

Metuchen Human Relations Commission

November 2018 Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:35 PM by Ms. Jiorle on November 6, 2018.

Attendees: Nicole Blankiet, Rob Facchini, Sophie Falkenstein, Leah Jiorle, Hazel-Anne Johnson, Asela Mourao, Ozair Omarzai, Ben Small (via telephone), Jordan Valliquette, and Reena Wade

The October 2018 Meeting Minutes were approved.

There were no comments from the public nor a Counsel Liaison Report.

Old Business

2019 Diversity Training Workshop- The Workshop will be in the January / February time-frame. Ms. Johnson will discuss workshop with Council-person Shari Rubenstein. At the December meeting, Ms. Johnson will provide an update.

Subcommittees for 2019 – The Commission revisited the make-up of the sub-committees for 2019. Jordon Valliquette has been added to the Black History sub-committee.

New Business

Winter Festival Parade – The Commission will participate for the second year in the town Winter Festival Parade. This year the theme is, "Baby, It's Cold Outside". The HRC will hold the Commission banner and meet on Brunswick Avenue at 3:30 pm on November 25, 2018 for a 4pm start.

Human Rights Day event – The Commission will celebrate Human Rights Day (December 10, 2018 observed) on Sunday, December 9, 2018. The time will be TBD but the event will be at the Metuchen Library at 4pm. Ms. Wade and Ms. Johnson will read books about human rights to the children in attendance.

Open Discussion- The Commission discussed activities for the past year and possible areas for future growth and additional areas for impact and awareness in the community. Possible ideas discussed were:

- Book Series – Considered identifying books that residents could read and then meet to discuss. A planned speaker could lead a discussion regarding the book. Next steps, collect lists of potential books for 2019.
- Speaker Series- Considered types of discussions, ideas for potential speakers (possibly professors from nearby universities) and topics.

- Training – Consider what training may benefit MHRC members as we become more active in serving the community.
- Connecting to other HRCs – Potentially meeting with, sharing best practices and co-sponsoring events with other HCRs.
- Creating Awareness of MHRC – As MHRC is in its early stages we need to ensure our community and neighboring communities are aware of the existence of the commission and how we can help. Mr. Small will advertise upcoming events (Human Rights Day / Winter Parade) at Board of Education meetings.
- Brochures – Creation of a brochure to identify who the MHRC is, what they do and how they can be of service to the Community.
- Welcome Packet Material for New Businesses and/or New Residents – Considered creating brochures and welcome packets.
- Creation of a Logo – This would be used to enhance MHRC brand and identification for materials and channels of communications.
- Social Media – School commission members advised that to reach youth, the social media channels must be used.
- Specific Areas of Concern: Human trafficking and hate crimes.
- Communications / Technology: For reporting concerns, the Commission needs to investigate channels where there can be anonymous reporting. There was a suggestion for the Commission to connect with Councilman, Jason Delia.

Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates

- Next meeting – December 4, 2018

Current Commission Members

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