

Dedham Human Rights Commission  
Mar 17, 2021 06:00 PM via Zoom  
Meeting Minutes

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Chris Kelly, Joe Borsellino, Diane Loud, Lianna Manos, Margaret Matthews, Amy Wax Lafont, Diane Barry Preston, Deputy Chief Michael Buckley, Philjay Solar

**Not in Attendance:** Dr. Margaret Adams

**Others in Attendance:** State Trooper Aaron Richardson, Amanda Smith, Tracey Franklin

The meeting was called to order at 6:07. Chairman Borsellino reviewed the Massachusetts laws regarding open meetings and meeting virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Approval of January and February meeting minutes:** A motion was made to approve the January 2021 meeting minutes and then seconded. Unanimous approval via role call voting. A motion was made to approve the February 2021 meeting minutes and then seconded. Unanimous approval via role call voting.

**Guest Speaker State Trooper Aaron Richardson:** Deputy Chief Mike Buckley introduced Trooper Richardson and explained the Community Liaison program which brings Trooper Richardson to Dedham from South Boston. Trooper Richardson shared some of his personal and professional history, as well as information about the program, which seeks to increase the presence/visibility of a diverse group of police in the community.

Commissioners and guests asked Trooper Richardson what types of activities he has or will be involved in here in Dedham, police training around de-escalation, transparency of communication and bias testing of officers. He has met with the Chief and Deputy Chief, delivered food to senior citizens with the food pantry, gotten involved with the Doug Flutie Foundation event, and generally seeks to have opportunities to both be in the community as a friendly face and to engage with others in some difficult conversations about racism. Some questions were difficult to answer due to the fact that he has been in the position for two weeks only, but he is committed to ongoing communication with residents and others.

**Discussion of Pride Month events/flag raising:** Diane has had some conversations with town manager's office as well as the Dedham Library, which is planning an entire month of events. Initially there was concern about in-person events and talk of a 'virtual flag-raising' and a banner on the town website, but with the reduction in constraints around outdoor activities, we may be able to have small in-person, Chris is going to provide some help in coordinating as well.

**Juneteeth events:** Joe asked Tracey if there have been any plans initiated, as the HRC would like to partner and support such efforts. Tracey and other ARCOD members have been working with other towns and an multi-town event will be held on June 19<sup>th</sup> in Walpole. Exact location TBD.

**Overall conduct:** Joe reminded all Commissioners about not using 'reply all' in emails, as this may violate open meeting laws and to please not engage with others who post inflammatory or provoking remarks about the HRC on social media in an attempt to discredit and/or disband us. He also shared that a review of the residency requirement for all HRC members, both at-large

and appointed, means that Dr. Fox Roye and Rob Blaney can no longer serve as voting members.

**Website updates:** Chris and Amanda have been working on our website and Amanda shared the new layout and design. She encouraged us to send her ideas and suggestions.

**Times articles:** Diane will have affirmative action in hiring article by next meeting. Liana will write one on Down Syndrome.

**I am Dedham:** May be able to have some Asian residents speak about their experiences and recent increase in hate crimes against Asians, but some people are not comfortable being public about this. Philjay will explore if there are people who are willing to share their stories. Diane Barry Preston is exploring some possibilities about older adults who are active in our community.

**HRCs and allies in neighboring towns:** Joe continues to forge relationships with other communities, including Hingham, Duxbury, Haverhill. Many towns are forming or reinforcing their commitment to HRCs.

Next meeting: April 21<sup>st</sup>, 6 pm via Zoom