

Wakefield Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes 5/19/2020

Call to order: 6:36

Present:

Jen Boettcher
Rev. Matthew Cadwell
ChiChi Canavan
Isabel Castro
Rich Greif
Pina Masciarelli
Maria Muti
Sherri Oken
Benny Wheat

Public Participation

No Public Participation

Minutes

Approved

Amy: abstain because she wasn't present at April meeting

Voting:

Are members who haven't been sworn in yet allowed to vote? Benny is essentially taking over her own seat, so she may be able to still vote, pending her swearing in (kind of like how Rich is still filling the seat pending that seat being filled by the school committee)

Policies & Procedure - Elections:

- Our elections were supposed to be this month, the May meeting. We did them in April.
- The problem with doing the elections in May is that if the chair is an outgoing member of the commission, their last meeting will be April. So if we do not hold elections until May, there technically isn't someone who is responsible for putting together the agenda.
- Should we change our Policies and Procedures to indicate April meeting going forward?
- One problem with having earlier elections is what if incoming members' appointments haven't started yet in April so they don't have an opportunity to vote for the seats. It would be the outgoing members who are voting.
- On the other hand, having the outgoing members voting might make sense, since they have more experience on the board and basis to make a decision.
- We could leave it as May elections, and if the chair is staying on the commission they can put together the agenda for May's meeting. Or if the chair is an outgoing member, the vice-chair can put together the agenda for May's meeting.

Fiscal Update:

- We have over \$649 that has to be spent before the end of June
- Do we have to spend it all?
- Normally if we don't spend it all the understanding is that we won't get as much the next year. It seems unlikely that anyone will be getting as much money in FY2021 as we got last year

Pride Subcommittee Update:

Chichi, Pina, Isabel, and Rev. Caldwell

- Cultural council grant:
 - how to use that now that we can't have an in-person event?
 - The Cultural Council is extending the money for a year, so we can save it for next year. This would allow us to use it next year when we might be able to have a more robust in-person event, and when there might not be as much grant funding available.
 - One question for us is (if there still is grant funding available) would we be able to apply for an additional grant next year for another event or if we would be precluded from applying.
- Flag Raising:
 - we're allowed to raise the pride flag.
 - We picked Monday June 1st at 6pm for the flag raising.
 - It would be great if the Commission, Town Council, the School Committee, and Chief Skorey, and Mary and Bob Eldridge. If it's not allowed to have so many people we could have 3-4 of us, one person from town council, and one person from school committee.
 - It might be wise to keep the gathering very small, very conservative in order to be sensitive to the other events that the town is not holding. And we don't want to give people the opportunity to get upset about people not social distancing etc. and have that taint the event or the HRC
 - Would be best to keep it to 10 people max, and not publicize to the public before hand.
 - Do some kind of livestream. Ideally by WCAT
 - Mehreen will check in with the town council on Thursday about the size of the gathering
 - Do we also have to ask the public health department about the size of the gathering?
 - The town requested that we only fly one flag.
 - They have the one we flew last year, so we don't have to buy anything.
 - We could have a table where we can give out lawn flags. Though this might not be a good idea if we're encouraging people not to gather for this event
- Lawn flags:

- The lawn flags are sturdy enough to stand up for the month if you put it in your lawn
- The flags would be about \$300 for 300 flags, including shipping
- There are different flags that we could order, like the traditional gay pride flag, or the “Philly” flag (with the black stripe and brown stripe). We could decide if we want a mixture. The trans flags are like 3x more expensive
- Should we do the traditional flag or the Philly flag?
- The Philly flag would not match the flag we raise in town. People might not know what the Philly flag is about, which would be an opportunity to educate. Could include that education in our media blitz and in one of our Wednesday Wisdom, could staple a little blurb to each flag to describe what the Philly flag is about
- On the other hand, the traditional flag is intended to be inclusive to begin with. No person is green, or purple, etc. It is the concept of diversity.
- By show of hands we decide to order the philly flags
- We could make them available at different locations and publicize that
- Could ask school committee if we could distribute them at the school on the day the school lunches are distributed
- For the other events there is a Monday/Wednesday/Friday series of recurring events
- Kids Corner - Mondays:
 - Do a book reading event with a different book each Monday in June
 - There was some concern about whether we’re allowed to broadcast copyright material. In light of COVID-19 publishers have loosened their rules because they want people to be able to access and benefit from their books. You just have to name the title, author, publishing company.
- Wednesday Wisdom:
 - Event every Wednesday about interesting information about the LGBTQ community
 - Include stories or information from multiple cultures
 - It would be important to make the task easier and to avoid tokenism to put some thought and work into providing content for the speaker (or collaborating to provide content if that is what the speaker prefers)
- Fridays:
 - Raffle the book from that Monday’s Kids Corner
- Things to buy for Pride (and for the HRC in general):
 - Lawn flags
 - Books for kids corner
 - Pride buttons: for 300 1.75 inch diameter buttons it would be \$115 plus shipping from the place we bought them last year
 - Pride stickers
 - Regular HRC buttons
 - We can order the 300 yard flags, kids books, and pride buttons for now and then spend some time this coming month to take stock of what we need re additional HRC supplies and make a decision about that at our June meeting

Roll call vote to buy 300 lawn flags for \$300: approved

Roll call vote to specifically buy 300 Philly flags for \$300: approved

Roll call vote to buy 300 1.75 inch diameter buttons for \$115 plus shipping: approved

Non-Appointed Positions:

- Matthiew will stay on as the clergy position
- Amy will stay on as the police position
- We don't know yet who will take the student position

Future Meetings:

- Traditionally we take 2 months off in the summer. Do we want to do the same this summer? People's summers will be very different. Many events/vacations may be cancelled, but also people's lives may be particularly hectic with work as things start to re-open
- We will table this until June and re-evaluate then
- In the past we have met at WCAT, but we're not filmed. We could meet at town hall, their conference room, which is available on the third Tuesdays.
- WCAT is less accessible for people who don't have cars. Town hall is a more pleasant space.

Roll call vote to move our meetings to town hall: approved

Anticipated Events:

- Farmer's Market: we don't have the opportunity to table at the market this year because of changes they've had to make due to COVID-19

Matters Not Anticipated:

- Who has access to the HRC email? Amy has the password, will send to Maria. Right now they get forwarded to Pina. Maria will check about changing the forwarding
- Shared electronic files: Maria is in contact with Sherri Dalton and the IT people about how/if we're allowed to have shared electronic documents. Having a shared place to keep documents is great, we're always having to dig back through old emails to find things. The question is about shared editing, which could be considered deliberation that could violate public meeting laws
- Racist incident: there was a mention in last week's paper of a racist incident in town. The language in the paper was very vague, we don't know what actually happened. It doesn't look like a specific crime was committed, so it would fall under the category of a "hate incident" as opposed to a "hate crime". Since we don't know what happened or to whom etc there's no way really to respond, except for in a general way about how destructive it is to engage in hate speech.

Farewell to Rich as he retires from the HRC!

Task List:

- Mehreen talk to town council about size of pride flag raising ceremony
- Isabel will get the button design from Deidre and send to to Amy
- Amy will order the buttons
- ChiChi will order the flags
- Pina will contact Principle McLeod about our student commissioner
- Amy will send email password to Maria
- Maria will contact Sherri Dalton about forwarding HRC emails to the appropriate people
- Anyone making purchases email Sherri Dalton about getting reimbursed, and also email Maria so she can keep track of our expenditures