



**Wakefield Human Rights Commission General Meeting
Tuesday, 1/18/2022 by Zoom**

Commissioners Present: Teresa Aravena-Gonzalez, Elizabeth Assena, Lindsay Averbook, Nicole Jacob, Jeremy Little, Maria Muti, Daniela Nedbalek, Sherri Oken, Emma Partyka, Eileen Rooney

Liaisons Present: Yana Herzog, Stephen Ingalls

Guest: Glavia Smith

Call to Order: 7:05 p.m.

I. "Housekeeping"

- This meeting is being recorded.
- Roll was called.
- Check in question: What is your favorite thing to do when it is snowing outside?
- No public participation

II. Guest Speaker: Glavia Smith, Director of Wakefield Metco

A. Background Information

1. Glavia has had this position for three years, starting in Oct. 2019.
2. The Metropolitan Council of Educational Opportunity formed in 1966.
3. They promote educational opportunity by integrating urban youth in suburban school districts.
4. 37 towns participate and over 3300 students are enrolled.
5. Metco started in Wakefield in 1969 and we currently serve 65 students from the Boston area, across grade levels.
6. Children are eligible at 5 years old at which time parents fill out an application and get assigned by lottery to a district with availability, not by personal preference.
7. Metco offers a seat while they continue to assess the student.
8. Once enrolled in a district, all educational services are provided by that district.
9. Having a sibling in a particular community, guarantees assignment to that district
10. Long travel time and a very long day makes it difficult for students to embed themselves in the host communities but most students are very hard working, serious about their education and well behaved.

B. Q & A responses

1. There is a need to create people and items in the community and schools that represent their identities.
2. They are looking for families to host students who have late day activities and might need a place to spend some time.

III. Approval of the minutes

- A. A motion was made to approve the 1.21.22 full commission meeting minutes; seconded and all present at that meeting voted in favor.
- B. A motion was made to approve 12/5/21, 12/29/21, 1/5/22 MLK meeting minutes; seconded and all present at that meeting voted in favor.
- C. A motion was made to approve 1/6/22 IWD meeting minutes; seconded and all present at that meeting voted in favor.

- IV. MLK/CSK
 - A. Live Event Cancelled
 - 1. They had not planned for an online event.
 - 2. On MLK/CSK day, they conducted a successful donation drive for items needed by people who are unhoused.
 - B. Virtual Event

WCAT will help them produce a full virtual event, including service award presentations and a dance presentation, during Black History Month.
 - C. Service Award Winners
 - 1. Students - Lauren Blois and Yana Herzog
 - 2. Business - WCAT
 - 3. Individual Award – Jim Scott
- ACTION ITEM The Committee will aggressively get the word out about the virtual presentation.
- D. Other plans for Black History Month
 - 1. The Language of Diversity post for that month will focus on appropriate language.
 - 2. No other special activities are planned.
- V. International Women’s Day – March 8th
 - A. Emphasis on “international”
 - 1. A panel of Wakefield women who are immigrants or first generation Americans, will tell their stories.
 - 2. We will ask She Major to perform.
 - B. 2022 theme “Break the bias”

Our program will address this theme from different aspects of bias: ethnicity, gender, race, etc.
 - C. Logistics
 - 1. We are planning a virtual event but hope we can have it live and are preparing for the possibility.
 - 2. We are meeting this Friday, 1/21 at 7 p.m. by Zoom.
- VI. Youth Council

They have created the “Snow Angels”, a program to help people who need assistance shoveling. They are looking for more volunteers.
- VII. School Committee
 - A. Policy and Communications Subcommittee
 - 1. The Committee is reviewing policies and language relative to discrimination, harassment, and tech policy around social media.
 - 2. They are exploring the language used by other towns and would like to incorporate more robust language into Wakefield’s policies.
 - B. Logo Revamp
 - 1. A committee has been created to address this issue.
 - 2. They would like strong student participation.
 - 3. Upcoming Meetings: Tuesdays, Jan. 25, Feb. 1, Feb. 8, from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- VIII. Land Acknowledgement
 - A. Information Gathering
 - 1. Local historian in Melrose has provided information on native people in this area from its time of development.
 - 2. They have looked at the wording of other land acknowledgements and talked to the people who developed the language and the process they used.

