

WEST HARTFORD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of March 2, 2022, Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Co-Chair Esam Boraey

Attendance:

Esam Boraey, Co-Chair (EB) was present
Dawn Ennis, Co-Chair (DE) was present
Aurora Melita, Secretary (AM) was present
Ted Mancini (TM) was present
Sarah Raskin (SR) was absent
Eric Schoenberg (ES) was present
Pramod Pradhan, Liaison and Facilitator (PP) was present
Tekisha Dwan Everette (TDE) was present
Kristin Sowell (KS) was present

Minutes:

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Speaker
Myra Clark-Siegel of the American Jewish Committee has been invited to address the Commission on her campaign to have towns across the state join the IHRA, which is the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and resolution against anti-Semitism

- For more information about IHRA: <http://www.jewishledger.com/2021/02/51-jewish-organizations-adopts-antisemitism-definition/>

Current definition of Anti-Semitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

Steps You Can Take To Stop Anti-Semitism:

- 1) Raising awareness on the matter by talking about it. Speaking to youth, in schools when appreciate, will help. We see a lot of anti-semitic social media posts. We need to be able to stand up and denounce these actions.
- 2) When there are these awful attacks on the Jewish community they often feel alone. Show solidarity and reach out to local faith to share that you support them.
- 3) Signing onto the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and resolution against anti-Semitism

IHRA Working Definitions and Charters: Guidance on key issues

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/ihra-working-definitions-and-charters>

American Jewish Committee (AJC)

<https://www.ajc.org/translatehateglossary>

Discuss on International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and resolution against anti-Semitism:

EB asked for a motion to recommend to West Hartford to adopt the IHRA definition, ES moved, DE Seconded, motioned passed by voice vote with one abstained

Eric moved motion for Co-Chairs EB & SR to draft letter to Town Hall, Esam seconded, passed by voice vote

Discuss Commissioner Emails:

DE shared that as a representative from the WEHRC we only share thoughts of the Commission if voted upon when communicating with other organizations

HRC Member Sarah Raskin to share update on Honor Roll:

SR, Given low number of recommendations or nominations suggest we extend the timeline and reopen the submission period

EB, Said he is happy to put it on social

PP, Said that he would be happy to work with the town to get it on their website

SR, Shared that there are no longer specific awards or number of awardees on Honor Roll. We can independently decide how many are recognized.

EB, So we will vet submission, do we have a criteria? Maybe we can pick a certain amount for segment or section.

HRC Member Ted Mancini to share an update on Crime Petition:

TM, Crime bill never made it out of committee. Working to hear back from town leaders to see if there will be movement on the topic.

SR, Reminded that bill language would be shared, asked if it was available.

TM, The bill died in committee so no language to share.

Discussion of “HRC Days to Celebrate” where we honor and recognize major human rights moments from our history:

SR, Shared google doc with suggested events/dates. Asked for a member to put their name next to date listed so that they can draft a post for review that is ready to go and that’s how we can divide the work.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JMnVd7EdOnZKu_KGmnDRT2qyROC25vpuxqzejYZkhd4/edit

Update on Facebook Live initiative

EB, Don’t have an update at this time

Update on Flag Raising and Pride Event

DE, June 1st 6pm outside Unity Green. Will be additional events throughout the month of June. Hope that we will be able to promote it and support it.

DE, Shared more events in June;

June 2nd from 4pm-9pm at Gastro Park

June 25th Celebration Ceremony, more details to come

HRC Member Kristen Sowell to share update on Juneteenth Event

KS, Will be held on Sunday, June 19th, 1:30pm – 4:00pm, exclusively in Blue Back Square, will have a WHHRC table at event, more details to come

SR & DE, volunteered to staff table

HRC Co-Chairs Dawn Ennis & Esam will share information of the New Elmwood Community Center Advisory Committee and discuss of WHHRC invitation to serve on Committee:

SR, Recommend that if someone represent WHHRC on Advisory Committee that we pay attention to ADA compliance to ensure the building is truly accessible

EB, This is in part to why we want someone from our Commission to be part of the Advisory Committee and we will continue to report back to WHHRC

EB, asked for motion to be appointed to New Elmwood Community Center Advisory Committee, TM moved, SR seconded, passed by voice vote

Discuss location for HRC's April Regular Meeting:

DE, Asked if we figured out that an in person location would also be accessible for virtual participation

PP, If you want to meet in person PP can provide that at the Senior Center or Library. Shared that he thinks it is better to meet at the library since he has more access to reserving room. PP shared that Town Hall said there were not rooms available to use.

ES, volunteered to follow up with Town Hall to see if we can use a room their if we decide to meet in person

KS, Shared that Town Hall would be a better location for everyone since it is centrally located

EB, By show of hands, majority showed support for in person meeting in April

Open Discussion

Announce Next Meeting Date

- Wednesday, April 6, 2022, location TBA

Adjournment

EB, made motion to adjourn, moved by TM, seconded by DE, passed by voice vote