



# Cambridge Peace Commission

*A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts*

## Minutes of the Peace Commission Meeting • June 21, 2017

**Commission Members Present:** Chair Larry Kim, Gladys Friedler, Aboma Dirbaba, Regina Yang, and John Ratliff.

**City Staff Present:** Executive Director Brian Corr and Program Coordinator Crystal Rosa.

**Commission Members Absent:** Georges Atallah, James Eliscar, and Elechi Kadete.

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

### Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director Corr announced that Co-Chair Connelly resigned after 9 years of service on the Peace Commission.
- Executive Director Corr reported on the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Commemoration of the Holocaust with survivor Aron Greenfield. Executive Director Corr sat with Mr. Greenfield on stage, as he described his life surviving several concentration camps in Poland and then his new life in Massachusetts. Cambridge Community Television recorded the event at the request of the speaker and his family. Executive Director Corr reminded the Commission that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find survivors of the Holocaust, but that the City is committed to doing so as long as possible.
- Executive Director Corr explained that in light recent resignations, and the fact that the terms of some of the commission members have expired, the Peace Commission will ask the City Manager's Office to advertise open positions for those vacancies. He asked that current members who are in holdover status, let him know if they are interested in being reappointed, or are no longer able to participate on the Commission.

### New Business

- Executive Director Corr noted that the regular meeting date for September would fall during Rosh Hashanah, and in accordance with City policy, the Commission needs to reschedule the regular meeting for a different Wednesday that month. The Commission decided to hold the regular meeting on September 6, 2017.
- Executive Director Corr stated that he and Chair Kim discussed a Commission retreat in lieu of a meeting one month to build community among the members and discuss the objectives for the following year. The proposal is a half day on Saturday, October 14, 2017. The Commission agreed to meet on September 6 to plan the retreat. Executive Director Corr suggested the Beech Room at the library as a possible site and having lunch coordinated.
- **Sanctuary City**  
Executive Director Corr explained that the Federal government has clarified its position on cutting funding for sanctuary cities, stating that it would only consider ending funding law enforcement that comes through the U.S. Department of Justice, which could leave the Cambridge Police Department vulnerable to cuts in some of its federal grant funding. The Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship had speakers from the Cambridge

Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition (CISC) regarding their support and assistance to undocumented families who take asylum at local churches. CIRC has also finished its needs assessment, which provided various new ways the city can be supportive to immigrant residents and new citizens. CIRC has also completed over 16 Know Your Rights trainings since the beginning of the current Presidential administration, and now have immigrant rights information pocket cards (known as “red cards”) in eight different languages.

- **Meet Your Neighbor Day**

Executive Director is interested in dedicating a day to encourage residents to get to know their neighbors. The Commission could collaborate with local groups to help promote the idea and create a toolkit for residents to develop their way of connecting with their neighbors. The date coincides with the National Neighbor Day on Sunday, September 17. Executive Director Corr will design a flyer to explain the idea and begin promotion once the Civic Unity Committee has confirmed its participation.

### **Old Business**

Commission Member Ratliff continues his coordination with the students who presented during the February 2016 meeting regarding nuclear divestment. They are finalizing their document that aims to inform employees on how they can find out more information regarding their investment portfolio and how to choose ethical investments. These students are working on a proposal for a forum, to be possibly hosted at the library and connected to with Hiroshima Day.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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