

**Town of West Hartford
Human Rights Commission
Mission Statement**

“The West Hartford Human Rights Commission fosters mutual understanding and respect among people, and encourages equality of treatment of all people, regardless of race, color, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, civil union status, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, genetic information, age, economic status, lawful source of income, national origin or ancestry, veteran status, or present or past history of physical, mental, intellectual or learning disability including, but not limited to blindness.”

Meeting Minutes 10.6.20

**Town of West Hartford
Human Rights Commission
WebEx
5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 6, 2020**

- Attendance
 - Sarah Raskin
 - Barry Walters
 - Brian Greenleaf
 - Esam Boreay
 - Krishna Adhikari
 - Micheal Pincus
 - Dawn Ennis
 - Adrienne Billings-Smith

- Guest participant: Jay Tooland, Farmington HRC

5:01 PM Meeting called to Order: Virtual Meeting Statement (Sarah Raskin)

5:03 PM Roll Call (Sarah Raskin)

- Motion (Sarah Raskin) to nominate Dawn Ennis & Adrienne Billings-Smith co-secretaries (motion 2nd by Brian Greenleaf) Unanimous Yay
- Approval of September 9, 2020 meeting minutes (Motion to move: Barry ; 2nd motion Esam Boraey)
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- Old Business
 - Discuss Meeting with Police Chief Riddick: Adrienne Billings-Smith commented (good meeting)
 - Sarah R. mentioned: Promoting Alternatives to Police in Schools: Addressing the School to Prison Pipeline Panel (10/6/20) and the legislation needs to be brought up to Tom Moore in WHPS meeting.
 - Sarah R.= informed the Commission of the Town’s (Town Manager Matt Hart email) decision to cancel the 10/7/20 Public Safety Committee meeting which was discuss the Civilian Review Board

- Matt Hart informed WHHRC that they could be apart of public comments on 10/21/20 Special Town Council Meeting
 - Adrienne B., Sarah R. and Barry W. suggested that a response to the email from Town Manager Hart—reiterating the previous discussions with Hart & Riddick about the Commission’s position either when deciding on the board or being apart of the review board
 - Barry will draft an email which will be provided to the board for final review
 - cc: Mayor Shari Cantor and Liam Sweeney
- Town of Compassion Calendar & Awards:
 - **Mayor Shari Cantor** stated her hesitation about doing the awards and suggested that it be cancelled due to Covid because the lack of time and support to put it together.
 - **Barry W.:** Suggested that the Commission could do the selection and coordinate and allow the town to review and accept.
 - **Sarah R.** stated that Mayor Cantor was very particular about ensuring it is a “Town Council Award”
 - **Sarah R.:** Stated that last year the HRC actually did the selection process and town approved
 - Barry or Sarah will check with Mayor Cantor
 - **Krishna A.:** Suggested that it just be delayed and to request alternative dates.
 - **Dawn E.:** Questioned why we needed to go through Mayor Cantor due to her lack of authority in town.
 - **Sarah R.** Reiterated that is was a Town Council Award (S. Cantor chair of WEHA TC)
 - **Adrienne B.:** Ask for previous names to be provided to new commissioners for reference
 - **Sarah R.:** Will forward list to commission after conclusion of the meeting
 - **Food Distribution: Mayor Cantor asked commission to help coordinate and distribute meals 10/9/20**
 - **Sarah R.:** Agreed that the Commission would assist—awaiting more detail
 - **Barry W.:** wants more info and wants to know the
 - **High School Athlete agreement and Student Conduct:** no further movement at this time
 - **Setting annual budget and fiscal requests:**
 - Sarah R.: Need to present it to Town Manager Hart soon
 - Adrienne B. asked for a copy of the draft budget
 - Barry W.: Will present it when we know better what our events will be because it is hard to gauge due to current circumstances
 - Explained that in the past there was no line item budget that was presented by the WHHRC.
 - Either reimbursed or monies came from town “discretionary” fund
 - Now Town has requested a more specific list of potential costs
 - **Hackathon:** N/A?

- **MLK Celebration:** Adrienne B. (liaison) No details at the time—will provide commission with details once they are given
- **Filling vacant positions:** N/A?
- **Sarah R.:** Moved on to New Business
- Tom Moore unable to make to make tonights meeting due to conflict with BOE meeting
 - Made Commission aware that we re-scheduled our meeting in order to rectify any potential conflicts
 - Will contact him and suggest he join us at the next meeting 11/10/20.

UDHR CELEBRATION DECEMBER

Sarah H: proposed various option (breakdown of discussion)

- **Esam B.:** Suggested Virtual Format: 1 Continuous Event (60-90 minutes) bc of lack of people coming back to watch multiple segments.
- **Brian Greenleaf:** How do we manage readers?
 - **Adrienne B.** Suggested pre-recording material
 - **Dawn Ennis** agreed

What is the date: TBA (Dec 5, 10, 12)

- **Barry W.** suggested holding off on date and time in order to check with past/current partners on their availability in order to better determine date and time.
- 3. **Barry, Dawn, Pramod:** Suggested Coordinating with WH TV and
 - **Dawn** will check with Jennifer Evans @WHCI (block out 90 minutes)
 - **Sarah R.:** Suggested Barry W. coordinate with Town for live feed on WHHRC page
 - **Pramod** will link it through youtube channel

Reading of the Declaration.

