

Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes October 28, 2020

Attendance: Chris Kelly, Margaret Adams, Officer Mike Buckley, Joe Borsellino, Margaret Matthews, Mayann Martin, Philjay Somera Solar, Diane Loud, Robert Blaney

Also in Attendance: Dr. Oneida Fox Roye, Dedham Public Schools

The meeting was convened at 6:06 PM.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes for September and October 8th were approved via role call unanimously.

Acknowledgement of the Filipino American Month

Human Rights Commissioner Philjay Somera Solar shared his proclamation to have October recognized by the town as Filipino American month. Philjay is working with Senator Rush and Representative McMurtry to establish a state acknowledgement of the month. Some other cities have already adopted the proclamation. Chair Joe Borsellino will share the proclamation with the Select Board and Philjay will attend a meeting to promote and share the proclamation. The Human Rights Commission unanimously approved the proclamation and moving it forward to the Select Board.

Discussion of Race in the Town and Schools

Chair Joe Borsellino shared some of the concerns shared with him and other members of the commission in regards to the discussion and teaching of race and racial equity in the schools. School Committee Member Mayanne Briggs shared that the schools are working to address the issues that were raised. She welcomed Dr. Oneida Fox Roye, Director of Equity for the Dedham Public Schools. She will be training staff on cultural diversity and bias. Her role is to support the adults working with students and also support alignment of the curriculum to be more representative of the wider community.

School Committee Member Mayanne Briggs shared that the school committee is voting on a policy that will support teachers in their remote teaching.

Chair Joe Borsellino shared that the content of any emails and concerns have been shared with the superintendent of schools and the school committee.

Dr. Oneida Fox Roye, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Coordinator, shared that her goals are right now to get to know the community and meeting with various stakeholders. These meetings have provided a wealth of information on the

complexity of the issues. She is committed to creating a vision and data that is built on community and relationship building.

The Human Rights Commission also passed unanimously to write and submit a letter to the Select Board that all staff including first responders including elected officials undergo bias and cultural training on an ongoing basis.

In addition, Chair Joe Borsellino will also invite the Town Manager to a future Human Rights Commission meeting.

Townwide Forum on Race

Collette Phillips will be at the next meeting of the HRC. The town has signed a contract with her.

Dedham Historical Society

Dedham Historical Society is writing their five year plan. They have offered to give their website as a place for us to post events. They would like to archive the "I Am Dedham" shows as part of their work. They placed the last video of the last show that interviewed several families speaking about their experiences in town on their website.

I Am Dedham Tapings

The HRC discussed contacting the Veteran's Officer to identify some veterans, who could interview for the next taping on November 11th. We also discussed interviewing the new school committee member, Dr. Oneida Fox Roye, and the leader of GSA in the schools for a taping focused on the schools.

William Gould Project

A fundraising page has been established for the funding of a memorial in his honor. The HRC reviewed the letter sent by his family to the Select Board asking for William Gould to be recognized by town hopefully formally sometime this summer.

Dr. King Day Celebration

The schools are excited to participate in the virtual Dr. King Day including the essay contest and music as well. There is a Zoom meeting planned on November 5th to discuss the logistics. Chair Joe Borsellino will invite Dedham TV to participate. Chris Kelly shared the photos with Dedham TV to create a collection of photos. Deanna Tavares agreed to write and read a poem. Lianna and Margaret A. will work on a component representing the Latinx community.

Select Board

We have been invited by the Board of Selectmen to attend the November 19th Select Board. Each member will try to attend and share some of the work they have been doing on the HRC.

The Human Rights Commission adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Future meeting dates on December 2nd, 2020 at 6 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Margaret Adams, Clerk Human Rights Commission