

Wakefield Human Rights Commission

Minutes of Meeting, August 20, 2019

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

Present:

Pina Masciarelli-Patel
Richard Greif
Maria Muti
Bob Vincent
Benny Wheat
Jennifer Boettcher
Reverend Matthew Cadwell
Amy Rando
Lt. Steve Skory, ex officio

Absent:

Isabel Castro
Frankie Lawton
Christina Joseph
Mehreen Butt
Superintendent Doug Lyons, ex officio
Town Administrator Steve Maio, ex officio

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:35pm
- II. Minutes of June 18 meeting accepted
- III. No public participation
- IV. Advocacy/legislative issues
 - A. Review of 7/25/19 meeting with Senator Lewis and local HRCs- One focus was on various bills related to Native Americans- mascot, renaming Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day, and changing the flag/state seal. Where do other communities stand in terms of mascots? Seems to be all over the place. Will more be done at the convening event of MAHRC in October? Should we consider submitting a letter in support of any of the bills? Matthew will look into these questions as they relate to Indigenous People's Day and Benny will look into the mascots bill.
 - B. Guest: Liora Norwich, Winchester Multicultural Network- nonprofit with multiple committees to address various issues in town.
- V. Response to anti-Semitic incident/coordination with town- concerns voiced over subjecting victim to renewed unwanted publicity. We'll write a general statement for September to coincide with start of school year and Maria will check with MAHRC regarding what they do in terms of rapid community response. Subcommittee for future templates to respond more quickly to incidents- Bob, Pina, Jen, Maria

VI. Summer/Fall events

- A. Farmer's market- September 21, 9-1, Rich will email for shift sign-ups
- B. UU church speaker series- tentatively scheduled for October 17, but they are struggling to find a speaker. There was a question about possibly merging this event with the Beebe Library event.
- C. METCO- Pina was looking into what's happening around 50th year celebration, learned that METCO director resigned and position is open.
- D. Beebe Library book event- Pina and Maria have been in touch with Karen and there's been some discussion around keeping it with the human trafficking theme and having local survivor/author speak about her book "The Diaries of Jasmine Grace." Somewhat late to start planning this for fall, so may delay it to January.

VII. Donation acceptance options- Maria will ask MAHRC what other towns do. We should not be accepting donations especially now that we have a budget.

VIII. Wakefield Cultural Council grant 2020- can we do this? Can we apply for others? How do we then handle this amount, is it considered a donation? Motion approved to write cultural council grant application for event in the future so long as not a fundraiser.

IX. Open meeting law guidelines review- people are watching town bodies closely, have reported in the past. What about, for example, the joint meeting between UU and some WHRC members? Have Tom Mullen come to next meeting- Maria will ask him.

X. Matters not anticipated for agenda- Could we print smaller stickers? Also, Bob reminded us to check food code regs before farmer's market.

XI. Review Action List and Adjournment

- A. Matthew- will look into questions around Indigenous People's Day
- B. Benny- will look into questions around changing school mascots depicting Native Americans
- C. Maria- will ask MAHRC about responses to hate incidents and how they handle donations
- D. Amy- will check board of health regulations re food
- E. Maria- will contact Tom Mullen about attending September or October meeting
- F. Pina and Maria- will draft general statement with general theme of tolerance and kindness
- G. Pina- will write MA Cultural Council grant
- H. Rich- will email re farmer's market shifts