

**TOWN OF WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
VIRTUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** Chairman Washington called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
2. **Commissioner Roll Call:** Present: Kevin Washington, Joyce Armstrong, Linda Massa, Rebecca Jacobsen, Josh Amaro, and Len Swade. Absent: Pat Mack, Kereme Murrell, Byron Bobb.

Also present: James Burke, staff liaison.

3. **Public Communications:** Jen Peck, a town resident, identified herself and stated that she was sitting in on meeting to observe.
4. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting was passed, 6-0.

5. **Liaison Report/Treasurer Report:**

Burke reported that total expenditures for the Juneteenth event were \$2,050. An in-kind contribution of picnic tables was made by the Public Works Department. Cash contributions were received from Amazon (\$1000) and First Church (\$500). The balance of the event costs were made up from the Town Budget.

The HRC will have a base amount of \$3200 to start the fiscal year. The Town Budget recommended by the town manager included additional funds for equity activities. The Lynn Farley Gillette Social Justice Fund was established at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and a grant will be coming in May or June of 2022 to the Town in support of HRC activities.

Burke also reported that the town is running its annual Citizen's Academy beginning September 21. This is a good opportunity for the public to learn about the operations of government. One can apply online and the program runs for seven weeks.

On Friday, Sept. 10, Social Services will be hosting a Caregiver Community Block Party at LP Wilson, which will promote resources to help caregivers and have free food. On Saturday the 11th the Town will commemorate 9/11 with a Walk of Light on the Town Green at 7:00 pm.

6. New Business

a. Attendance

Chairman Washington stated that going forward, the Commission will be taking attendance. Acting in his role as Chair, he will enforce a policy that if a commissioner misses more than three meetings without a valid excuse, there will be a conversation to assess whether that commissioner is willing/able to continue serving on the Commission.

b. Calendar

Chairman Washington reported that he added some items to the calendar including some racial and ethnic heritage months and awareness days to address the diversity of the town population. He also reported that he would like to adjust the Conversations on Race to reflect that diversity as well.

Burke shared the proposed calendar on the screen. He stated that the calendar's purpose is to get as many HRC events as possible into the town's events brochure to better publicize them, and thus when planning these events, the HRC must meet certain deadlines. For winter brochure the deadline is October 25. For spring and summer the deadline is February 28. These must also be based on the availability of town spaces as well. The Chair requested that a copy of the calendar be emailed to the Commission.

Chairman Washington asked Armstrong and Amaro to coordinate with the Police Department to organize a food drive for Windsor Food and Fuel. Commissioner Armstrong suggested that a food drive be organized in the early spring, because that is when need for donations is highest. Chairman Washington suggested organizing a food drive in April. Amaro said he would reach out to Officer Taylor to see whether the HRC could get involved in the WPD's holiday food drives. Armstrong and Massa discussed adding a potential pet food drive as well. Amaro suggested reaching out to the high school to organize a food drive at a WHS football home game.

c. One Book One Windsor

Chairman Washington reported that he would like to announce this event on November 1. Burke proposed to have book recommendations from commissioners sent to Community Development office ahead of the October meeting. Sandra Brown will collect the suggestions and send a summary to the HRC members in time for the meeting.

d. Conversations on Race

Chairman Washington would like to have a conversation program every month, unless there is a special event (e.g. Juneteenth), in which case there may be a separate event added onto it. The first Conversation on Race will be in October, with a discussion on Critical Race Theory in Windsor public schools. Chairman Washington is coordinating with school officials to be present at the event. He also invited other Commissioners to present ideas for future conversations. Armstrong proposed that one session related to Asian Americans be included as a priority. Massa and Chairman

Washington discussed ideas for a potential Conversation on Race focusing on the Hispanic community, to be timely with Hispanic History Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15).

Amaro suggested sponsoring a salsa event, with an instructor brought in to lead and potential collaboration with Mofongo. Burke offered that this event could potentially be coordinated with another Windsor event (perhaps the Chili Challenge). He will work with Amaro on it.

7. Old Business:

Chairman Washington thanked everyone for their help with the previous Juneteenth event and discussed ideas for the next one, including more entertainment and coordination with the Town of Bloomfield. It was agreed that fewer speakers would be desirable.

8. Adjournment:

A motion was made for adjournment by Chairman Washington and seconded by Massa at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James Burke, Staff Liaison