



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, February 2, 2017**

Present Commissioners: Chanta Bhan, Nicholas Leydon, Bonita Cox, Olinda Marshall, Cynthia Orellana, and CHRC Staff Nancy Schlacter, Crystal Rosa, Attorney/Investigator Acloque, CPD Dept. Supt. Steve DeMarco, Sergeant Louis Cherubino and Detective Steven Edwards.

Absent Commissioners: Nadia Davila, Sabrina Selk, Chara Itoka, and Mercedes Evans.

Documents Used:

- January Minutes
- February Agenda
- Handouts from Cambridge Police Department about Massachusetts General Hospital Freedom Clinic for survivors of exploitation and human trafficking of labor, sex, and organ trafficking
- Human Rights Commission Presentation Outline

1. Call to order

Chair Bhan called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Review and approval of January Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the January meeting and edits discussed. Minutes will be approved at the March meeting once edits are completed.

4. Executive Director's Report

ED Schlacter updated the Commission on cases, staff activities and outreach. Since the January meeting, no new cases opened, 1 case pending, and 3 cases closed. The pending case involves a housing complaint alleging discrimination against a person with a disability. All closed cases involved housing complaints, 2 for racial discrimination based on color, and the third closed case involved racial discrimination and national origin discrimination. Attorney Investigator Acloque participated in a Civic Unity Commission meeting about cross-Commission collaborations. ED Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Acloque attended CET's Network Event Planning Team (NEPT) event focused on how to outreach effectively to Spanish-speaking communities.

5. Presentation by CPD Special Investigations Unit Sergeant Cherubino, Detective Edwards and Deputy Superintendent DeMarco

CPD has collected data on Human Trafficking in Cambridge for 20-25 years. The police department has moved from arresting the person engaged in sex work to a victim-centered approach and instead provides social services to the exploited person. The paradigm shift explains why there are fewer arrests made at present day. When CPD officers are in contact with someone who engages in sex work, they conduct an assessment, asking a series of questions to determine whether they are victims of human trafficking. CPD officers determine whether the individual requires immediate removal from their situation and transfer to a

safer location. Sergeant Cherubino explained these are similar to steps taken when CPD officers respond to incidents of domestic violence.

CPD has partnerships with local hotels and provides training on the warning signs of human trafficking. CPD also conducts weekly outreach to homeless people. Sergeant Cherubino explained that hundreds of individuals are recruited into sex work or labor through force, fraud, coercion and narcotics. Sergeant Cherubino further explained that the opioid epidemic has contributed to the cycle of recruitment and individuals being sold, along with putting homeless people at risk of being exploited. Sergeant Cherubino described the Human Trafficking as modern day slavery.

CPD gets its information from hotel management, anonymous tips and social media. Sergeant Cherubino encouraged the Commission to say something if they see something suspicious. According to Sergeant Cherubino, it is better to rule it out than not look into it.

Some warning signs are:

- Behaviors that indicate someone is not free to leave, is unusually fearful, or appears to be under the control of someone nearby.
- Areas of concern are libraries and public gathering places.
- Individuals most affected are usually under the age of 18 but appear older than they are and are provocatively dress.
- The exploited person may or may not be paid, or allowed breaks.
- There is usually a large debt involved.
- The individual may appear disoriented, confused and malnourished, or have physical signs of abuse, and lack healthcare.
- Individuals disconnected from their families or runaways are often recruited and then become addicted to substances.

CPD partnered with Debra Fortson on an awareness piece about human trafficking called *Body and Sold*. CPD was a part of a panel discussion at the Central Square Theatre. Sergeant Cherubino is hoping the play will be shown at schools. Additionally, CCTV is working on an awareness piece for the community based on *Body and Sold*.

CPD is also working with the courts to develop a training called “John Suppression,” which attempts to reduce the need for exploited sex or labor by reducing demand. The mandatory training would be education on the effects of exploitation and trauma on the victim. Currently, the law does not punish “Johns” well enough to deter them and victims often fail to testify because of intimidation or shame. At present, there is pending legislation in the Massachusetts Senate to address these concerns.

Sergeant Cherubino provided information on MGH Freedom Clinic, which provides healthcare and other social service referrals to survivors of exploitation and human trafficking of labor, sex and organ trafficking.

6. December Meeting Follow Up

- **Debt-bondage in Cambridge immigrant community**
Chair Bhan met with Senator Montigny to find out what would be helpful regarding House Bill No 4595 Anti-human Trafficking Law (Senate, No. 2461). The bill is being resubmitted with slight updates. Chair Bhan confirmed that there is an education component in the Bill for the Trafficker, as previously explained by Sergeant Cherubino.
- **Fair Housing Event**

Scheduled Saturday, April 29, 2017, from 10 am - 2 pm, to be located in the CRLS main cafeteria. CHRC staff has started planning the logistics for the event and has started designing the marketing materials for distribution and promotion. Once materials are completed, Project Coordinator Rosa will send them to the Commission for review. Project Coordinator Rosa will also email the Commission information about the possible panel discussions for help with formatting questions.

- **Housing Programs in Cambridge**

Commissioners expressed interest regarding Section 8 vouchers and how they work in connection with Cambridge Housing programs. Specifically, Commissioner Cox is interested in understanding voucher portability, i.e. whether a Cambridge resident with a Section 8 voucher can return to Cambridge after they have moved outside of the City to use a voucher. This topic will be covered during the April Fair Housing event.

- **Speakers on Gentrification**

Commissioners expressed interest regarding a speaker on gentrification, specifically about housing and the small business community in Cambridge. Chris Cotter, Director of Housing, is tentatively scheduled for May or June. This topic will not be covered during the April Fair Housing event.

- **Fair Housing Ordinance**

FHO under review by the City Law Dept. to prepare for Home Rule petition to Legislature.

New Business

- **Human Rights Vacancies**

ED Schlacter explained that the applicants for the two vacancies are representative of residents in Cambridge. There are 3 interviews left to conduct and 2 that have been rescheduled to February 13, 2017. Interviews and selections will be completed within the next month.

- **Spring CLC presentations**

The Human Rights Commission will provide training to English language learners at the Community Learning Center (CLC) in May. ED Schlacter is in contact with Nicole Ivins from CLC, and will organize trainings based on interested teachers who sign up for a CHRC presentation for their classes.

- **HUD Performance Appraisal**

The HUD Performance Appraisal is scheduled for Thursday, February 9th. ED Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Acloque are prepared for the review.

- **Sanctuary City letter in support**

Commissioner Leydon asked the Commission to support a letter to Cambridge legislators to uphold Cambridge values as a Sanctuary City. The Commission was interested in seeing a draft letter. Commissioner Leydon will draft the letter and send it to ED Schlacter, who will share it with members of the commission. Discussion of edits to the letter will be discussed at the March meeting.

Commissioner Orellana moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Cox.

Next Commission meeting will be Thursday, March 2, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Rm on the 2nd Flr.