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Draft- Belmont Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 2, 2017
Belmont Town Hall, Conference Room #1

Present:

HRC members: Tony Moroso: Chair; Susanne Boylan; Kathleen Kayta Gajdos; Sandi Gubin, Seneca Hart, Paul Solomon, Fran Yuan; Charlene O'Connor (BAR); and Captain. J. Peter Hoerr (BPD).

Also present: Barbara Watson, former HRC Chair

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.
2. New member, Susanne "Sue" Boylan was welcomed to the Commission. It was noted that Nan Donald will resign from the HRC and Mirella Duda may do the same.
3. The minutes of the Tuesday, October 3, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously, as amended.
4. Report on phone-line and e-mail correspondence: Seneca noted one incident of an exchange of profanities in public. Captain Hoerr asked if the email could be forwarded to him.
5. Assignment of responsibility for minute taker and checking e-mail and phone line contacts:

November: Paul
December: Kayta
January: Sandi
February: Sue

6. Fran reported on the GSA Potluck held at her home on Sunday, Oct. 29. She noted fewer attendees than in the past, but that allowed for more conversation.

Fran stated that the title: Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) has been changed to LBGTQ Alliance, and will still be part of BAR.

7. Fran spoke about potentially sponsoring a talk by Gish Jen and her book: "The Girl at the Baggage Claim." Fran will contact the Belmont Public Library and follow up.

8. 2018 MLK Breakfast updates:

- Tony submitted the application for the use of the High School
- Barbara had compiled an "instruction book" for all aspects of the MLK event, and Fran will organize it and make available to each volunteer the information specific to the assigned task.
- Publicity: Since Nan will resign from the HRC, this area will be covered by others. Included will be articles to the Belmont Citizen-Herald, the Belmontonian and the Boston Globe.
- Other groups to be contacted include BAR, The Religious Council and the Belmont Media Center.
- The Belmont School Administration will be contacted so that information on the event can be distributed to all schools via list serve. Kayta will contact the media, and Tony will create flyers for distribution to churches and other sites a month before the event.
- Food: Fran will be in charge.
- Programming:

- Barbara stated that the Breakfast has two goals: to bring the Belmont and METCO communities together and to raise funds to support METCO.
- Timing: The Breakfast is scheduled for 9-11:00AM. The speaker will have up to 30 minutes plus questions. Attendees will be encouraged to arrive by 8:45AM.
- Music: it was suggested that to avoid having too much entertainment, as in the past, that it be limited to 2-3 performances, with a preference for student performers.
- Other issues:
 - Should a new High School club, "Black in Belmont", be included in the program?
 - Tony will contact Melissa Hart to arrange for child care in the gym, and Alice Melnikoff for student volunteers.
 - The cost for sign language volunteers will be billed to BAR, to be reimbursed by the Disability Access Commission.
 - Sandi will look into projecting the program on a screen for the hearing-impaired.
 - Barbara will arrange for tables, chairs and coffee carafes, and will cc Fran.

9. It was noted that the film "13th" will be shown at the Watertown Free Public Library on Sunday, Nov. 19, 1:30-3:30 PM.

10. Liaison Reports:

- Belmont High School: Jia could not attend this meeting.
- Belmont Police Department: Capt. Hoerr reported on two incidents:
 - Hecklers harassed an Asian couple who were walking on the High School track.
 - A swastika was found attached to a light pole, with graffiti on it. It was not clear how long it was there, and Capt. Hoerr felt it was probably not a hate crime.
 - Capt. Hoerr spoke about Senator Brownsberger's bill in the legislature to bypass the local resident preference by allowing to be considered those who have resided in the town for one year prior to the Police Officers Civil Service exam date.
- BAR: Charlene O'Connor reported:
 - A METCO fund check was given to the School Department at their Boston School Committee meeting in October.
 - Funded "Story Starters", a 10 week program for family and pre K-4th grade to provide tools for families to talk about race.
 - Funding a Winnbrook Thanksgiving luncheon for English Language Learners (ELL).

11.) Next meeting, Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 7:00PM.

12.) The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Solomon