3. They will plan for concrete follow up initiatives to the presentation of the language.

ACTION ITEM Benny and Eileen will share the language at our next meeting.

IX. Active Bystander Training

A. Nothing has changed since last month

1. Quabbin Mediation is concerned that there may not be an appetite for virtual training at this time.
2. Dan Leiber and Sherri Oken are certified and would like to facilitate a training in Wakefield.

X. Finances

A. End 2021

1. Revenue \$2,677.76
2. Expenses \$1,269.91
3. Balance available: \$1,407.85

B. Allocation to Specific Initiatives Discussion

1. It's hard to project which initiatives will require a certain amount of money since we don't have an itemized accounting of spending, and what is planned varies from year to year.
2. The financial reports do not itemize expenditures clearly.
3. We have a line item budget of \$1,000 which we should try to spend down before the end of fiscal year so that we will receive at least that amount in the future.
4. There is no pressure or timeline for spending the money in the revolving account in which grant money is deposited unless earmarked for specific events and use.

ACTION ITEM: Sherri will speak with town finance clerk about delineating which account contains which money, and to which initiatives we incur expenses.

C. Future Expenditures

1. We were awarded \$500 grant from the Cultural Council for our Pride event which must be used by end of June, the State fiscal year.
 - a. Suggestion: Try to book talent now.
 - b. Possibility: Evan Greer, local trans musician, who could do a kid's concert
 - c. We must book the bandstand 90 days in advance of a June event.
2. We received a \$200 grant from Black Student Union to co-produce an event.

ACTION ITEM: Benny, Eileen and Elizabeth will exchange ideas about artists to book for a Pride month event.

D. Raising our Visibility

1. We received a \$48 donation from proceeds a vendor received at Festival by the Lake, who listed us as a possible recipient.
2. Many people are not aware of the WHRC and we need to raise our profile more.
3. We are allowed to pay to boost our social media posts. (\$5 minimum cost, you must choose time frame for boost and must identify the targeted audience)
4. We can post on Instagram through the Youth Council.

E. Donation to WCAT

1. They are an independent, neutral entity.
2. They do not receive town funding and have asked other town groups to sponsor at different levels.
3. They are extremely helpful to us, and we would like to donate to them.
4. We must look into conflict of interest laws. If they are not a town body, we could donate \$100; otherwise only \$50.

5. A motion was made to make a donation to WCAT, the amount to be determined by the amount we're allowed to donate. Seconded but after discussion amended to read

We will make a donation to WCAT, in the amount of \$100 when we can confirm that amount is allowable. The amended motion was seconded and all voted in favor

ACTION ITEM: Benny and Nicole will check on the legality of our donation with an inquiry to Tom Mullen, and also check with Steve Maio on how to pay the donation from the WHRC line item account.

XI. Items not anticipated

A. Scheduling Conflict

FYI Conflict with some Tuesday meetings of the Youth Council and WHRC

B. Suggestion: Monthly shout out

1. Recognize a person or business in town that is supportive of our mission, starting with people who have already helped us with our initiatives.
 - a. Owner of Veiled Valkyrie who listed us a donation recipient for a portion of her proceeds from Festival by the Lake sales, raising the visibility of the WHRC and our work
 - b. WCAT (note: they are getting a MLK/CSK Service award)
 - c. Speakers on holocaust – Gerald Levinson, Sue Herz
 - d. Glavia Smith of Metco
 - e. Speaker on people with disabilities
2. Compile a list by month of who we would like to honor.
3. Recognition could include a personal letter, a certificate, social media posts, article in the Item and Observer.
4. Before we post on social media or send an article to the newspaper, get agreement from the person if it okay to make this public.
5. This initiative can increase visibility for the WHRC as well as recognition for someone in the community.
6. We will wait to start this program after the MLK/CSK Service Awards are presented.

Table: Finalize plans at our next meeting.

C. Relative to Pride Month

1. Another Appalachia by Neema Avashia was recently published.
2. Suggestion: we could ask the author to do a reading during Pride

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:56 p.m., seconded and all voted in favor

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sherri Oken, Secretary/Treasurer