

Metuchen Human Relations Commission

Tuesday, June 12th 2019

Meeting

Call Meeting to order at 7:40 PM sharp: Hazel-Anne Johnson & Nicole Blankiet

In attendance: Nicole Blankiet, Sophie Falkenstein, Hazel-Anne Johnson, Richard Green, III, Asela Mourao, Ozair Omarzai, Sheri-Rose Rubin, Jordan Valiquette, Reena Wade, Intern- Rob Facchini

Welcome to any members of the public/public comment: Hazel-Anne Johnson & Nicole Blankiet

Review & Approval of May minutes: Asela Mourao- approved

Report from the Council Liaison: Sheri-Rose Rubin

- Passed the Budget at last night's Borough Council Meeting with new infrastructure projects upcoming including The Forum Arts Project and Metuchen Public Library
- Working on a ban on the sale of dogs at stores in town (in the future)
- At the next Council Meeting on 6/24, two SOFI Awards will be presented (Shout- Out for Inclusion)
- There is a backlog of ordinances to add two new members but interested persons can participate as a member of the public in the meantime
- Neve Shalom is planning an event around the recent immigrant experience, titled "World Cafe: A Community Conversation" on Sept 22, 2019 and the HRC could participate in some way
- Employee had been spoken to previous to the Council Liaison reaching out to the Chief regarding the Traffic & Parking Officer who was wearing a Blue Lives Matter shirt

Comments sent from the public: Hazel-Anne Johnson - none

Old Business and Next Steps:

- 2019 Diversity & Inclusion Training Workshop update.
Hazel-Anne: Training session scheduled with Metuchen Chamber of Commerce at September quarterly meeting. Will work with Sheri-Rose and Tyreen Reuter to clarify details before their June 18th meeting.
- HRC Website update: Would like to add May 2019 World Day photos and links to our three social media accounts, Facebook, Instagram, and the newly created Twitter account @MetuchenHRC. Access to humanrelations@metuchen.com and Richard will reach out to J Muldoon as the Borough Business Administrator
- Book Club/Speaker Series update - Leah (via email)
 - Next speaker date is August 28, 2019, 7-9pm
 - Ethel Brooks, Rutgers Professor & Metuchen resident to speak at November 13th book club event.
- Ordinance to add additional Commission members Update: Sheri-Rose (see above)
- Grant Speaker Discussion update- Sheri-Rose- The HRC has to select as a group the Speaker and a couple of potential dates and reach out to the Grant Writer to apply for it. Nicole will coordinate that.

New Business

- Yoga at the Plaza on June 23rd celebration to honor International Yoga Day (UN). HRC has been made Co-Sponsors. Organizers would like HRC to write something up about its significance, or yoga on the HR/UN perspective: Reena has written something and Nicole will read it at the opening.
- Looking ahead to a HS student to replace Sophie for the next school year, we will ask the Empowerment Club's Advisor for a recommendation

- LGBTQ+ Pride Month Event Discussion - Richard was approached about a Drag Queen Story Hour event and then made contacts and has story books and will try to pull it together for June 22nd or 23rd and possibly the Metuchen Public Library
- Discussion about when to make a report to the Borough Council & Public
- Sheri-Rose suggested Metuchen having its own Pride Parade in the future or some event the Plaza and Richard is interested in investigating options
- Sheri-Rose brought up having one person be the go-to for all the social media postings, in other words be responsible for sharing the information on all platforms. Discussion happened regarding who is more familiar with what platforms and sharing that responsibility. Also we agreed that we should all share info/ events from HRC to our personal pages & groups even more.

Upcoming Meeting/Important Dates

- Yoga at the Plaza June 23rd, 2019
- Next HRC meeting is July 9th and none in August
- Book Club Speaker Series – August 28th and November 13th, 2019
- Winter Parade -November
- Metuchen Country Fair – October 5th, 2019
- Human Rights Day in December
- MLK Day in 2020

Adjourned: 8:48 pm

Current Commission Members

1. Nicole Blankiet	2. Sophie Falkenstein	3. Richard Green, III
4. Leah Jiorle	5. Hazel-Anne Johnson	6. Kevin McPeek
7. Asela Mourao	8. Ozair Omarzai	9. Sheri-Rose Rubin
10. Ben Small	11. Jordan Valiquette	12. Reena Wade
13. Ed Zellej	14. *Intern: Rob Facchini	