



Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, September 4, 2014

Present: Commissioners Chanta Bhan, Bonita Cox, Nadia Davila, Melissa Gonzalez-Brenes, Kerry Gough, Nicholas Leydon and Kim Nghiem; and City staff Nancy Schlacter and Mariah Freark.

Absent: Commissioners Mercedes Evans, Harry Reyes, Sabrina Selk, Randa Shedid and Carmen S. Negrón.

Guests: Chris Burke, Police Superintendent

Documents Used:

- June Minutes
- Executive Director Schlacter's notes from 6/12/14 networking event

1. Call to order

Chair Cox called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Welcome New CHRC Commissioner – Nadia S. Davila

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves and welcomed Commissioner Davila.

4. Review and approval of June Minutes

Motion to approve by Commissioner Leydon and seconded by Commissioner Bhan.

5. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Schlacter updated the Commission on cases, staff activities, and outreach events.

6. Outreach Discussion – Priorities (as informed by Kharis M. and Cliff C. presentations)

A discussion was had about outreach priorities and the need to list, assign and execute specific tasks. Commissioner Gonzalez-Brenes suggested the Commission consider returning to its method of holding working meetings, especially if multiple subcommittees are created.

Commissioners requested an update on the status of CHRC's partnership with the Community Learning Center. Executive Director Schlacter stated that the spring term seemed to work better for the teachers than the fall term for CHRC presentations to CLC students.

Commissioner Nghiem expressed an interest in working on mental health issues in Area IV. She agreed to attend a neighborhood group meeting, get more information and report back. Superintendent Burke offered to connect Commissioner Nghiem with the Area IV community group CPD works with.

Commissioner Cox asked what the Commission wants to do about schools. Commissioner Leydon said that he was most interested in the district's need for teachers who reflect the population of their students. He and Commissioner Bhan agreed to reach out to School Department staff and ask how CHRC could support recruitment and retention of teachers, and report back to the Commission.

Commissioner Cox expressed an interest in distributing information to medical office and clinics. She and Commissioner Gonzalez will look at how to distribute the Commission's lead paint flyer to these areas.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that she wanted to revisit CHRC's partnership with the Community Engagement Team (CET). She suggested someone from the Commission attend another CET meeting to learn what issues the outreach workers are seeing in their communities to see how CHRC could partner.

Commissioner Cox summarized that the Commission is interested in conducting outreach in four areas:

1. mental health/Area IV
2. schools
3. lead paint
4. CET/immigrant population

7. June meeting follow up:

- Pride brunch: feedback

Neither Commissioner Shedid nor Commissioner Selk was present to report back. Superintendent Burke said that he was present, that the event was very well-attended, and there was a speaker from Uganda who was very compelling.

- Lead paint/family status discrimination video: update 22 City View

Executive Director Schlacter reported that she has a commitment from the Cambridge Public Health Department to collaborate on this video, but that the fair housing network she has been working with has been largely inactive over the summer. She informed the Commission of the City of Boston's upcoming outreach event about lead paint, children, and housing and stated that she hopes to collaborate with Boston on the video. She stated that this is a work in progress.

- Danehy Park Family Day, 9/20/14: volunteers?

Executive Director Schlacter reminded Commissioners that tables are first-come, first-served and recommended that whoever takes the early shift should arrive at 10 a.m. Commissioner Cox volunteered to take the beginning shift, and will pick up the tent and materials from the Commission offices sometime during the week before Danehy Park Day. Commissioner Gough volunteered to take a shift. Commissioner Gonzalez-Brenes stated that she can take the later shift and take the tent and materials home with her. Commissioner Leydon said he may be available, and he will attend if he is able to do so.

Commissioner Gonzalez-Brenes requested more raisins, because those were a draw at Riverfest. Commissioner Gough requested temporary tattoos and pens. Executive Director Schlacter stated that CHRC has stickers and pens available.

- School Department: re-present in October?

Commissioners agreed that School Department staff should be invited to present at the October meeting. Commissioners had a discussion about what information they were seeking. Executive Director Schlacter stated that she will draft a list of questions and disseminate it to Commissioners before forwarding it to the School Department.

8. New Business

Commissioner Gonzalez motioned to move the October meeting from October 2, 2014 to October 9, 2014. Commissioner Leydon seconded. All Commissioners present voted in favor.

9. Outreach subcommittee

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. Next Commission meeting is Thursday, October 9, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.