

Belmont Human Rights Commission Belmont Town Hall
February 7, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Lisa Bernt, Janet Cudmore-Boswell, Judie Feins, Trish Lohmar, Moez Rawji, Connie Williams, Fran Yuan

Members Absent: Nan Donald, Laurie Graham, Rosalind Kabrhel, Camille Sarrouf

Liaisons Present: Selectman Paul Solomon, Peter Hoerr (Belmont Police Department), Hildy Dvorak (Council on Aging)

Before the meeting began, commission members held an informal discussion of the FAIR HOUSING RESOURCE BOOK, compiled by Lisa Bernt. Lisa circulated a Table of Contents to members by email.

The meeting began at 7:15 pm. Fran Yuan presided in Laurie's absence.

1. Minutes of January 3, 2008: Minutes were approved with minor revisions
2. Phone Line: Fran reported that a constant caller to the line reported that she had moved to Watertown. Janet is monitoring the line in February, and Judie is monitoring in March
3. Music Event scheduled for 3/29/08. The event will be at the Chenery Middle School. Performers are Christiane Karam and the ZILZALA Middle Eastern Ensemble and the AREV Armenian Folk Ensemble. Fran reported on the budget, publicity and food. The budget includes \$1000 to pay performers and \$500 for food. A generous donor has given the \$1500. In addition, donations of Middle Eastern food are being sought. The program will describe the groups, the donor, and the HRC. Fran asked members to indicate their availability to prepare for the event and do what needs to be done on the evening of the event.
4. Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Report: Judie reported that there is a very short time remaining to update the report. When the last report was filed in November 2002, a consultant was hired to assist. This time, Jeffrey Wheeler, Town Planner, is taking the lead in preparing the report. Members made suggestions about getting help from local college students from colleges with planning departments. However, because it is late in the academic year, students may already be committed.
5. Fair Housing Act: April is the 40th Anniversary for the Fair Housing Act. What can HRC do to commemorate this significant legislation? A discussion followed about the history of Fair Practices in Belmont. There are still several Belmont citizens who were members of the Fair Practices Committee. Judie mentioned the possibility of having Belmont High School students do an oral history project based on interviews with these citizens. This could be an important piece of Belmont history to document and preserve.
6. Housing Resource Book: Selectman Solomon and commission members thanked Lisa for the excellent work she did to compile the resource book. The book will be placed in the library. Lisa will check with the persons in the library about where to place the Housing Resource Book so that it can be available to the public
7. Events: The Devil Came on Horseback, a film about Darfur, will be shown at the Studio on March 2. Greg Mortenson will speak at Belmont High School on Feb 26. He is the author of Three Cups of Tea, the book chosen for One Book One Belmont.
8. The meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Minutes submitted by Connie Williams