

Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, Jan 8, 2019

Reorganization and Regular Meeting Minutes

Reorganization Meeting called to order by Ms. Jiorle at 7:30 PM sharp on January 8, 2019.

Attendees: Sophie Falkenstein, Jordan Valliquette, Ben Small, Kevin McPeek, Leah Jiorle, Father Ed Zelley, Sheri-Rose Rubin, Richard Green, III, Reena Wade, Ozair Omarzai and Rob Facchini.

Remote Attendees: Hazel-Anne Johnson, Asela Mourao and Nicole Blankiet

2019 Officers* – Ms. Leah Jiorle is stepping down from chair position. Nicole Blankiet and Hazel-Anne Johnson were elected as co-chairs. There was an agreement to add an additional two citizen members. Based on the co-chair leadership in lieu of Chair and Vice-chair positions and additional members, the Charter will need to be updated. Reena Wade stepped down from the Secretary position. There were no volunteers for the Secretary position and the interim plan was to rotate note/minute taking among members with Ozair Omarzai to take February 2019 minutes.

Communication - Channels were briefly discussed. MHRC currently has email, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

2019 Sub-committees*

Rapid Response Team – Nicole Blankiet, Richard Green, Hazel-Anne Johnson, Sheri-Rose , Jordan and Leah

Outreach: Educational Asela, Hazel-Anne, Kevin and Ed

Other sub-committees: Reena, Nicole, Asela and Richard

2019 Meeting Dates, Second Tuesday of Month**

- January 8
- February 12
- March 12
- April 9
- May 14
- June 11
- July/Aug Break? Discuss
- September 10
- October 8
- November 12
- December 10

Regular Meeting Called to order at 8:09 PM sharp

The December 2018 Meeting Minutes were approved*.

*Ben Small left the meeting, however, all others in attendance voted in favor.

**Meeting dates approved but may be revisited based on changes to 2019 Board of Education and Borough Council Meeting days.

Report from the Council Liaison: Council-person Rubin advised at the next Borough Council Meeting she will propose an update to the Ordinance, which would include two (2) additional citizen members. She also shared that the Metuchen Human Relations Commission would pair with the Accessibility Commission. The new Chair of the Accessibility Commission is Jen Asprocolas. The Accessibility Commission meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

There were no comments from the public.

Old Business

Diversity Workshop - Ms. Johnson provided an update on the 2019 Diversity workshop. The sub-committee created a survey for businesses in town to identify what specifics of training are most needed and how to schedule to accommodate more businesses in attendance.

Website Update - The Borough has updated the website with photos, resources, etc.

New Business

Book Club/Speaker Series - Ms. Jiorle provided an update about her meeting with those at the Metuchen Library to form partnership regarding the 2019 book series. The library will supply refreshments and can assist with nominal speaker fees, if needed. The proposed dates being discussed are all Wednesdays (4/10/19, 7/27/19, 8/4/19, or 11/13/19). The first book will be A More Beautiful & Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History by Jeanne Theoharis. The discussion included potential moderators, leaders and speakers.

February Black History Month Event - The subcommittee provided a brief update and the plan is to have a panel. The subcommittee was looking into the BIL as a venue.

Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates

- Next meeting - Tuesday February 5, 2019

Current Commission Members

1. Nicole Blankiet
2. Sophie Falkenstein
3. Richard Green, III
4. Leah Jiorle
5. Hazel-Anne Johnson
6. Sheri-Rose Rubin
7. Kevin McPeek
8. Asela Mourao
9. Jordan Valliquette
10. Ozair Omarzai
11. Ben Small
12. Reena Wade
13. Ed Zelle

*Intern: Rob Facchini