

Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2021 – Remote Meeting – 6:30-7:30 pm

REMOTE PARTICIPATION MEETING

Conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen.L.c.30A &20, et seq., and 940 CMR29.01, et seq.

In response to Governor Baker's declaration of a public health emergency and the related Emergency Executive Order dated March 12, 2020, the Human Rights Commission shall be meeting remotely until further notice. The audioconferencing application Go to Meeting will be used for this purpose. An online link and telephone access number will be provided on all meeting agendas and also on the Human Rights Commission website. This application will permit the public to access and participate in future Human Rights Commission meetings. Instructions for joining meetings in this manner will be provided on the Human Rights Commission website. . We extend our thanks for your understanding in this manner, which is intended to keep members of the Commission safe.

Chairman Kevin Merritt called meeting to order, stating the declarations above and asking all members to identify themselves and their home address.

Online for the meeting were:

Kevin Merritt
Pat Kilty
Donna Gaffey
Erin Bradley, MD
Jane Francis
Lindsay Beal
Sheila Ryder
Select Chair Raymie Parker
Dennis Sheehan, Town Administrator,

Motion to start the meeting was made by, Rob Bardell. Second by Jane Francis.
After roll call vote meeting began at 6:40 pm

First order of business was approval of meeting minutes for February 4th, ,2021 motion made to approve as amended by Erin Bradley, second by Donna Gaffey. Roll call vote was held and minutes approved.

Discussion was started regarding outreach and event planning, forming subcommittees with membership to plan events and work on outreach. To see if we can plan agendas for certain months knowing there is something occurring within that month.

Some thoughts came out of brainstorming. Need to keep an eye on the pulse of what is happening currently. Pandemic has limited opportunities to reach out and immerse with other groups. HRC needs to become known in the Town.

- Discussion regarding June event-Donna and Lindsay to collaborate on event for June- Gay Pride month. Lindsay shared with the group regarding the Ice Cream Social that was held two years ago in the First Congregational Church, lots of families, were in attendance, maybe an outdoor location such as common might be a better location. Rob also shared that there was a petition for a flag at the High School .and linking up with other groups to bring education and outreach, would help HRC build momentum. Sheila suggested using bystander training and helping to apply to LGBTQ community.

- Rob expressed that he would like to see more education and social conversations happening in town and that we provide a safe space to have the conversations. Pat agreed, bringing a subject forward to people educates us as well.
- Brining in other groups to a meeting was suggested, we have not had the Disability Committee as a guest yet.
- Working with Domestic Violence was brought up by Rob.

As a result of this conversation the following were ideas for subcommittees were tossed out.

- Jane and Pat were going to look into providing outreach via the outlets that they have with either written or social media.
- Rob and Sheila for training
- A communications subcommittee with Kevin and others
- Communicating with both Erin and Emma as to their suggestions or ideas.
- Should we need to hold a vote to empower the committees? Question held until next meeting.

Discussion moved to developing a complaint form, the pros and cons of this were vetted and it was decided it will require more research.

Also discussed was the recent Racial Equity Group meeting, which Rob, Sheila and Patricia attended. This is a new group and Kevin suggested at some point it may be good idea to look into some collaboration with them.

Next meeting was scheduled for March 25th.

Rob makes motion to adjourn meeting, the motion is seconded by Pat. A roll call vote was held and meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm