



**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Peace
Commission

Meeting Minutes

July 2026: Meet Your Neighbor Subcommittee Meeting # 1

Date: Monday, July 6, 2026

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Location: Via Zoom

Attendees: Elka Kuhlman, Julie Ayaz, Karim Razzaz, Saffana Anwar, Lizette Sta. Maria, Eliza Fay

Minute Taker: Lizette Sta. Maria

- **6:30 - Call to Order**
 - Commissioner Kuhlman calls the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.
- **6:31 - Welcome and Purpose**
 - The purpose of this meeting is to brainstorm ideas that the Peace Commission can use to plan and facilitate Meet Your Neighbor Month. The discussion will be anchored in four focus areas that were identified in June 2026 Commission meeting.
- **6:35 - Overview of MYN**
 - ED Anwar shares the vision for the MYN initiative: A city where every individual feels seen, heard, and connected. A city where every neighborhood is a place of belonging.
 - The 2026 theme is Stories We Share: The Courage to Connect
 - There will be three tiers of participation:
 - Peace Commission-led events
 - City Department-led events
 - Example: staff reached out to Cambridge Public Library to see if we can do a story time around this theme
 - Community-led events

- ED Anwar explains the decision to expand the initiative to the whole month of September due to various holidays
- 6:45 - **Review Ideas from June Meeting**
 - Eliza Fay and Lizette Sta. Maria present drafts of zines
 - Zine 1: What is Meet Your Neighbor Month?
 - Zine 2: How to Plan Large Events for Meet Your Neighbor Month?
 - Commissioner Razzaz proposes two ideas: 1) an award system/incentives to encourage participation and 2) to ask Mayor Sumbul Sidiqqi to issue a proclamation
 - ED Anwar explains that there is already an idea to do a passport stamp activity to incentivize participants
 - The group discusses involving local businesses
 - The four focus areas identified in June were:
 - Intergenerational engagement
 - Interfaith efforts
 - Immigrant community connections
 - Meet Your Neighbor Toolkit
 - Commissioner Kuhlman shares something she did last year - asked the School of Honk if they would be willing to do a dance party for Meet Your Neighbors
 - ED Anwar added a potential collaboration that is already in the works: a film screening with the Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship for A Man Called Otto
 - Commissioner Ayaz's ideas:
 - Interested in reaching out to those suffering the most or have the most needs, example: thinking of unhoused individuals as your neighbors
 - For the focus area on immigrant community connections: could do an event surrounding Hispanic Latine Heritage Month - could even involve local businesses
 - ED Anwar explains there was a previous employee engagement event hosted by the Office of Equity &

Inclusion, which featured one long community table on the street, Latin dances, food from Ole restaurant, zines with Spanish 101 activity - Peace Commission could take inspiration from that

- For the focus area on intergenerational engagement: a small musical performance for the Senior Center
- Commissioner Razzaz's idea:
 - Film screening in Cambridge Public Library
 - ED Anwar adds that there are watch parties currently happening around the city and the screens used are viewable in daylight - perhaps the Peace Commission could host a movie screening outdoors
- Commissioner Kuhlman's ideas:
 - Reach out to School of Honk again this year
 - Food waste/compost education for immigrant communities - work with Tagu Wabeto, Immigrant Outreach Specialist
- Eliza Fay's idea: community mural
 - ED Anwar suggests perhaps working with Ayana Mack, the artist that OEI has worked with for previous Art of Self Care events
- Meet Your Neighbors Toolkit:
 - Set of physical objects that we can loan out to help facilitate engagement and connections
 - People can fill out a form where they can ask for a toolkit
 - Possible items: passport, engagement prompts, coloring pages, bubbles, etc.
 - Example: Heat Oral History kit by MAPC
- 6:55 - **Discussion: What should Peace Commission do?**
 - Commissioner Kuhlman:
 - Get in touch with DPW and Tagu Wabeto for food waste/compost education for immigrants
 - Get in touch with School of Honk

- Commissioner Ayaz:
 - Reach out to unhoused community members/refugees (brainstorm for a couple more days on what this could look like tangibly - perhaps a film screening and discussion)
 - Another idea: Putting together a play with ESL learners
- Commissioner Razzaz: ready to help wherever
- 7:50 - **Next Steps and Adjournment**
 - The next Subcommittee meeting will occur on Monday, July 13, 2026 from 6:30-8 PM. Prior to that, Commissioners should:
 - Review drafts of zines and flyer
 - Bring ideas on what to put in the Meet Your Neighbors Toolkit
 - Make progress on/get solidified on the event ideas they wish to push forward with
 - Commissioner Ayaz motions for the meeting to adjourn. Commissioner Razzaz seconds the motion. The meeting is adjourned at 8:00 PM.