



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, January 9, 2020**

Present: Co-Chair Joshua Stadlan, Commissioners Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Michael Kourabas, Katie Stack, Olinda Marshall, Kuong Ly, Police Deputy Superintendent Robert Lowe, CHRC Staff: Executive Director Nancy Schlacter and Attorney Investigator Sabrina Acloque

Absent: Co-Chair Mercedes Evans, Commissioners Kaleigh Callender, Bonita Cox, Brandon Morgan, Sabrina Selk, and CHRC Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa

Documents Used:

- December Minutes
- Email from Betsy Allen
- Community Development Department Housing Information Sessions Flyer
- 2019 Cambridge Hate Crime Review PowerPoint

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Stadlan called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. Ellen Frith, a member of the public was present.

2. Public Comment

A woman who identified herself as Reverend Ellen Frith stated that it was difficult for people with disabilities to access Story Street in Harvard Square and expressed her disappointment because she feels that people with disabilities are not being served.

3. Presentation by Cambridge Police Deputy Superintendent Rob Lowe on Hate Crimes and CPD's Procedural Justice Initiative

Police Deputy Superintendent Robert Lowe made a presentation on hate crimes occurring in Cambridge and across the nation. Dep. Supt. Lowe stated that prior to September 11, 2001, many hate crime incidents targeted Muslims; however, since September 11, 2001, hate crimes targeting Jewish people have increased across the nation. Dep. Supt. Lowe stated that hate crimes increased in Cambridge in 2019, as compared to 2018. Dep. Supt. Lowe stated that there were 18 hate crime incidents reported in Cambridge in 2019, and 16 incidents reported in 2018, for a 13% increase. Of the 18 hate crime incidents reported in Cambridge in 2019, 32% were religiously motivated, 47% were racially motivated, and there were four incidents (21%) based on gender identity or sexual orientation. There were no incidents motivated by nationality, gender or disability reported in Cambridge in 2019.

Dep. Supt. Lowe also presented on the Cambridge Police Department (CPD)'s Procedural Justice Initiative, which is an initiative to enhance police and community relations by

proactively monitoring data relating to police-citizen interactions for indications of possible racial profiling and racially biased policing (including use of force incidents). The Office of Procedural Justice will also assess the CPD's compliance with statutes, ordinances, and regulations aimed at mandating accountability.

4. Review and approval of December 2019 Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the December 5th meeting. Commissioner Ly moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Stack.

5. Executive Director's Report

ED Schlacter updated the members of the Commission on cases. Since the December meeting, one new case has opened, resulting in five cases pending. Three of the cases involve a claim of discrimination in housing based on the person's disability. One case involves a claim of discrimination in a place of public accommodation based on national origin and gender identity, and the other involves a claim of discrimination in a place of public accommodation based on race. ED Schlacter informed the Commission that the Cambridge City Council voted to approve the Commission's Fair Housing Ordinance on December 9, 2019. ED Schlacter updated the Commission on staff training and activities. Attorney Investigator Acloque attended the Suffolk University Brown Bag Luncheon on December 11, 2019. Attorney Investigator Acloque and ED Schlacter attended a Networking Event Planning Team meeting on December 12, 2019 and played "Factuality," a boardgame which explores systemic racism with participants. Attorney Investigator Acloque attended a Fair Housing and Education Training in Silver Spring, MD from December 3-6, 2019.

6. Chair/Co-Chair Election for 2020

The Commission voted unanimously to elect Commissioners Yasmin Padamsee Forbes and Michael Kourabas as Co-chairs for this year.

7. December Meeting Follow up:

- **DEI Dir. Allen's presentation in October: follow up question sent @ AA/PI efforts by DEI**

Commissioner Ly wanted to know why there is a disparity between the percentage of Asian residents who work for the City as compared to the percentage of those who live in Cambridge. Commissioner Ly wanted to know if the City was undertaking any efforts to overcome this disparity. ED Schlacter followed up with Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Director, Betsy Allen, and shared Director Allen's email response to the Commission, in which Director Allen stated that she will contact Cliff Cook from the Community Development Department to find out if he has any data on the characteristics and employment profile for the Asian American/Pacific Islander (AA/PI) community to help determine whether there need to be more targeted efforts to recruit more members of the AA/PI community. Commissioner Ly suggested a survey for members of the AA/PI community to find out if they have an interest in working

for the City. Commissioner Ly also suggested that the Commission should look into the percentages of the AA/PI community who live in and work for the City of Boston to see if there are similar disparities between residents and AA/PI members of their workforce.

