

Special Meeting
Human Relations Commission
August 8, 2016

Meeting Called to Order: 6:37 p.m.

Attendance: Chair Kevin Washington, Joyce Armstrong; Pamela Lofton-McGeorge; Patricia Mack, Viola Nahabedian

Absent: Richard Knickerbocker (excused); Bernice Johnson

Guest: Richard Armstrong

Agenda Items:

1. Budget Report

- 2017 Budget \$3,480 (same as 2016 budget)
- Suggestion to rename Budget line items
 - a. Replace “One Book One Windsor” line to be “International Peace Festival”
 - b. Replace “Conversation on Race” to “Community Special Events”
 - c. Add budget line item called “Community Special Events”

Motion: Commissioner Mack made a motion to change the budget categories discussed. Armstrong 2nd the motion. Vote: in Favor (7), Oppose (0), Abstain (0). Motion Passes. There was discussion regarding Pat Mack’s membership status. McDougald indicated that Mack is an alternate; however Mack thinks she received paperwork for full membership. McDougald will get an update from the Personnel Division. HRC Commissioners discussed the membership in regards to full members, alternates and students, as well as current membership vacancies. Currently have 4 vacancies (1 Full Republican, 2 republican alternates and 1 democrat alternate) open. Suggested that McDougald send out a membership roster to commissioners. McDougald and Washington spoke with Commissioner Johnson in regards to her interest in remaining a member of HRC, since she has minimally attended meetings. It was noted that Johnson indicated she wanted to remain an active member. In addition, she had sent notification that she was available for this special meeting; however, was not in attendance for this meeting. Commissioner Armstrong indicated that Johnson contacted her via email inquiring about tonight’s meeting and stated she was not aware it.

2. Freedom of Information Act

- a. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a law that gives you the right to access information and is controlled by federal and state governments.
- b. Chair emphasize the importance of the FOIA and advises the Commissioners to be cautious when corresponding via email, etc. He indicated that all correspondence regarding HRC business should be between Commissioners ONLY and do NOT include outside parties. Therefore, to reduce the possibility to be liable for information conveyed via emails please do not put anyone on email when we are conversing about a HRC topics.
- c. Commissioner Swade asked about discussing HRC information verbally to someone outside HRC? The commission agreed that we can discuss topics that have been approved for discussion. As a commission we want to be cautious to discuss any sensitive issues that have not yet been approved, particularly around race, cultural issues, etc.

3. Calendar Events

- a. Chair indicated that we will be going into a hectic period soon. So wanted to highlight upcoming events planned for HRC. The events are as follows:

- **Oct. 31st** - Halloween on the Green
- **November 10th** – Bridge Builders Awards
- **Dec. 12th** (not confirmed) – Holiday Torchlight Parade - McDougald will confirm the date.

4. HRC Issues

- a. Chair Washington indicated that having the opportunity to lead the HRC for the Town of Windsor means a lot to him, specifically due to his personal life.
- b. Chair Washington prepared a letter and read it to the commissioners that highlighted the goals of HRC, participation and teamwork. He stressed the importance of attending meeting particularly if we need to vote and need a quorum to move the initiatives of the commission forward. So meeting participation is very helpful and appreciated.
- c. Furthermore, Chair stated, “Branding our Human Relations Commission is very important. It is our responsibility to be visible in the community.” He indicated how it was nice to hear great things about our commission from town leaders and citizens.
- d. Lastly Chair Washington thanked Commissioners Joyce and Dick Armstrong for their continuous support, as well as Joyce’s willingness to always edit correspondence. Also, he thanked commissioners Mack, Lofton-McGeorge, Nahabedian and Swade for their participation and commitment. He thanked McDougald for always being there and being a great Liaison for HRC.

5. Police/Community Forum

- a. Commission decided to table discussion about this event/collaboration until September.
- b. McDougald indicated that a “Service of Prayer, Appreciation and Compassion” service was held on August 4, 2016 at Hopewell Baptist Church. This was a collaboration between Hopewell Baptist and Union Baptists Churches and Hartford and Windsor Police Departments. Question arose as “Will this be the only Windsor Forum?” It appears from the flyer that this was a church service instead of a forum.
- c. Commissioner Len Swade thinks that Windsor may hold an event/forum in the fall. McDougald is waiting to hear back from Windsor Police Chief. So she will send a follow-up email or call him.

