

Human Rights Commission

9/20/2021, Kyrouz Auditorium

Attendees:

Hannah Kimberley, Chair
Maiuza Alves
Jen Beloff
Toni Borge
Michea McCaffrey
Sarah Peck
Holly Dougwillo, City Staff Liaison, ex officio
Jen Holmgren, City Council Liaison, ex officio

Absent:

Paul Wasserman, Vice Chair
Nicki Richon-Schoel

1. Call to Order: Chair Kimberley 5:30pm
2. Review of minutes from August 16, 2021. Approval: Moved by Hannah, seconded by Sarah. By Role Call vote, members present unanimously approved to accept minutes.
3. Gloucester Public Schools review of practices re: diversity education: continued to next meeting. **Members Borge and Peck:** What are they doing from grade to grade re: diversity education, especially in light of the antisemitic graffiti at Market Basket, which raised the issue of how much they understand. Asking broadly about diversity education for students, teachers, and staff. **Member Peck:** Asking if instances like this come up, how are they presented in the schools? If students are ever identified as the perpetrators of these acts, anti-racism instead of just diversity. **Member Alves:** GPS hires someone to work with immigrant community, ELA students, communication liaison. What type of impact does that have on that population? Would they be interested in joining the Commission? **Member Beloff:** Do the schools have standard policies or plans in place in case of such events, around how they respond? Do they have formalized plans that are consistent? **Member McCaffrey:** What changes in the curriculum are being made to discuss Juneteenth and other events? Where are there places where the curriculum could be adjusted? **Member Borge:** Cape Ann's own history as well, incl. Slave trade (Also see Other Business below).
4. Discussion on Domestic Violence: **Councilor Holmgren** relayed information to the Commission on upcoming events from Sunny Robinson of the Gloucester Coalition for the Prevention of Domestic Violence: a proclamation at City Hall on October 1 re: Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and an observance on October 12 at Stacy Boulevard.
5. Discussion of a plan for disruptive behavior - a concern was brought by a member of the community re: disruptive behavior **Member Peck** will search for best practices in other

communities, and **Councilor Holmgren** will send a link to the Gloucester City Council Rules of Procedure to Member Peck and the Committee.

6. Discussed letters to Mayor's office re: vaccine mandates and mask mandate letters.

OTHER BUSINESS / MATTERS NOT ANTICIPATED BY CHAIR

1. **HR Director Dougwillo** presented the City's new Diversity Commitment Statement - review by members of this statement for approval to post on City website. Statement is to go on all job postings, and a policy on diversity in hiring is also in place for city managers. **Member Beloff** suggested translating the statement into different languages, and consensus was the two most commonly used besides English are Spanish and Portuguese. **Member Peck** suggested that IT Director Knowles might want to consider a Google Translate button on the City website. **Member McCaffrey** suggested use of a rubric during the hiring process to help decrease implicit racial bias. **HR Director Dougwillo** also reported she's been working with City administration to help increase diversity in hiring, and is hoping to continue on this trajectory. **Member Beloff** suggested this may be something our school system is doing, or could consider doing if they are not. **Chair Kimberley** asked that we add that to the HRC's list of questions for the superintendent for the next month. **Member Borge** pointed out that the city is really hiring people based on qualifications, not on anything else.
2. Racial Justice Team: **Member McCaffrey** reported on surveys to residents, hoping to beef up response rate to get an idea of what our more diverse community members are thinking and feeling; comparing answers from PoC and from the White community. Hoping to get a better picture of what's going on, **Member Beloff** vocalized her support of this and stated this approach is good for being able to get more perspectives and then analyzing them on the back end.
3. **Member Alves** discussed the bill for driver's licenses for immigrants, where it currently is at the Transportation Committee in MA State Legislature, discussed different requirements which would make it easier for immigrants to legally acquire a driver's license. Had been in Committee last year but did not have such specific requirements. Discussed how an undocumented immigrant does not let their passport expire by more than a few months. Discussion of who may be able to listen to these concerns at the state and federal level. **Member Beloff** suggested Northeast Legal Aid.

Motion to adjourn by: Member Borge

Seconded by: Member Beloff

Members voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn the meeting at 7:12pm.

Minutes submitted by Jen Holmgren, Councilor-at-Large.