



Cambridge Peace Commission

A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Minutes of the Peace Commission Meeting • May 15, 2019)

Commission Members Present: Co-Chair Elka Kuhlman, Co-Chair Larry Kim, April Crehan, Georges Atallah, Kaza Fraley, and Aboma Dirbaba

City Staff Present: Executive Director Brian Corr; Deputy Superintendent Robert Lowe, Cambridge Police Dept

Call to Order

Co-Chair Kuhlman called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Dirbaba moved to approve the March minutes and Commission Member Atallah seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

- Exec. Director Corr traveled to Easthampton, Mass. twice this year to conduct trainings for that city's new Community Relations Commission (CRC). The CRC was developed by their mayor and city council in the wake of events that highlighted issues of income inequality and a high cost of living, racism and anti-immigrant sentiment, and conflicts between newcomers and long-time residents.
- He reported that Mending Cambridge, which engages men and male-identified people in work to prevent domestic and gender-based violence, has begun providing bystander intervention trainings, starting with the Cambridge DV Steering Committee and the Community Relations Unit of the Cambridge Police. The goal is to train people all around the community to be comfortable intervening when something occurs.
- In April, ED Corr appeared on a panel at Harvard School of Public Health entitled "Research and Advocacy in the #MeToo Era", and he also conducted a training on trauma for the staff of the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board.
- In April, members of the Commission attended a presentation from Ronnie Millar, Executive Director of the Irish International Immigrant Center (IIIC). The IIIC is a Boston-area organization that helps any immigrant who has legal issues and provides other resources. Its fundamental principles are that: "All are welcomed and valued and enjoy equal opportunities and protections;" "We're all in the together;" and "Providing security for those who are immigrants."
- ED Corr reported on the Holocaust Commemoration, along with commission members who participated in the event. The speaker, Frieda Grayzel, was very well received and the event was standing room only. It was so packed that we ran out of programs.

Retreat Brainstorming

The following are questions and thoughts shared by members of the Commission about their ideas for a retreat:

- Set goals for the year on a calendar, and include: what we want done, what we need to prepare, and what we want to do for each idea.
- Receive training in Mental Health First Aid to help with supporting the community in the wake of traumatic events affecting the community.
- Identify what commission members can do around being a connecting point between all the community organizations in Cambridge, and then look into whether there are other entities within the city that are doing this, and if there are ways to enhance what might already be happening.
- Consider whether we are an “event” entity or if we are we trying to be representative of “who” Cambridge is
- How do we make our impact on the City? What can we do that other organizations are not doing?
- What is our role as the City is changing and evolving?
- Invite City employee Hector Acevedo from FindIt Cambridge to present about their work to compile everything going on in Cambridge.
- Consider having a theme for each year and collaborate with existing agencies and groups around that theme.

Next Steps and Wrap up

Commission Member Crehan will send out a doodle poll for the Retreat Date in the Summer. Once a date is set ED Corr will reserve a room.

Adjournment

Commission Member Fraley motioned to adjourn the meeting and Commission Member Crehan seconded. Meeting was adjourned unanimously at 7:28 pm.

The next meeting of the Peace Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 19, 2019, at 51 Inman St. in the Second Floor Conference Room.