6. Bridge Builder Award

- a. There was discussion that the categories do not reflect the mission of HRC.
- b. There are 8 award categories, which may not necessarily be an award given for each category. It is a possibility based on the submission of nominees, there can be multiple awards given in any of the awards categories.
- c. Richard Armstrong indicated that the idea of Bridge Builder Awards is to make Windsor a better community for all residents.
- d. It was discussed to update categories for more inclusiveness, which will become more meaningful as time goes on.
- e. Commissioner Swade indicated that the ordinances from which HRC was established is around preventing prejudices and discrimination, upholding civil rights law and diversity. He suggested that the awards should be consistent with the ordinance’s mission and should be upheld.
- f. It was noted that majority of the award nominees have been submitted by the HRC Chair Washington and the Windsor Police department.
- g. It was further discussed that the Cultural Diversity Award need to be rewritten to include mission of HRC and include diversity and inclusiveness to broaden/brand our commission by educating citizens about our purpose around preventing prejudices, intolerance, and discrimination. Len Swade agreed to rewrite the Cultural Diversity Award statement and send to McDougald ASAP. McDougald will send out to commissioners to be open for discussion.

Motion: Commissioner Mack made a motion to accept the 7 categories with the exception of the 8th one regarding the “Cultural Diversity Award,” which will be rewritten by Commissioner Swade to include information from ordinance and then email McDougald for distribution to HRC members to review and discuss no more than 2 days. Motion was 2nd by Commissioner Len Swade, Vote: All in favor 6; 1 oppose. Motion passes.

7. International Peace Day

- a. Chair Washington indicated that there is a lot of opposition in regards to the planned date for the event. He mentioned that Windsor School would like to move the date. The Poets would like to participate again. Loomis Chaffee has an event the weekend of when we would like to hold the International Peace Week dinner.
- b. Chair Washington suggested moving the dates to Oct 7th – 9th. However, Pat indicated that this is Columbus Day holiday. So commissioners decided on Oct. 14th-16th to hold the event, which will give the schools and Loomis an opportunity to be available to participate. Washington will contact Loomis regarding holding the event dinner there on Sunday, Oct. 16th.
- c. The events will be held as follows on each day”
 - o **Friday, Oct. 14th** – “Community Talent Show” as one of the fundraising events. The talent show would be held at Windsor High School (if available). It will include all ages including Senior Center. This will be a family friendly talent show. The format will be similar to the “Voice” show and referred to as the “W Factor.” Therefore, the HRC will hold pre-judged tryouts conducted by HRC prior to performing. Approved performers must perform the same act during the talent show with 3 minutes per act. There will be judges invited from the community to judge the invites the night of the show, such as Windsor School leader and teacher, WHS Choir Director, Loomis Chaffee president, Town Council member, Dr. Lipman and Sr. Center contact. Also, commission decide that the Poets will be added to the Talen Show event by having them perform between acts.
 - o **Saturday, Oct. 15** – Health and Nutrition Wellness Fair. Invite UCONN, Hartford Hospital, and St. Francis to bring their buses to screen for Prostate Cancer, etc. Dr. Lipman to provide information around Dental Care, invite Spa business to participate, possible food trucks (weather permitting). Commissioner Len Swade indicated that LP Wilson does a Health Fair in the Fall. Action: Commission agreed to possibly partner/collaborate with them. Commissioner Lofton-McGeoge will contact LP Wilson to find out date of their event. If Health Fair is held same weekend Oct 14th-16, ask LP Wilson if the Pinwheels created by Windsor elementary students can be displayed in front of building. Also, Chair Washington indicated we could sponsor a Fitness Day, which will include yoga and Zumba workouts and other health vendors. Action: Chair Washington will contact Tim Smith (past member) to provide workout sessions.
 - o **Sunday, October 16th** – Peace Day Dinner. Possible location is Loomis Chaffee to be held from 3pm – 6pm. Format will include a reception from 3-3:30 pm with dinner to follow from 4-6pm. The theme is titled” The Year of the Woman.” Chair Washington will ask Deputy Mayor Jody Terranova as Keynote Speaker. Also other keynote speakers could include Lt. Nancy Wyman, someone from the Non-Violence Organization for Cultural Diversity Training, Tim Curtis, Beth Bye from West Hartford State Senator (Len Swade suggested her), Windsor Teacher of the Year, New Haven Mayor, new 1st Church pastor in Windsor, and Dr. Shelia Colbert (Loomis Chaffee President). **Action:** Chair Washington will reach out to all the above- mentioned person to see if they are interested and available to be speakers.

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8. Other Topics

- a. Commissioner Swade indicated that he would like to invite Nellie Holmes-Mason, past Bridge Builder awardee's daughter to HRC meeting, because she has expressed interest in attending.
- b. Also, Commissioner Swade state that he would like to contact the David Schultz, WHS student LGBT advisor to reconnect. Chair Washington indicated that David Schultz spoke at the Orlando event and was very impressed with his speech.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:42. Next Meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2016.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Lofton-McGeorge

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