

## Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

### Metuchen Borough Hall

Start Time: 7:32pm

✓	1. Suneet Bhatt (Member)	✓	2. Joel Branch (Council Liaison)	✓	3. Joanne Cruz (Member)
✓	4. Khalila Cruz (Member)	✓	5. Arthur Flaherty (MPD Liaison)	✓	6. Laura Hermans (Secretary)
	7. Jacqueline Ho (Member)	✓	8. Dylan Jaques (HS Senior Liaison)	✓	9. Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus (Chair & BOE Liaison)
✓	10. Amanda Lin (Member)	✓	11. Tara Matisse (Member)	✓	12. Andrea Orlando (Member)
✓	13. Edward Porowski (School District Liaison)	✓	14. Emma Staal (HS Junior Liaison)	✓	15. Nadia Tariq (Vice Chair)
	16. Bobbie Theivakumaran (MDA Liaison)	✓	17. Bhavi Vyas (Member)		18. Edmund Zelley (MEAICA Liaison)

**Welcome to members of the public/public comment:** Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus, Chair

- Shannan Foat-Gelber
- Shailen Gandhi

### Introductions

**Reorganization meeting:** Joel Branch, Council Liaison

- Nomination and election of officers: Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary
  - Chair
    - Nadia Tariq moved to nominate Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus for Chair, Khalila Cruz seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.
  - Vice Chair
    - Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus moved to nominate Nadia Tariq for Vice Chair, Dylan Jaques seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.
  - Secretary
    - Nadia Tariq moved to nominate Laura Hermans for Secretary, Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

**Review & Approval of December 2022 minutes:** Laura Hermans

- December 2022 Meeting Attendance: Khalila, Shannan, Laura, Jackie, Dylan, Hazel-Anne, Amanda, Andrea, Emma, Nadia
- Laura Hermans requested approval of the December 2022 minutes.
  - Nadia Tariq moved and Khalila Cruz seconded

### Old Business:

- Human Rights Day 2022: Thank you to all volunteers!
- Windows of Understanding 2023 Community Partners: Metuchen Police Department & First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry
  - Bicycle patrol - Chief Flaherty is pleased with the Police Department's involvement with Windows of Opportunity. With the goal of maintaining trust and open communication,

## Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

### Metuchen Borough Hall

the Metuchen Police Department strives to maintain engagement and a strong relationship with our community.

- The Windows of Understanding Community Conversation hosted by the Metuchen Human Relations Commission in partnership with the Metuchen Arts Council will be held on Thursday, March 23, 2023 at the Metuchen Public library from 7:30pm-9:00pm.

### **New Business:**

- All members are asked to update information on the Member contact list, this form will be distributed to all members via email.
- All members are encouraged to sign up for Subcommittees. The Subcommittee sign-up sheet will be distributed via email.
- We will distribute MHRC Google Calendar meeting invitations to members with Gmail accounts.
- 2023 Subcommittees
  - Lunar New Year Celebration (January 28th 1:00pm-2:30pm )
    - Metuchen Town Plaza
    - Presented in partnership with the Metuchen Downtown Alliance
  - Black History Month (February)
    - Montford Point Marines Community Conversation
      - In 1942, for the first time in the United States Marine Corps' history, black men were allowed to enlist and train at Montford Point, a segregated boot camp located in Jacksonville, NC. Two of these gentlemen; Sgt. Austin F. Banks (1923-2021) and Cpl. Daniel E. Robinson (1925-2013) were both from Metuchen, NJ and were recipients of the Congressional Gold Medal for their service during WWII.
  - Windows of Understanding (March 23, 2023 from 7:30pm-9:00pm)
  - Women's History Month (March)
  - Neurodiversity Celebration Week (March 13th-19th)
  - Autism Acceptance Month (April)
  - AAPI Heritage Month (May)
    - How to be a Better Ally to your Asian Neighbors Community Conversation
  - Jewish American Heritage Month (May)
  - UN World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue & Development (May 21st)
  - Pride Month (June)
    - Town event on June 3rd in partnership with Metuchen Downtown Alliance
    - We discussed a desire to see more pride flags displayed more prominently throughout our downtown during June.
    - Potential development of awards from the HRC to community businesses for being inclusive and accepting to all in the community. This would be a positive way to encourage businesses to show support with a pride flag.
    - Potential rainbow patterned crosswalk art
  - Juneteenth (June 17th)
    - Potential Discussion Panel - "How are those 2020 DEI goals going?"
    - Event date TBD in partnership with Metuchen Downtown Alliance
  - Hispanic Heritage Month (September-October)
    - Event date TBD in partnership with Metuchen Downtown Alliance
  - Thomas Mundy Peterson Day of Democracy (October 6th)

## Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

### Metuchen Borough Hall

- Indigenous Peoples Day (October 9th)
- Winter Festival Parade (November 26)
- Marketing Approaches
  - Jackie will develop a social media post schedule.
  - Utilize more community groups: Mommas of Metuchen
  - Utilize Canva
    - Dylan has experience with this program and will need a transparent PNG of our HRC logo.

### Liaison Reports

- *Arthur Flaherty (MPD Liaison)*
  - Metuchen Police Department is implementing the Safe Place Initiative within the next few months
    - Originated in the Seattle Police Department
    - This is a partnership between the Metuchen Police Department and Metuchen Businesses. Participating businesses will provide a safe place for victims, while help is called. Safe Place empowers victims to report incidents to police so the crime can be properly investigated. This program is free for businesses, who will receive a rainbow shield sticker and training materials at no cost. The goal is to bridge the gap between victims and police. This program says to any victim of Bias or Hate Crime that “You will be heard, you will be treated with care, dignity and respect from the business you enter to find help in, as well as from Law Enforcement Officers from your agency who respond to investigate”.
- *Dylan Jaques (HS Senior Liaison)*
  - Students are pursuing implementation of a DEI suggestion box at Metuchen High School.
- *Hazel-Anne Johnson-Marcus (BOE Liaison)*
  - Johnathan Lifton has been elected as the new President and Brian Glassberg as the new Vice President. The board continues planning for referendum implementation. Work will probably begin at the younger grade level schools and progress to upper grade level schools. A Board Construction Committee will help oversee this process.
- *Ed Porowski (School District Liaison)*
  - Staff and students will attend the Day of Dialogue workshop on Thursday, January 19th
  - Director of School Counseling: HiTOPS will implement training for staff and students. Content will focus on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.
- *Bobbie Theivakumaran (MDA Liaison)*
  - Lunar New Year Celebration: Saturday, January 28th at 1:00 pm
    - Classical Chinese Dancing, MHS Asian Heritage Club Lion Dance, Korean Drummers & Fan Dancers, Fong Lion Dancers Professional Dance Troupe, Parade around Main street
- *Ed Zelley (MEAIKA Liaison)*
  - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Service at New Hope Baptist Church: Sunday, January 15 at 3:00 pm - all are invited.

### Next Month's Agenda

- Please email ideas for topics of discussion during February's meeting to Hazel-Anne, Nadia and Laura.

**Metuchen Human Relations Commission**

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**Metuchen Borough Hall**

**2023 Meeting Dates:**

**February 7 | March 7 | April 18 | May 2 | June 6 | July 11 | September 5 | October 3 |  
November 7 | December 5**

Adjourned: 9:08pm