

# Cambridge Human Rights Commission Thursday, June 6, 2013

Present: Commissioners Elaine Angelone, Chanta Bhan, Bonita Cox, Mercedes Evans, Melissa Gonzalez-Brenes, Caitlin Steirman, Randa Shedid, Brendan St. Amant, and City staff Nancy Schlacter, Mariah Freark and Carmen S. Negrón.

Guest: Police Superintendent Chris Burke.

Absent: Commissioners Matthew Barrett and Adrian Velazquez.

#### **Documents Used:**

- May 2013 minutes
- Proposal from Jane Chiang
- Email from Michelle Sprengnether

#### 1. Call to order

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

### 2. Public Comment

No members of the public were present for public comment.

## 3. Review and Approval of May Minutes

The May minutes were approved with a minor correction. Commissioner Gonzalez-Brenes moved to approve and Commissioner Evans seconded and the motion was unanimously approved (Commissioners Angelone, Bhan, Cox, Evans, Gonzalez-Brenes, Steirman, Shedid and St. Amant).

### 4. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Schlacter reported on staff activities including trainings and the draft Summer Newsletter created by Office Manager Negrón. She informed the Commission about CHRC's partnership with Suffolk University Law School's testing program. She also informed the Commission that the vacant Commissioner positions have been posted, and Commissioners agreed to extend the deadline until June 28<sup>th</sup>. Commissioners Bhan, Cox and Evans volunteered to be on the resume review subcommittee. Executive Director Schlacter reported that the person who would provide a presentation on Fourth Amendment Rights, Alex Marthews, was unable to attend the June meeting. Commissioners agreed to invite him to the next meeting for which he is available.

In an update on outreach, Executive Director Schlacter reported that Chair Cox staffed a table at the River Festival, and reminded the Commissioners that Danehy Family Day will be coming up in September. The Commissioners expressed an interest in staffing a table at Danehy Park Day.

Executive Director Schlacter also asked the Commissioners if they would be interested in attending a one-day mediation training on a Saturday in the fall. She will report back to the Commission with possible dates.

### 5. Summer Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Shedid made a motion to cancel the July and August meetings and reconvene on September 5, 2013. Commissioner Evans seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved (Commissioners Angelone, Bhan, Cox, Evans, Gonzalez-Brenes, Steirman, Shedid and St. Amant).

## 6. Discussion about CPS and Immersion Outreach issues

A discussion was had about the May presentation from Jane Chiang and other parents. After unanimous votes the Commissioners agreed to write a letter to the parents and: 1) share the CHRC's list of resources with the parents; 2) inform the parents that the Commission is unable to take action unless a formal complaint has been filed; and 3) inform the parents that while the Commission shares the parents' concerns about equity, a complaint would need to be filed with the MCAD, as the Commission does not take complaints against City agencies. The Commission agreed to send a similar letter to Michelle Sprengnether.

## 7. Follow-up on shelter survey/transgender outreach

Commissioner Bhan informed the Commission that it has been difficult for her to contact her resources from New York and said she would keep trying and report back at our next meeting. The Commissioners agreed to put this issue on next meeting's agenda.

### 8. Status on translation of outreach materials

Executive Director Schlacter reported that the lead paint flyers have been translated and CET will help distribute them.

#### 9. New Business

Commissioner Shedid voiced her concerns about affordable housing in Cambridge. Executive Director Schlacter said that the Community Development Department and the CPA Committee are focused on housing. She also suggested inviting Chris Cotter from Community Development to our September meeting. Commissioners agreed.

The Commission thanked Commissioner Steirman for her service.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m. Next Commission meeting is September 5, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.