

Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, June 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Call To Order: 7:37

Attendance of Commission Members & Liasons

	Robin Brown	✓	Shannan Gonzalez	✓	Richard Green III
✓	Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus	✓	Lorraine LeSter		Amanda Lin
	Asela Mourao		Ozair Omarzai	✓	Andrea Orlando
✓	Edward Porowski	✓	Max Rubin	✓	Sheri-Rose Rubin
✓	Michelle Tang	✓	Nadia Tariq	✓	Reena Wade
	Ed Zelley				

Review & Approval of May minutes: May minutes - Approved by all in attendance.

Report from the Council Liaison: Sheri-Rose Rubin : As of 6/1 Borough Hall is open to the public once again. There was a recent presentation to the Mayor and Council from the Equity Commission. The Equity Commission requested more data collection and reporting to ensure equitable policing in the Borough. For example, one recommendation was to collect demographic data during traffic stops similar to that collected by the NJ State Police. Another recommendation involved increased training for police officers to better equip them for their interactions with the community, especially people with disabilities. The Accessibility Committee will offer support to the Metuchen Police Department as they work to implement this recommendation.

- There is a big push for the public to give their feedback on the green public spaces that are to be revamped. Everyone is encouraged to give their feedback.
- Sheri-Rose requested that HRC members share their race and/or ethnicity and their pronouns. The Borough is seeking a sustainability certification and one component addressed the extent to which the Borough's boards and commissions are representative of our community based on census data.
- Borough Boards and Commissions are allowed to meet in person while also accommodating those who prefer to meet via Zoom.

Comments sent from the public: None

Old Business:

- 2021 Event Planning
 - **Juneteenth-** Bobbie Theivakumaran reached out from the MDA asking to partner with them on a Juneteenth event they have planned. There will be information about the history of Juneteenth presented, step dancers, and more. The HRC will share information on their social media pages to promote the event and determine if there are other ways to help with the event.
 - **Gender Identity & Expression Community Conversation:** The event will be on Wednesday, June 30th at 7:30. The subcommittee had a meeting with a member of the public, Laura Hermans, and discussed ways to demystify perceptions around gender identity and gender expression. The subcommittee will be meeting weekly this month to prepare for the community conversation in which we will host an expert on gender identity and expression from CHOP and facilitate a conversation with the public. The first area of focus is gender

Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, June 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes

identity in children. The subcommittee asked Richard to help design the flyer for this event.

New Business

- 2021 Event Planning
 - **Calendar:** HRC member, Shannan Gonzalez, reformatted the online diversity calendar into a spreadsheet to begin deciding what types of holidays the HRC would want to create events, flyers and conversations around. The calendar will be shared with the HRC members and color coded based on the type of action the HRC will take to bring awareness to each holiday. The HRC is thinking of a way to reformat the calendar so that it can be displayed on the HRC Facebook page and/or website.
 - **Indigenous Peoples Day** - October 11
 - **Human Rights Day** - December 10
- **Book Club Partnership with Metuchen School District Racial Justice & Equity Committee:** The Metuchen School District Racial Justice & Equity Committee is holding book clubs to have conversations about racism, racial justice and equity. The meetings will be on Wednesdays around 3:00 in the afternoon. There will be a new book to read each week.
- **Community Member & High School Student Involvement:** HRC is still searching for a junior member for the 2021-2022 school year to take the place of Max Rubin who will be graduating this year. Michelle Tang will refer a few classmates for the HRC to consider. Michelle Tang, Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus and Nadia Tariq will have conversations with the potential candidates to find the best fit for the HRC.
- **BOE updates:** No new updates.
- **Other New Business:** none raised

Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates

- June 19: Juneteenth
- June 30: Demystifying Gender Identity & Gender Expression Community Conversation at 7:30 pm •
- July 6: Metuchen HRC Meeting at 7:30 pm (possibly in-person)

2021 Metuchen HRC Meeting Schedule

Jul. 6 | Aug. 3 | Sep. 7 | Oct. 5 | Nov. 2 | Dec. 7

Adjourned: 8:27