

BELMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Belmont Town Hall

September 7, 2006

Present: Janet Cudmore-Boswell, Judie Feins, Laurie Graham, Rosalind Kabrhel, Cheryl Morrissey, Donna Ruvolo, Fran Yuan (Chair).

Absent: Cynthia Bannon, Bill Rudman, Moez Rawji, Connie Williams.

Guests and Liaisons Present: Lt. Peter Hoerr (Belmont Police Dept.), Hildy Dvorak (Council on Aging), Paul Solomon (Selectman), Dan Richards (Belmont High School).

1. The Chair called the meeting to order. Cheryl Morrissey volunteered to take the minutes.
2. New and returning members introduced themselves to the committee; liaisons made introductions as well.
3. Vote took place to accept the previous minutes. Minutes were approved.
4. Phone answering rotation for monitoring HRC phone line:
Donna Ruvolo will cover September 2006.
Laurie Graham will cover October 2006.
Question was raised whether a formal log should be kept on in coming telephone calls. To date there have not been any calls that required logging in, but the issue was left open.
Discussed how to let the community know that a telephone number exists for the HRC.
5. Other options were discussed for the community to contact the HRC. One option was by e-mail, another was through the town web-site. Both these options will require input from the Town Hall.
6. It was brought to the attention of the HRC that the local cable station wants more community involvement. This may be an opportunity for the HRC to make information more available.
7. No Place For Hate: It was suggested to put a poster in the Belmont Library. The library would like to know how large the poster is.
8. The Chair would like to vote in a Vice Chair. All members are urged to consider this position, and a formal vote will take place at the next meeting. Anyone who is interested in this position, please contact the Chair.
9. New liaisons: The HRC wants to enlist more liaisons, and have them become more involved. Calls will be made from an existing chart, which will include the

recruitment of an administrative level Middle School liaison, the Business Community, Chamber of Commerce/Groups, Rotary Clubs, and PTO Chairs. A Metco liaison will be recruited when the position has been solidified with the Town. Fifty applicants have applied for the position.

10. Programming: HRC to sponsor or co-sponsor two or three events. Upcoming events to consider are: Bullying Program at the schools, and a Housing Program to involve landlords and realtors.

11. A question was asked with regard to the pressing issues the HRC may have. One issue raise was middle school age children with regard to bullying and pranks.

12. Diversity Survey Tabulation: Tabulation seems to be an issue because of the minute number of questions that were answered, or answered correctly. Most people wrote in what issues they would like the town to address- ie: concerns that the banks are taking over the center, more places that are dog friendly etc.

13. March is Belmont Unplugged: A couple of books that are being considered are The Revealers, and The Black Swan Green.

14. Work shops @ No Place for Hate are on file in the Belmont Library.

October 17, 2006, HRC Commissions will meet to network and share information at the Main Library in Newton Center in the evening.

16. A question was asked with regard to the demographics of placeCityBelmont. The information is available through the federal census.

17. It was suggested by a member to have a gay awareness open panel to discuss the experiences of gay people in the town. It was brought up by another member that the open panel should include the religious views, and all human rights issues, instead of singling out one specific group. This topic remained open.

Monday, September 11, 2006, there will be a Peace March in honor of Herman Taylor III, who died at the hand of violence, to continue his legacy and remember what he was all about.

19. Lt Hoerr (Belmont Police) discussed police incidents: One incident of graffiti, thought to be a hate crime, turned out to be a misunderstanding of how to read the painters scrawl; the second was hate/bias graffiti in the tunnel at the Belmont Center Train Station; the last was hate/bias name calling to a person walking in Belmont.

Lt Hoerr pointed out again that a great community service project for students would be to update the murals in the train tunnel.

20. Dan Richards (Belmont High) discussed diversity week, which takes place the end of February – beginning of March. This brought about the question as to how other

community groups could get involved with diversity week. He also spoke of a proposed project to hang flags in the Cafeteria to represent all 31 countries that are represented by the first generation student population at Belmont High.

21. Hildy Dvorak (Council on Aging) discussed how the most pressing issue that the Council has at this time surrounds the Senior Center.

HRC was advised that a Youth Services Coordinator was hired.

23. Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Submitted by: Cheryl Morrissey