

## **Wakefield Human Rights Commission**

Minutes of Meeting, Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Wakefield Community Access Television (conference room), 24 Hemlock Road, Wakefield, MA

### **Present:**

Pina Masciarelli-Patel  
Richard Greif  
Jennifer Boettcher  
David Watts, Jr.  
Isabel Castro  
Maria Muti  
Amy Rando  
Chief Richard Smith, ex officio

### **Absent:**

Maria Mutti  
Bob Vincent  
Talat Aman  
Superintendent Doug Lyons, ex officio  
Town Administrator Steve Maio, ex officio

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:33pm
- II. Public Participation. Chief Smith introduced the new Chief of Police, Lieutenant Steven Skory. Welcome and introductions by all members present.
- III. Minutes from March meeting were accepted
- IV. Chair's comments
  - A. Welcome new commissioners Benny Wheat and Frankie Lawton. Also, welcome to the incoming Wakefield Chief of Police, Lieutenant Steven Skory, who will be joining the Commission as an ex-Officio member.
  - B. Last meeting for commissioners Chief Smith, David Watts Jr, Rabbi Hersh, and Talat Aman. Heartfelt appreciation for all their work.
  - C. Reminder of upcoming Town Meeting. The meeting is on April 29th. It will be useful to attend since the Town Budget will be discussed and we are petitioning a small money allocation from the budget for our Commission.
- V. Update
  - A. "Mental Health Forum" and "International Day" wrap Up. Rabbi Gregg expressed there was low traffic on "Mental Health Day." "International Day" was successful. Many people were interested on out table. Others expressed gratitude for our work.
  - B. "American Creed" Wrap up. It was interesting that many of the attendees were not the same people that usually attend all events related with Human Rights Interest.

Discussion among commissioners related about ways to promote human right ideals out of our comfort zone. Frankie Lawton suggested going to events organized by different political associations. Chief Smith suggested that movies like “Creed” could be shown to the Wakefield High School graduating class. It is important to share this feedback with the library and the School Committee.

- C. Open seats. Amy will share information next time about the School Committee decision. Pina is following up with Superintendent regarding high school representative to be a Wakefield Human Rights Commissioner.
- D. ADL/WHRC Partnership- scheduled for May 21st in the evening. It will take place in the Savings Bank Theater . Heidi Hoffmann, from Metro ADL will be there. There are great expectations to the event. Chief Smith mentioned that possibly Secret Service will be attending.
- E. Pride Event. Subcommittee will be meeting on April 16th, at 8:30 pm. Updates for next meeting. Event will be in the Civic Center. We were approved for a one day liquor license. Jen Boettcher is concerned that our event only includes the 21+ population. She interested in finding opportunities to include families interested in celebrating Pride. It was mentioned that we could partner with Melrose that already has Pride events planned. Frankie Lawton mentioned that it will be meaningful to the LGBTQ population to fly the Rainbow Flag/ Transgender Flag at Town Hall during Pride. David Watts Jr. mentioned the possibility of displaying flags on the Veterans’ Memorial. Isabel Castro mentioned partnering with the business in town to display flags, get discounts, and to promote Pride-friendly businesses. It was mentioned that it was a good idea to contact the Wakefield-Lynnfield Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, the Bread Shop.
- F. Anti Hate Speech. There was discussion about the text. Frank Lawton wanted to know the purpose. David Watts Jr. should not put emphasis on Anti-semitic and anti-islamic attacks, but be inclusive of all hate. Pina Masciarelli said we are committed activists, we must show courage and vision. Jen Boettcher motioned to accept the text as living document to be updated as needed. Commissioners approved unanimously to move to approve the language, but suggested forming a committee conformed by representatives from the Town Council, the School Committee and the Human Rights Commission.

#### VI. New Items

- A. Wakefield Human Rights Commission May Meeting moved to Tuesday, May 14, at 6:30, Public Safety Building, Community Room, 1 Union St. Reason: ADL meeting is on Tuesday May 21st.
- B. Wakefield 101, May 16th 6:30-8:00. Volunteers to attend Amy Rando, Frank Lawton, Rabbi Greg
- C. Festival by the Lake, June 8th. Pina will send sign up for commissioners to divide themselves in three shifts.
- D. We received an email of a refugee family needing housing. There was debate as if housing was a Wakefield Human Rights Commission area of interest. The decision was not to publicize now. Rabbi Greg said that the Clergy Association will take the request

from the family. Wakefield Human Rights commission will decide at a later date if we want to get involved into these types of requests.

E. Melrose is having a Cultural Council event, May 8th, from 6:00- 8:00.

F. Updated Action List

1. Find out who is the new Wakefield High School Commissioner (Pina)
2. Create Sign up sheet for “Festival by the Lake” (Pina)
3. Pass feedback about “Creed” to the library and the Wakefield School Committee. (Pina)
4. Find out about flying Pride Flag in Town Hall (Amy)
5. Talk to the Wakefield-Lynnfield Chamber of Commerce (Frank Lawton and Isabel Castro)
6. Clergy Association will follow up with refugee family looking for family (Rabbi Greg).

Meeting adjourned at 8:10