



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, October 6, 2016**

Present: Commissioners, Chanta Bhan, Nicholas Leydon, Bonita Cox, Olinda Marshall, Cynthia Orellana, and CHRC Staff Nancy Schlacter, Sabrina Acloque, Crystal Rosa, and Dept. Supt. Steve DeMarco.

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

Documents Used:

- September Minutes
- October Agenda

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 September Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the September meeting and approved them unanimously on a motion from Commissioner Orellana, seconded by Commissioner Cox.

4. Executive Director's Report

ED Schlacter updated the Commission on cases, staff activities and outreach. Since the September meeting, 1 new case opened, 2 cases are pending, with 1 case is in post cause proceedings. The two pending cases involve a public accommodation complaint, and a housing complaint about alleged racial discrimination. ED Schlacter has continued her regular collaboration with the Community Engagement Team (CET). Currently, CET is planning an event scheduled for Thursday, December 15, which will serve as a 4-year reflection on the American Born Black Outreach Team's (ABBOT) community efforts. HRC staff continues to collaborate with Cambridge Public Health Department and Inspectional Services Department staff regarding the Lead Paint Story Journal; the next step is to input the final draft into the GIS template. ED Schlacter asked the commissioners who participated in Danehy Park Family Day to provide feedback about the event. Commissioner Cox suggested that HRC staff provide fruit snacks for kids to draw them to the table and provide an opportunity to speak to their parents directly. ED Schlacter also explained that Commissioners Lakhani and Slate resigned from serving on the Commission.

5. September meeting follow-up:

• **Cambridge Rindge and Latin School Title IX Coordinator**

ED Schlacter reached out to representatives of local campuses, inviting their Title IX Coordinators to speak in a panel to inform the Commission of their programs and policies

regarding allegations of sexual assault/harassment on their campuses. Kharis McLaughlin, Title IX Coordinator from CRLS, was interested in addressing the Commission in person. Dr. McLaughlin is scheduled for the November 3rd meeting.

- **Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Program**

A representative from the Civil Rights unit in the US Attorney's Office will speak to the Commission on December 1st regarding a program funded by the Department of Homeland Security, which encourages Muslim community members to inform when another member is exhibiting behavior indicating an interest in violent extremism. For background information on an alternative perspective, HRC staff will forward Commissioners the handouts provided at the June CHRC mtg by Shannon Erwin, Executive Director of the Muslim Justice League, before the December meeting.

- **Speakers on Gentrification**

ED Schlacter is conferring with Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, to identify relevant speakers regarding gentrification and displacement of residents and small businesses. The Commissioners confirmed that their interests were mainly about housing and the small business community in Cambridge. ED Schlacter will also reach out to Chris Cotter, Community Development Department's (CDD's) Director of Housing. The Commission voted unanimously to have a speaker on gentrification for the May or June meeting, on a motion by Commissioner Leydon, seconded by Commissioner Marshall.

6. New Business

- **January Meeting Date**

The January meeting date was unanimously moved from January 5th to January 12th on a motion by Commissioner Leydon, seconded by Commissioner Cox. There will not be a speaker scheduled for this date because the Commission may elect a new chair.

- **Brainstorm Fair Housing Event**

During a brainstorm meeting with Chris Cotter of CDD, the idea of a "Housing Fair," emerged as a possible way for HRC and CDD to collaborate on a fair housing event in April. Commissioners listed Housing Fair stakeholders and organizations to discuss at the next meeting CDD:

- Speakers on discrimination topics
- Dispelling myths about Section 8 (and other) vouchers (CHA rep or Barbara Chandler/MBHP)
- CoC for the Homeless/DHSP
- Multiservice Center
- FTHB program information
- Lead paint poisoning awareness
- Non-student housing available via Harvard/MIT

- **Commissioner topics raised for further consideration:**

- a. Discussion on the invitation to co-founder of the Y2Y shelter was removed from new business.
- b. Debt-bondage in Cambridge immigrant community – Chair Bhan completed initial research on debt-bondage in Cambridge and has contacted State agencies that can speak

to issues of wage injustice. The Commission voted unanimously to continue the conversation in March, on a motion made by Commissioner Orellana, seconded by Commissioner Leydon.

- c. How to navigate Cambridge Housing programs with Section 8 Vouchers – Commissioner Cox is interested in understanding whether a Cambridge resident with a Section 8 voucher can return to Cambridge after they have moved outside of the City.

Commissioner Cox motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Leydon.

Next Commission meeting will be Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.