

# Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**Call To Order: 7:36 PM**

## 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 Zelle				

**Present member(s) of the public:** None

**Welcome New Commission Members:** Shannan Gonzalez, Amanda Lin, Andrea Orlando, Nadia Tariq

**Review & Approval of Minutes:** February Minutes - Approved by all, with the exception of new members

## Council Liaison Report:

Human Relations Commission has grown to add four new members.

Reminded HRC that the Accessibility Commission will be working on a presentation about Growing Up With A Disability. This could be a possible opportunity for partnership.

There is challenging work in the future with a rise of bias incidents targeting the AAPI community. How best can the commission address this in our community? There is much work to be done.

**Public Comments:** None

## OLD BUSINESS

### Update COVID Flyer

HRC discussed updating the 2020 COVID flyer focusing on bias attacks targeting the Asian community. Hazel-Anne, Nadia, and Richard will work together to create an updated flyer that will keep messaging general but also provide facts about bias incidents and other updated information.

Due to a rise in bias incidents, should HRC review how it follows up on stories submitted by community members? Can a checklist or flowchart be created that HRC members can follow when discussing incidents with those who reached out to HRC?

### Windows of Understanding Project

A subcommittee meeting is scheduled with the Metuchen Arts Council and artists to discuss and plan the April 21 presentation focusing on Climate Change. Reena will provide Zoom Link for meeting. Tentative meeting date of April 14. Subcommittee is Reena / Richard / Andrea

### Partnership with Temple Emanu-El for an Ally Conversation focused on Black Neighbors

Richard repurposed existing documents and flyers for Temple Emanu-El to use for event. Program is expected to follow a similar format of HRC Ally conversations. HRC will help promote event on social media.

## **Indigenous Peoples Day Event**

HRC is looking for ways to help if/when the Borough organizes such an event. Hazel-Anne will follow up with Mayor Busch about having Rev. Dr. Norwood to speak at the event.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **2021 Event Planning**

Tentative 2021 events include:

**April 21** - Windows Of Understanding Climate Change Conversation

**April 28** - Silent No More: Congregational Anti-Racism. Hosted by First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen featuring a conversation with author Dr. Ibram X. Kendi. The program focuses on ways houses of worship can find a common voice to promote antiracism. HRC will amplify event on social media.

**May** - Metuchen World Day, date TBD. Event will be reimaged from past years due to the pandemic. HRC's goal is to find ways to foster dialogue amongst the community.

Subcommittee: Reena / Asela / Nadia / Michelle / Amanda / Shannan

**June** - LGBTQ+ Event, format and date TBD

**September** - Indigenous Peoples Day event, format and date TBD

**December** - Human Rights Day event, format and date TBD

### **Social Media Strategy**

Members can forward related articles to Hazel-Anne and Richard so they can be posted on social media sites. We hope to broaden our message and possibly use a social media management platform like Hoot Suite. Social Media

Subcommittee: Hazel-Anne, Nadia, Andrea, Richard, Michelle

### **Community Member & High School Student Involvement**

There is a high school student committee for equity and racial justice that has created informative videos utilized to facilitate poster creation by our middle school students as a part of a Black History Month assignment. HRC would like to invite these students to a future meeting and see how it can help amplify their message.

### **Board Of Education Update**

The BOE is using tools like virtual tutoring and other digital means to minimize the learning gap during the ongoing pandemic. The BOE wants all students to have the necessary resources for success. BOE is also accepting feedback about how students are doing with mental health issues and what can be done to minimize student challenges with virtual learning.

### **Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates**

Mar 18 - How To Be A Better Ally To Our Black Neighbors presented with Temple Emanu-El @ 7:30 PM

<https://www.edisontemple.org/event/how-to-be-an-ally-to-our-black-neighbors.html>

Apr 21 - Windows Of Understanding - Climate Change Conversation @ 7:30 PM

April 28 - Silent No More: Congregational Anti-Racism hosted by First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/146476995637>

May 21 - Metuchen World Day, details TBD

### **2021 Metuchen HRC Meeting Schedule**

Apr. 6 | May 4 | Jun. 1 | Jul. 6 | Aug. 3 | Sep. 7 | Oct. 5 | Nov. 2 | Dec. 7

**Adjourned: 9:01 PM**