Commissioner Stack suggested following up with Director Allen to find out more about the City's outreach efforts to the AA/PI community. Co-Chair Stadlan suggested that Commissioners could find out if there are organizations serving the AA/PI community and to note what trends these organizations are observing regarding servicing the AA/PI community. Commissioner Ly suggested reaching out to Bethany Lee at GBLS about work she is involved with regarding the AA/PI community. The Commission would like to find out Cliff Cook's response to Director Allen's email prior to his April 2, 2020 presentation at the Commission meeting. Follow up regarding this matter will be discussed at the next Commission meeting.

- **CPSD Dep. Supt. Turk agreed to present on 5/7/20 on progress on CPSD/CRLS equity and inclusion efforts (In conjunction w/CPSD Dir. of Diversity & Development Ramon DeJesus on recruitment, hiring and promotions within CPSD).**

Commissioners should think of questions to ask Dep. Supt. Turk and Dir. DeJesus at their May 7, 2020 presentation to the Commission. Commissioner Kourabas explained that there had been controversy over the "N" word that was spoken by a panelist who was invited by a CRLS History teacher to do a presentation at the high school. An investigation was underway and the teacher was blamed for sponsoring the event.

- **Cliff Cook scheduled for Demographics Presentation on 4/2/19.**

8. New Business

- Co-Chair Stadlan hasn't aggregated the data or done any analysis yet regarding his research into case files on recurrent issues or locations for housing complaints. Co-Chair Stadlan stated that he would like to place this matter on the bench until he has more information on it.
- The Cambridge Public Library Youth Services Department would like to partner with the Commission for its Summer Reading Program. The theme for this year's program is "Imagine Your Story," in which the library would like to explore identity and how it relates to children's own life stories. The library would like to know if Commissioners are interested in presenting or co-presenting an activity with the Youth Services staff at one or more library locations, relating to the work

Commissioners do for the Commission and how it relates to the lives of young people. Commissioners Kourabas, Padamsee Forbes and Marshall expressed an interest in the event; however, the Commission as a whole would like more information about what is envisioned by the library. Commissioners wanted more information about whether the event will be during the day or during the evening; on a weekday or weekend; and whether the library wants Commissioners to speak about their professional or personal life stories. Attorney Investigator Acloque stated she would follow up with Clara Hendricks at the Cambridge Public Library to obtain additional information.

9. Outreach

- The Community Development Department will be hosting upcoming housing information sessions, including one on January 21, 2020 at the Central Square Branch Library at 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., and on February 25, 2020 at the Citywide Senior Center at 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. ED Schlacter asked whether Commissioners would be able to table on these dates. Co-Chair Stadlan stated that he might be available to table at the information session on February 25, 2020. ED Schlacter will forward the CDD Affordable Housing Information Sessions Flyer to Commissioners regarding tabling on additional dates.
- Project Coordinator Rosa is working with the PIO Intern Designer on creating the layout for a general CHRC brochure. Project Coordinator Rosa and the intern are trying a different format and a different look.
- ED Schlacter will be making a CHRC presentation at CPD's Community Stakeholders Meeting on January 16, 2020 at Biogen, located at 225 Binney Street in Cambridge, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Police Dep. Supt. Lowe stated they are expecting between 50 to 100 people. Anyone interested in attending has to email Police Dep. Supt. Lowe so their name can be added to the security list.

10. Future Planning

The April Fair Housing Event is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2020, and will take place at the Cambridge Rindge & Latin School (CRLS) Main Cafeteria. Project Coordinator Rosa will confirm the date soon. Commissioners should let ED Schlacter know if they can help out at the event.

Commissioner Kourabas moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Padamsee Forbes.

Next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, February 6, 2020, in the Large Conference Room on the 2nd Floor at 6:00 p.m.