

Wakefield Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes 2/21/2023

Present members of HRC:

Sherri Oken
Eileen Rooney
Benny Wheat
Jeremy Little
Teresa Aravena-Gonzalez
Nicole Jacob
Daniela Nedbalek

Absent:

Vanessa Westlake, Youth Council Liaison
Ashley Carter
Elizabeth Assenza
Amy Rando
Superintendent Doug Lyons, ex officio
Town Administrator Steve Maio, ex officio
Chief Skory, ex officio

Also Present:

Mehreen Butt, Town Council Liaison
Meghan, member of the public
Annette Dupon, member of the public

Call to order and attendance Call to order: 7:03pm

Check-in

Public participation

- Meghan from Melrose is a community organizer who is involved in advocating around issues that are arising with the siting of the NEMT. There was no review done regarding the historical significance of the site. Sagamore Faries Gray of the Massachusett tribe did a walk-through of the forest site where it is proposed. She is looking to make sure that there is adequate representation from the people who will be impacted by the siting decision such as people with disabilities, indigenous communities.

Approval of minutes: (3-5)

- IWD Subcommittee Meeting Minutes for January 29, and February 5 2023
 - Unanimously approved by commissioners who were present
- WHRC General Meeting Minutes: January 2023
 - Unanimously approved

MLK Follow up re: Day of Service

- The original day of service was scheduled on the day when it was 11 degrees outside, so we plan to reschedule.
- Rescheduled date: Saturday March 4th
- Eileen will reach out to the Boys and Girls Club, email the people who had registered to volunteer, and will email the WHRC's larger mailing list

IWD Updates

- March 8th at 7pm at The Savings Bank Theater at the highschool, in person.
- There's an amazing panel coming together that represents a diversity of genders, ages, races, ethnicities
- The cookies for the reception will come from the Voke
- Students from the HS will be helping with the A/V.
- We could ask if any photography students would like to do photography for the event. This might have a cost, fairly low, something like \$20 an hour.
- Need other volunteers for the day-of. Vanessa has volunteered to be there. We'll have a welcome table with WHRC materials, trying to get people signed up on our mailing list, setting up the reception and packing up after.
- It would be good to keep track of how many people are there (and at all our events) so we can continue to make a strong argument about the reach and impact of our event.
- The promotions have started: local papers, the schools, the Chamber of Commerce. Would be good to send it to other HRCs in other towns. Eileen has contact people for Reading, Melrose, Stoneham. Eileen will send those contacts to Sherri so sherri can email them
- Sherri will send Eileen and Daniela a blurb about the volunteering ask. Eileen will send it to our mailing list, and Daniela will put it on FB.
- Sherri will ask WCAT if they can send us a transcript file for the event, which folks can use on their assistive technology. Will also make sure there's closed captioning on the recording.

APAH Planning

- The community volunteers who have been involved for the past couple of years are very excited to get started on planning.
- What kind of event would we like to see: one central event, or a series of smaller events?
- Need to convene a subcommittee: starting maybe in March to plan an event for sometime in May. Right now this subcommittee is Sherri and two community members who volunteer. We will also see if the new commissioner would be willing to help with this subcommittee.
- We can also reach out to commissions in other towns to see if they're planning events for APAH
- Daniela could put out a call on FB for people in and around town to contribute their voices about cultures and communities

Juneteenth flag Raising Fee

- Nicole is planning to reach out to Rep. Lipper-Gerebedian who has a powerful story about Juneteenth and how it impacted her. And we can partner with the North Shore Juneteenth Association as we have in other years. Nicole will email Rep. Lipper-Gerebedian.
- The fee for NSJA is \$300, this would go towards the singer and the flag raising, and we will provide our own speaker.
 - Vote to spend \$300 for this ceremony: unanimously approved.
 - Eileen will reach out to NSJA to make the payment and start planning for the date: save the date for Friday 6/16
- Our target date will be to do it on Monday June 19th, though we should reach out to the library to see if that's possible since they will likely be closed on that day. We could plan to do Friday 6/16? TBD after we speak with the library. Nicole will email the library about this.

Budget Update

- The WHRC budget proposal has been submitted to the Town Administrator who included it in his proposal to the Town Council. It has not yet come for up for a vote in Town Council, but will soon. Then it will ultimately be voted on at Town Meeting on Monday 5/15 7pm at the Galvin
- We got a Mass Cultural Commission grant for \$1,500. Daniela will email Sherri Dalton to double check if expenditures for this grant can be spent out of the HRC's account and then the Arts Council can reimburse the Town directly.

Matters not anticipated

- We got another application for a new commissioner. Eileen will be talking with them soon so we will hopefully have a new commissioner soon.
- Black History Month social media campaign: our page likes are up by 200%, reach is up by 68%, post engagement is up 27%. Making consistent posts really makes a big difference.
- Could we start including on our event postings from now on a blurb inviting people to contact us if they need an accommodation?
- Sunday March 5 there is an event at the Galvin called "Considering Matthew Shepherd". Eileen and Sherri will be tabling
- Jenn McDonald invited someone from the WHRC will be going to the social media best practices training. Those of us with access to the FB page, at least one of us should go

Review action list

Adjourn: 8:18pm