

Arlington Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 20, 2013
Senior Center –8:00 p.m.
Robin Varghese, Chair

1. Present: Robin Varghese (Chair), Sheri Baron, Gary Horowitz, Christine Carney, Stacy Davison, Sharon Grossman, Mel Goldsipe, Ghanda DiFiglia.
2. Absent: Marlissa Briggett, Nancy Rhoads (Vice Chair), Nick Minton, Nancy Sweeney, Jorje Loayza
3. May 4th 2014 – Event planning - Sheri Baron and Christine Carney will chair the organizing committee. The event will combine the Bill Shea Everyday Hero Award, the 10th anniversary of legalization of Gay Marriage in Massachusetts, and 20th Anniversary of the AHRC.
4. Possible February 2014 Dialogue: “Rescue in the Philippines,” a documentary telling the dramatic story of how cigar-smoking/poker-playing brothers devised a plan to save 1,300 Jews during the Holocaust (I knew it involved poker somehow) by helping them immigrate to the Philippines.
 - Stacy will work with Christine to determine if the Regent is an appropriate venue for the Film – Also will help determine if \$200 stipend would be sufficient to have the author come to discuss the film after it’s showing.
 - Suggestions to have the film shown at the Arlington Film Festival, in February perhaps, advertised at synagogues and other places where relevant populations might be reached.
5. Citizen’s Open Forum (15 minutes) – Only commissioners at meeting.
6. Welcome – Mel Goldsipe and Ghanda DiFiglia – new commissioners and reintroduced Sharon Grossman to those who were absent from our May meeting.
7. Correspondence received: None
8. Finances review - No update available – Waiting on updated budget from Christine Connelly as our admin has been let go. Response to having a commissioner take on the duties originally carried out by our admin- Commissioners could not be paid for admin services.
 - a. Would our former admin be willing to return?
 - b. Plan B is to hire someone to check the phone messages, e-mail monitoring, maintain the budget, handle check requests, handle mailing, dialogue details, and author the annual report etc... Nancy said she is able to find the most recent job description and pass this along to the Chair.
 - c. 10.57/hr for admin would use 2200 – the commission would like to budget \$12/ hour for an admin – like a few hours each week but more when projects arise.
 - d. “Books for Bill” to be selected by the Thompson school principal from the list of Human Rights related publications. Books will be inscribed and donated to the Thompson Library – \$200 budget for this – Christine Carney will work with Christine Connelly to arrange for the books to be purchased before July 1st. Christine Carney has also volunteered her relative to do the inscription on the books.

9. May Minutes to review

- a. Marlissa mentioned to keep track of items in the agenda and minutes that should be included in the annual report – MBTA for annual report.
- b. Handicap accessible – RIDE –
- Nick – add that he will work on the 20 year anniversary summary of accomplishments. Would like to use this for an article in the *Advocate* – also for our FB page as well as part of our Town Day display.
Ottoson added to the list.
Add Metco - Mel
The chair will contact Kathy Bodie to confirm that the Commission would like to formalize our program with the schools to make permanent an active connection with the school principals.

REVISED School Liaison list –

Brackett School- Robin Varghese
Bishop School -Christine Carney
Dallin School- Gary Horowitz
Hardy School-Sheri Baron
Peirce School -
Stratton School - Marlissa Briggett?
Thompson School – Ghanda DiFiglia
Ottoson Middle School – Stacy Davidson
High School – Sharon Grossman;
METCO – Mel Goldsipe

10. Incidents & Complaints: Two phone calls received regarding the same incident. First from a neighbor reporting an incident on resident's behalf and wanting to discuss this incident and how the AHRC functions for an ACMI news report. Second phone call from the resident after I recommended that the resident file a complaint directly. Complaint form to be sent out once resident responds to phone message left my Chair.

The chair and commissioner Carney will meet with the inquirer to discuss what the commission could do further.

Chair will forward the complaint to all the commissioners for review.

The chair will set-up a time when commissioner Carney and he are able to meet with the resident to discuss the vandalism and other issues she had made the police and the commission aware of recently to see how the commission may be able to help further.

11. Annual Report – discussion – update we have previous discussed a number of events for this year and next year and feel that we will address the goals list in the annual report.

12. Update on “Books for Bill”. Confirm budget status for 2012/2013 and remaining funds to be able to make a contribution towards books. Christine has provided the list to the principal to select books. Books - \$200 contribution toward Human Rights related titles that the principal will select from to ensure that we can make a contribution this year.

13. Nancy working on locating the phone list that the commission has historically maintained.
14. Chair has requested that those documents belonging to the commission be returned to the commission after having been turned over to our former Admin under the supervision of Christine Connelly.
15. Chair will also reestablish contact with the Mass association of Human Rights Commission through Diane McLeod to determine when, where and how often meetings are held and share this information with the commission.

Contact Chief Ryan to invite him or a representative to present the traffic statistics if available and also encourage discussion about the recent case of vandalism possible. Confirm that any complaint that may have a chance of discrimination being involved is passed along to the commission to help/be informed.

16. Welcome packs for new commissioners were supposed to be ready for today but were not. Check with Christine Connelly about the status of the welcome packets.
17. Christine agreed to administer the commission's FACEBOOK page, she will work with Joan Roman (Town's Public Information Officer) to get this set-up. Mel suggested that perhaps a Twitter account would be useful to help further improve our distribution of information by reaching more people in our community. She pointed out that local news organizations may elect to follow and retweet our Twitter account tweets which could be set-up to repost FB posts. Mel indicated that she would be willing to look into available and appropriate handles for the Twitter account. Chair would check with Joan Roman on how to set-up such an account. – Vote: Unanimously approved to support moving forward with a Twitter account if the town will allow it.
18. Website update - FAQ's are still limited to just the one. Ms. Grossman's information has been added as well as updating of terms for various commissioners. Mel and Ghanda have been added to the website. Will also add information to the website on our procedures related addressing a human rights complaint. Also, the form that is required will be posted for visitors to download and fill out – hopefully making the commission more accessible and improving transparency.
19. We are having an issue with accessing the AHRC e-mails – Chair will work on resolving these issues along with Adam Glick our website administrator. The chair will send out instructions on e-mail access to Mel, Ghanda and Sharon.

Adjourned at 10 :08

Next meeting – Wednesday July 17th at 8 pm – NOTE: Conference room located in the senior center (27 Maple St).