

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

July 7, 2005

Present: Garret Barry (Chair), Steve Shestakofsky (Vice Chair), Cheryl Morrissey, Bill Rudman, Fran Yuan, Judith Feins, Donna Ruvolo, Regie Gibson, Moez Rawji

Liaisons: Lt Hoerr, (BPD) Mike Collins, (BAR)

Minutes of June 2, 2005 will be accepted as revised.

Introduction of new members and old members who discussed their various backgrounds.

Bill Rudman read the Guidelines for the Human Rights Commission (HRC) per the chairs request.

Revised minutes need to be sent to Sandra Curro, Paul Solomon, and members.

Discussion surrounding the election of a new chair.

Chair will stay in position through September meeting if numbers of meeting are reasonable.

New members have declined to vote.

There are 11 members total.

Steve will remain vice-chair.

* Fran: Hotline: One call from a man known to police who has living arrangement problems. No specific complaint. Art and Fran met with him to hear his concerns. No written complaint needed.

Art Heron has telephone access to HRC telephone line. Number needs to be changed.

Sally Bleiberg, chair of the Belmont housing Authority explained that the BHA oversees state subsidized, low income housing in Belmont. There are 274 units of state subsidized housing. Sally presented HRC members with copies of a draft of the BHA's Civil Protection Plan for discussion. BHA has used the Boston Housing Authority civil rights protection plans as a model. BHA would like HRC to work in conjunction with them. A rough draft was handed out and feedback is requested.

Steve wants to know the roll that BHA wants HRC to play. BHA tenants to know the HRC exists if they have a problem and what procedures to follow.

Police need to be involved if needed.

BHA contacts the police.

Lt. Hoerr is considering contacting HRC for ideas in working with some issues regarding training. Flow of information to be helpful to each other.

Cheryl – MCAD has statute of limitations that should be understood.

MCAD has a mechanism to resolve a civil issue.

Lt. Hoerr – the complainant needs to know the guidelines.

Steve – all forms should include the statute of limitations.

A liaison is not available from the BHA, but someone would be sent as issues arise.

The Chair stated that HRC meetings would run roughly two hours, from 7pm to 9pm.

The Chair stated that the Annual Report to the selectmen went well.

Judie – The selectmen asked on a scale of one to ten what kind of problems Belmont has. It was stated that Belmont has no terrible problems.

Chair discussed No Place for Hate, and working towards official certification. Board of Selectmen (BOS) need to sign off.

Donna – Is No Place For Hate to strong a statement?

Three activities have to be accomplished in one year's time. Then HRC would receive a sign.

Does HRC want a sign?

Judie – HRC doesn't have to post the sign if we move ahead towards certification.

Chair – Chair would bring certification to BOS to sign.

Donna – What activities can we co-sponsor.

* Moez – Learning through enjoying instead of preaching may be a better approach.

Lori Graham of the Disabilities Access Commission and Special Education Council would like to co-sponsor a group activity.

Mike Collins from Belmont Against Racism (BAR) stated that the form for the BHA would be useful for HRC on a website for people with questions or concerns.

Garret – Brief discussion of training workshops.

Fran – Paul Solomon says that there is funding for training.

Garret – This wouldn't be done until September or October.

Donna – Is the training team building or sensitivity training?

Judie – It is learning to deal with team building.

Fran – A discussion of what we need should take place.

Bill – HRC needs to be careful about who is hired.

The following is a list of dates for future meetings agreed to by all present:

August 4, 2005

September 8, 2005

October 6, 2005

November 3, 2005

December 1, 2005

Vote to adjourn

Respectfully submitted by
Cheryl A. Morrissey, Scribe