



WHRC General Meeting Oct. 19, 2021 by Zoom

Present: Teresa Aravana-Gonzalez, Elizabeth Assenza, Lindsay Averbrook, Nicole Jacob, Jeremy Little, Maria Muti, Sherri Oken, Emma Partyka, Eileen Rooney

Absent: Daniela Nedbalek

Liaisons Present: Yana Herzog, Steve Ingalls

Call to order 7:05 p.m.

I. "Housekeeping"

- This meeting is being recorded
- Close captioning is available.
- Roll Call
 - What is something that you are looking forward to?
- There was no public participation.

II. Approval of the Minutes

A. Sept. 21 General WHRC meeting

A motion was made, seconded and all who were present at the Sept. 21st meeting voted in favor.

B. Sept. 22, 29 and Oct. 6 Indigenous People's Day meetings: tabled - no quorum

C. Sept. 23, 29, Oct. 7 Hispanic Heritage Month Meetings

A motion was made, seconded and all who were present at the Sept. 23, 29, Oct. 7 meetings voted in favor.

D. Sept. 29th Speaker Series meeting did not occur

III. Activities/Commemorations

A. Indigenous People's Day

1. One member of the public (not a Wakefield resident) who majored in indigenous studies joined the committee.
2. Online book readings were presented along with informative posts on current events and involvement in indigenous people rights campaigns.
3. Related Discussion
 - a. Land Acknowledgement
 - i. Communicate with Town about creating a municipal land acknowledgement.
 - ii. Should the WHRC state a territorial acknowledgement at the beginning of their events to acknowledge the people upon whose land we are gathering and how that land was acquired?
 - It can be created in collaboration with the people you are acknowledging.
 - Concern was expressed that we do not want this to be empty gesture; we need to move forward carefully after doing more research and getting input from affected people.

Action Item: We will do more research and report back at the next meeting. Maria Muti will reach out to the MA Human Rights Coalition, Benny Wheat MA to the Tribe at Ponkapoag and Eileen Rooney to the MA Center for Native American Awareness. We may reach out to the others in the indigenous community and advocacy groups.

- b. We could make an organizational endorsement of the MA indigenous people agenda (5 bills in various stages, actions individuals and organizations can take to endorse).
 - i. Indigenous Legislative Agenda is a collaboration of various organizations in the Commonwealth. They have a great variety of resources available to the public.

- ii. "Mascot" bill has progressed, and what the State Seal will look like is in process of development.
- iii. A motion was made for the WHRC to endorse the Indigenous Legislative Agenda, seconded, all voted in favor.
- iv. Where does Wakefield stand relative to the mascot issue, considering that the State is moving forward?
 - The resolution stands as made. We will cease to use Native American imagery in our logos, mascots, etc. and by extension, we will not use any imagery that is derogatory in nature.
 - The composition of the committee to develop the new mascot has been approved, with most members from the student body.
 - The CARES Act also is under discussion by the School Committee.
 - Most students do not think the Warrior name is a problem but agree that the current imagery does not reflect well on our community.

Action Item – Benny Wheat will submit the WHRC endorsement of the Indigenous Legislative Agenda.

B. Hispanic Heritage Month Commemoration

1. The October 14th event was a truly exciting and wonderful celebration.
2. All the pieces fell together perfectly in a short period of time.
3. Special thanks to Hugo Aravena and Maria Colon whose generous sponsorship made this event possible, and to Ina Coveney who joined our committee to help plan the event.
4. Planning for 2022 should begin 90 days in advance.

C. MLK and CSK - January 2022

1. The Committees have not yet met.
2. The Committee consists of Jeremy Little, Teresa Aravena-Gonzalez, Nicole Jacob, Elizabeth Assenza.

D. International Women's Day

The Committee consists of Maria Muti, Sherri Oken, Eileen Rooney, Emma Partyka.

IV. Active Bystander Training

A. Status of workshop

1. We did not have enough registrants again.
2. The registration link was broken so promotions started later than we needed. This may have contributed to our not getting enough registrants.
3. Also, we may need to better explain the concept to the community to build interest.
4. People may be "zoomed out" but TAB is not offering in-person training.
5. Enrollment may be affected by current events and what is in the news.

B. Moving Forward

1. Reach out to student population through social media (ex. Diversity Club) since TAB provides important skills for younger people.
2. Can we promote and offer it strictly to older students? There is a different curriculum for youth.
3. We need more targeted outreach and stronger promotional language.
4. Reschedule some time in winter so we have more lead time. General consensus was that we would like to offer a youth training.

ACTION ITEM:

Benny Wheat to check if WAAV is amenable to offering a youth training; discuss the program with Superintendant Lyons on whether they would like to be connected with Quabbin Mediation, offer a TAB workshop and can provide financial support.

V. Other Activities

A. Mental Health Partnership

1. The Social Action Committee at UU Church would like to partner with us on mental health issues.
2. In the past, there has been a fall speakers' series scheduled by the Church and Commission.

3. Lindsay Averbook will connect with the UU Church's Social Action Committee to plan something for the Spring.

B. Positive Messaging Campaign

1. Diversity of Language
2. We can work with the Commission on Disability for the preferred language describing people with different abilities (Liaison: Levonne Coughlin).

Action item: Daniela Nedbalek and Sherri Oken will work on creating informative material we can share.

C. Fall in Love with Wakefield

1. Sunday, Oct. 24th, 1 – 5 p.m.
2. The WHRC will have a table in the Americal Center.
3. If you are available on Sunday and haven't signed up to staff, please sign up.
4. We discussed what should be displayed
 - a. Table cloth with HRC logo
 - b. WHRC banner
 - c. Pride month material
 - d. Mental health material
 - e. What is an Active Bystander?
 - f. Indigenous Peoples and CARES legislation
 - g. Hate Has No Home Here signs
 - h. Digital photo frame (if available) – Hispanic Heritage, past virtual events
 - i. WHRC buttons

ACTION ITEM Eileen Rooney will contact Jenn MacDonald about whether we should be collecting contact information to expand the email distribution list so that people can sign up for updates from Town groups. Sherri Oken will put together an Active Bystander flyer.

VI. Announcement

Attorney General's Office Virtual Convening on Addressing Hate in Our Communities
Tuesday, Oct. 26th 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Action Item: If you attend, report back at our next meeting.

VII. Storage

A. Physical

1. We need a central location for storage.
2. Physical space is available at Town Hall but we can only access when the Town Hall is open.
3. Maria Muti is willing to continue storing and when her term is up, we can move material to Town Hall.

B. Electronic Storage

1. Maria Muti showed what it looks like and what it currently contains.
2. She will reach out to David Watts who was the photographer for past events.
3. We need to build out the structure before posting ex. Folders for different events with sub folders for different years, and folders general resources & administration of events
4. Suggestion: Review materials before posting.
5. Permissions: We agreed that general Commission members can view, read and download but not add or edit.

Action Item: Log In access will be provided to Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary who will create folders and file structure.

VIII. Items Not anticipated

- Remember to send resources (people who need to be contacted, who can help us) to Sherri for the planning and promotions document.
- Suggestion: Follow Melrose's lead. At the Melrose Indigenous People's Day, someone from a local tribe to talk to children about what the town used to look like.
- Should we try to reach out to other HRCs?

Motion to Adjourn 9:19 p.m. Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Sherri Oken