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Belmont Human Rights Commission
Belmont Town Hall, Conference Room 1
Thursday, October 4, 2012
7pm

Meeting Minutes

Members in attendance: Carl Brauer, Nan Donald, Barbara Watson, Fran Yuan, Paul Solomon, Jirair Hovsepian, Julie Cicalise, Rachel Rennard, Daniel Vernick (High School Liaison)

Belmont Police Liaison: Captain Peter Hoerr

Belmont Against Racism: Kathryn Bonifiglio

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:10 pm.

September Minutes. The minutes as amended were accepted.

Phone Line Report and Assignments.

- ^ September: Barbara. Barbara returned a call and left a message for the caller. The caller does not currently live in Belmont and described a number of problems including pressure to change the dosage of medications. Barbara left a message which provided contact information, including the address, phone number and intake hours, for Mental Health Legal Advisors and she asked the caller to call the HRC phone line again if she could provide additional information.
- ^ October: Carl
- ^ November: Fran
- ^ General Discussion on Responding to Phone Line Calls. There was a general discussion on the purpose of the phone line and on responding to calls in a helpful way. Barbara agreed to start compiling a list of resources or contacts for use in responding to the phone line. Cpt. Hoerr suggested that the department's community service officer be included in the resource list. In addition, it was suggested that a log of calls and the resource list be maintained.

Beech Street Center Intergenerational Video Project: Jerry has consolidated clips from the various videos and has added captions. The consolidated video will be shown at the Beech Street Center on Tuesday, November 13, 2012 from 5-6:30 p.m. Fran will speak to Center staff about the format for the evening, whether there will be a discussion of the video. Jerry will make a draft of the video available to the members through a You Tube link. Barbara will contact the high school to offer the video to be used as part of the school's diversity awareness program.

Photographs featuring diversity on Town Website: Fran and Daniel have been working on the website presentation, which will be a photo collage of people's faces.

One Book, One Belmont: As a member of the One Book Committee, Carl will coordinate the One Book event on October 17, 2012, Time and the Ancient Maya. Rachel and one other will help out with this talk at the library. Belmontian Author Tom Perrotta will speak on October 23, 2012 at the Beech Street Center.

Request by Documentary Filmmaker: Fran thanked the members who attended the viewing of the rough cut of the documentary of a local woman who has lost her sight and hearing and has been a victim of domestic abuse. Fran also mentioned that the subject of the documentary needs volunteers to walk with her.

Additional Upcoming Events:

Gish Jen: A collaborative effort between the Human Rights Commission and the Friends of the Library. Author Gish Jen will speak on her latest work Town and Country on Thursday, November 8, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

BAR Gay Straight Alliance Potluck: October 28 from 6-8. All members are welcome.

School Department Presentation on Bullying has been scheduled for Wednesday, December 5, 2012.

Former Human Rights Commission Member Charles Laverty will speak to the Commission at the December 6, 2012 monthly meeting about the Housing Trust and Housing Authority.

Liaison Reports:

Belmont Police: Captain Hoerr talked about two issues impacting evidence. First, it is anticipated that the Department of Public Health's lab problems will impact some Belmont cases. He emphasized that the criminal justice system depends on the concerned parties letting the prosecutors know right away when there is a problem. In addition, he informed the commission about a new law that impacts the length of storage of evidence. Police departments will be required to keep any DNA evidence for the duration of a defendant's sentence, which will require additional storage options to what are currently available.

Belmont Against Racism: For the benefit of the new members, Kathryn explained some of the activities of Bar. In addition, Kathryn expressed BAR's Board's concern about an incident at the Senior Center that suggested a lack of sensitivity and requested further information about the Commission's response and concern about the effectiveness diversity training funded by BAR at the Center. Fran volunteered to follow-up.

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Next Commission Meeting: November 1, 2012 at 7pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Barbara Watson