- **Sarah R.** Tape Event: Need Deadline (Maybe Dec 1st)
- **Dawn E.** volunteered producing recordings of declaration (need 7 days)
 - Suggested taping all over WeHa
 - **Krishna & Adrienne** = Agreed
- **Sarah R.** volunteered to edit recordings (needs 72 hrs)
 - Sarah & Dawn:** Have people tape their reading in some meaningful spot in WeHa
- **Brian Greenleaf:** Suggested people read entire declaration or more than just 1 part in order to be covered in case some one fails to provide their portion
- **Sarah R.:** Reminded commission that we all read the preamble.

Music/dance (past performances)

- a. Hall Jazz
 - b. Conard Voices of the World-upbeat song
 - c. new performer
 - d. new performer
- **Barry** stated that we need to move quickly to confirm potential performances

- **Krishna** suggested that we make it more performance focused rather than heavy on speakers due to the inability for many to focus on screens.
- **Adrienne:** Suggested upbeat music due to the stressful year

- **Pramod:** Will contact Donna for potential Dance performance
- **Sarah:** Suggested Latanya Farrell (woman of color and West Hartford resident)
- **Barry:** Suggested Gay Men's Choir

Poet (past):

- **Sarah R.** Suggested a more diverse line-up if possible
- **Adrienne** suggested 1 poet (Mike Keo, founder of I AM NOT A VIRUS)
 - **Adrienne B.** will contact Mike Keo about doing
- Other possible individuals will be:
 - a. West Hartford Poet Laureate Julie Choeffel
 - b. Kate Rushin

In the past had Land Acknowledgement

- **Sarah** suggested to shorten this portion due to it going over last year

Speaker ideas (Barry suggested no more than 2)

- a. **Sarah suggested:** Tekisha Everette from Health Equities Solutions to talk about health equity/access in light of our current times
 - a. **Adrienne** agreed that Tekisha would be a great speaker
 - b. **Esam** agreed

Other Potential Speakers suggested by **Sarah R.**

- b. high school students from WeHa At Your Service
 - c. Concerned Parents of Color West Hartford
 - d. Kid Governor as she is from West Hartford (her focus is animal adoption)
- **Barry** suggested leaving 2 spots open until we know about the election and can make sure the individual speaks to the "times"
 - **Commission** continued to speak of typical speakers that would have to be included in the event (i.e., Mayor Cantor).

Adrienne suggested: Steve Hernandez, Executive Director for Commission on Women, Children and Seniors due to his background.

Barry agreed that Steven would be a great option

Esam stated he would contact Steven Hernandez to see if he would be willing to speak

All Members discussed time of event and time limit for speakers

- **Barry** suggested 10-15 minutes for key note speakers
- **Adrienne & Sarah** suggested 10 mins
- **Sarah** also wanted to make sure that the 10 minutes was only for key note speakers and not poets and other performers.

Adrienne: Asked Sarah if she could share this as a google doc so that we could continue to work out the logistics in terms of time limits for speakers and performers.

Sarah: Stated she would provide it after the meeting

- **Sarah:** Groups that would normally be tabling
Have their logos/names, live links, and contact information displayed somewhere on the page?
 - **Barry** stated it would be a good idea to get them on the WHHRC page and FB page by providing links directly to the organization
 - **Pramod** agree and will look into and make it happen as soon as we provide names and links

Sarah opened up meeting to callers:

Caller 1: Jay Tooland, Chair of Farmington HRC

- Told commission that FHRC just moved to do their own Human Rights Day
- Voted in Sept meeting
- asked for the commissions assistance in planning FHRC event
- FHRC next meeting is Oct 8th
- Requesting planning documents
 - Sarah stated she couldn't send him current planning documents but would provide last years program
- Asked how we read the declaration because it is a very long document
 - Barry told him that it was broken up throughout the program in order to not read it all at once. **(call ended)**

Sarah opened up meeting to miscellaneous discussion:

- **Barry** spoke about making sure that declaration readers read 2 or 3 declarations in order to have better fluidity
 - **Sarah** wants to still make sure we preserve our diversity of speakers

Barry- Thanked all the new commissioners

- Wanted to also mention potentially making a better effort on social media pages in regards to GOTV
 - **Oct 27th** last day to register online or in-person to vote
- **Barry** mentioned 2020 Census extension to Pramod
 - **Pramod** stated the extension was only through the weekend
 - stated that overall WeHa showed improvement from 2010
 - Town was focused on Elmwood area (didn't do as well because of the inability to go door to door), but overall WeHa did well (upwards of 90% participation in some areas)
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- **Pramod:** Spoke about the re-opening of the library as of today Noah Webster and Faxon Libraries now have: Computer, Browsing and Curbside Appointments available (860.561.6202), have served almost 11,000.
- **Barry** mentioned the new ballot dropbox at Faxon Library (3rd in WeHa)

- **Sarah:** Mentioned need for more admins on FB and Twitter accounts
 - **No one** volunteered at this time
 - **Barry** stated he had too many other obligations
- **Sarah** asked one last time if there were other issues to discuss

- **6:30 PM Barry** moved to Adjourn meeting/**Dawn Ennis** 2nd
- **Meeting Adjourned 6:30 PM**
- Next meeting November 10, 2020