



Cambridge Peace Commission

A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Minutes of the Peace Commission Meeting • September 18, 2019

Commission Members Present: Co-Chair Elka Kuhlman, Co-Chair Larry Kim, April Crehan, Kaza Fraley, John Ratliff, David Seeman

City Staff Present: Executive Director Brian Corr, CPD Deputy Superintendent Rob Lowe

Call to Order: Co-Chair Kuhlman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: On a motion from Co-Chair Kim, seconded by Commission Member Crehan, the minutes of the May 19, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.

Checking In

- People shared brief reports about their lives and how they were doing.

Executive Director's Report

- Exec. Dir. Corr reported on Meet Your Neighbor Day and noted that he had been able to travel across the city and visit all the events. There were 18 events and the full list is posted on the Peace Commission webpages at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/peacecommission/meetyourneighboraday2019submissionslistingasof20190912.pdf>
- Commission members discussed how to get the Commission members more involved in hosting and organizing events and increase the number of events. A group of Commission members may meet in the summer before to brainstorm.
- Exec. Dir. Corr shared general updates, including that Port Community Pride Day will take place at Clement Morgan Park; that a couple weeks prior he met with Kashmiri activists who are working on a resolution with Mass. Peace Action; and he reminded Commission members to complete the mandatory online Ethics training provided by the Mass. Attorney General's Office and required of all board and commission members by state law.

Discussion of Peace Commission Focus for the Upcoming Year

- Commission members brainstormed and discussed a range of ideas including:
 - What is the Peace Commission and what do we do?
 - Can we narrow down our focus?
 - The Commission often steps in when there are issues that involve race - there is no "Race Commission," so think about issues around anti-racism for the next year
 - What can the Commission do that is not already being done and where does it fit in among all that is happening in Cambridge?
- Exec. Dir. Corr shared about other related efforts in Cambridges:
 - Cambridge Digs Deep - An incident between someone from Harvard and a person living in affordable housing - went viral - the city brought in a consultant - set up by two council members on their own

- Citizens Committee on Civic Unity: Organized and convened a citywide event on implicit bias last year with Prof. Mahzarin Banaji of Harvard who wrote the book “Blind Spot”, and that has led to having conversations with people in the community and a two-part training she did for the Cambridge Police Department”
- Commission members continued to discuss ideas including:
 - Collaborating with efforts like this and work together to create something we all care about;
 - Sending Commission members to other events in the city that pertain to our focus and have members report back to the group;
 - Connecting with the Citizens Committee on Civic Unity
 - Creating a sub-focus in the next few months - maybe listen to the Citizen committee first before we move forward on this - listen first before we come up with a specific focus
- Commission Member Ratliff moved that Commission members focus on issues of race over the next year, seconded by Commission Member Crehan, and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Recruitment of New Members

- Interviews of applicants for the commission will be conducted by the co-chairs, the executive director and one other Commission member. Exec. Dir. Corr will be setting up the interviews.

Unfinished and New Business

Co-Chair Kuhlman will send out meeting reminders to remind Commission members two weeks ahead of each meeting and then again, the weekend before.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM on a motion from Commission Member Crehan, seconded by Commission Member Ratliff, approved by unanimous vote.

The next meeting of the Peace Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 51 Inman St., 2nd Floor.