

Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, July 5, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Call To Order: 7:35pm

Attendance of Commission Members & Liasons

✓	1. Joel Branch (Council Liaison)		2. Khalila Cruz (Member)	✓	3. Shannan Foat-Gelber (Member)
	4. Rebecca Greenbaum (Member)	✓	5. Laura Hermans (Secretary)		6. Jacqueline Ho (Member)
	7. Dylan Jaques (HS Junior Liaison)	✓	8. Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus (Chair & BOE Liaison)		9. Abdullah Khan (Member)
✓	10. Amanda Lin (Member)		11. Joanne Cruz (Member)		12. Andrea Orlando (Member)
	13. Edward Porowski (School District Liaison)		14. Michelle Tang (HS Senior Liaison)		15. Nadia Tariq (Co-Chair)
	16. Bobbie Theivakumaran (MDA Liaison)		17. Edmund Zelley (MEAICA Liaison)		18. Audra Sbarra (Accessibility Committee Liaison)

Welcome to any members of the public/public comment: Hazel-Anne M. Johnson-Marcus

- Maria Orchid - Representing the Edison Human Relations Commission.

Review & Approval of June minutes: Laura Hermans

June Attendance: Khalila, Laura, Dylan, Hazel-Anne, Joanne, Michelle, Nadia, Audra, Ed Z.

- Not enough members present for a quorum, June minutes approval postponed until our next meeting in September..

Old Business:

- [Williams Scholarship](#)
 - The Inaugural Williams Scholarship was awarded to Sayuri Govender. The Scholarship Subcommittee sent a congratulatory letter along with the check from scholarship founder, Mr. James Belikove, which was presented at the Metuchen High School Scholarship Award ceremony on June 21st.
- Juneteenth & Pride Events
 - Kudos to the subcommittees and all who were able to participate in the events!
 - A community member suggested we fly the pride flag prominently for next year's pride month.
 - Planning for next year should start soon. In the future, we should strive to have event subcommittees formed by December.

New Business

- Metuchen Police Department - Chief Flaherty
 - The Police department is prioritizing being inclusive, engaged, welcoming, and present in the community.

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- In the future, a Police Liaison will be present at every MHRC meeting. A different Officer may be present at each meeting to allow us to get to know the members of the police force.
- Metuchen HRC & YMCA Partnership
 - Melinda DiBenedetto - Metuchen YMCA Board Manager and member of DEI committee for MEWSA YMCA. This partnership can amplify our messages through social media. Future collaborations could include Hispanic Heritage Month and Metuchen Borough Dance Party.
- Hispanic Heritage Month Subcommittee
 - Subcommittee members are strongly encouraged to begin meeting and planning now.
- Metuchen Farmers' Market Table
 - Volunteers needed for Saturday, July 16th. MHRC members are encouraged to volunteer for a shift.
 - Volunteers should plan our table display and prepare literature/QR codes for distribution.

Liaison Reports

- *Hazel-Anne Marcus Johnson (Board of Education Liaison)*
 - The Board of Education is awaiting response from New Jersey about state aid for the referendum.
- *Joel Branch (Council Liaison)*
 - In response to public comments during Council meetings about the natural gas power station in Woodbridge; What can Metuchen Borough do to further promote healthy, clean living in Metuchen? Potential partnership with the Metuchen Environmental Commission for an online community conversation. Topics could include:
 - Composting, lower carbon footprint, healthy lifestyle
 - Intersections between income level and where these facilities are commonly built
 - With the goal of bringing people together and being inclusive, the Borough could host a multigenerational, cross cultural dance party on the Plaza. This event could include a DJ and public lessons for different types of dance. Melinda DiBenedetto is exploring the possibility of the YMCA providing a public Zumba class at the event. Potential event name: “#OneMetuchen Dance Party on the Plaza”. Tentative date: October 30, 2022.

Other New Business

- Michelle has identified a potential HS Junior Liaison, waiting on confirmation.
- Upcoming Events: Hispanic Heritage Month, Winter Festival, Human Rights Day

2022 Meeting Dates:

Sept. 6 | Oct. 4 | Nov. 1 | Dec. 6

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Adjourned: 8:48p