opening: Betsy Carlton-Gysan has been put forward.

9. Cultural Competency Training: This will be paid for by the Health and Human Services Department and will include their staff. Commissioner Fontanez is following up on dates.

10. AHRC and all logos: Commissioner Maxwell and Jerri Newman will reach out to a local graphic designer to complete these.

11. Town Meeting: There are no Warrant Articles planned.

12. Budget for next FY: Commissioner Goldsipe reported about a meeting with Town Manager Chapdelaine in which they discussed a three-year process to increase the AHRC's funding:

Year 1 - increase funds to pay for current level of administrative support

Year 2 - increase funds to pay for additional hours of administrative support

Year 3 - increase funds to pay for a new position for ADA administrator who would also coordinate all of the like-minded Commissions (e.g., Rainbow LGBTQIA+, Human Rights, Disability).

13 & 14: A motion was made by Commissioner Minton and seconded by Commissioner Maxwell to table Items 13, 14; unanimously approved.

15. Community events and info: 25th Anniversary of Commission was discussed and agreed that an event in the fall would be appropriate; annual Martin Luther King, Jr. event.

Commissioners should let the co-chairs know if there are any agenda items for the January meeting.

Commissioner Minton made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Commissioner Fontanez; unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Grossman