

**TOWN OF WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING - DECEMBER 9th, 2021**

HYBRID MEETING VIA ZOOM AND IN-PERSON AT TOWN HALL – LUDLOW ROOM

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Washington called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm
2. **Roll Call/Attendance:** taken by Secretary Copeland. Present in person: Castella Copeland, Linda Massa, Jim Burke, Chairman Washington, Joyce Armstrong. Present via Zoom: Leonard Swade, Bryon Bobb, Pat Mack. Excused absences: Rebecca Jacobsen and Josh Amaro. Unexcused Absences: Kereme Murrell. Copeland has a tracker via google sheets that is updated each meeting.
3. **Public Communications:**
Burke noted that there is no one present in the room and on Zoom. Chairman Washington closed the public communications portion at 6:37 pm.
4. **Approval of Minutes: November 2021**
Armstrong and Massa noted a correction on the date for the Bridge Builder award is on January 27th. Armstrong also noted that she had an excused absence as well. Motion to approve of the minutes of October 13th, 2021 was passed 7 - 0. A motion was made by Chairman Washington and seconded by Armstrong.
5. **Liaison Report/Treasurer Report: Jim Burke**
Burke shared a couple of items including the budget for the commission. For this fiscal year, the commission has \$4,800. This does not include the grant fund possibility from the Lynne Farley Gillette Social Justice Fund. Burke broke it out based on what we have done in the past so that the commission is not locked into the numbers, only the bottom line number. Out of the \$4800, the commission has spent \$143 so far this year. The commission has purchased all the one book one Windsor items.

Burke also noted he had a conversation with a contact from the Windsor Senior Center about tours to all of the places aforementioned in November. Burke shared that the Senior Center last did a tour to Pequot museum in 2016 and it was low cost. Rebecca, the contact from the Senior Center, shared that the commission can work with the Windsor Recreation department to do tours. Burke noted that Rebecca also suggested to meet with the Windsor Senior Center and Recreation center after the commission first identifies where the events will take place so that logistics and plans can be made. Burke shared that the commission can run the event through the Town of Windsor's Recreation department to have folks sign up and get the costs down. Burke reiterated that the commission has to first identify a couple of committee members to work with Rebecca and Shannon at the recreation department since the two ladies know the tour operators and logistics more.

Chairman Washington inquired the difference between doing something locally versus going out of the area? Burke shared if it is local and individuals are seniors, the bus is free of charge if they are 55+ since the Windsor Senior Center already has mechanisms in place. Burke also shared that the buses the Windsor Senior Center uses could be open to the general public but at a cost, therefore Rebecca and Shannon suggest a motorcoach. Chairman Washington further inquired if the commission decides to open the bus to the seniors and the general public does it make a difference? Burke replied having dual access to Senior Center individuals and the general public would impact the money. Chairman Washington further inquired with a hypothetical event; for instance, if the

commission hosted an event and went to the John Lewis center in New Britain to go with the one book one Windsor event, how would that work? Burke replied the commission would have to charter a bus and work with the company including a minimum amount of people needed to go on the trip. For example, the Windsor Senior Center uses the bus to go to Radio City in New York for \$190 total for bus, ticket in, and potentially food. Massa and Armstrong shared they are not sure if food is included but probably. Armstrong also shared that the senior buses are not that big, they are mini-busses not able to get many people.

After answering questions about transportation, Burke shared that the commission needs to approve a schedule of meetings for next year, 2022, to place on the town website. Burke and Massa inquired if the commission would like to leave out the July and August meetings. Chairman Washington inquired when the commission needs to get this done? Burke shared that until the commission comes up with the next set of meetings to approve of, a special meeting will be in order such as this last one in December. The same will have to happen in January until the commission files an approvable schedule. Burke provided a solution by providing a version that commissioners can approve of that avoids holidays and Burke will email it out for all commission members to approve of. Chairman Washington shared that July and August will not have meetings since the commission has Juneteenth and end of the year events. Burke confirmed that he will send the schedule via email. Massa and Burke inquired if the commission would have the same schedule of meetings every second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm EST? Chairman Washington replied yes since it makes sense for the group. Chairman Washington also inquired for clarification on the amount spent and the potential amount gained from the budget that Burke shared. Burke noted that yes this spreadsheet is a rough estimation of costs based on previous year's expenditures, but excludes potential grant money that can cover additional expenses and costs for larger events.

6. New Business:

A. SOUTH PARK INN-Kandyce Aust-REQUEST Chair Washington

Chairman Washington shared information about a respite place for the homeless to help homeless individuals get their bearings before getting back out into the world. After receiving this information from an organization, Chairman Washington was asked to bring up the information to the commission and potentially do a clothing or toy drive to assist those in need. Massa inquired where in Hartford the event would take place? Chairman Washington shared that he is presenting the information to the commission to see if commissioners are interested in putting an event together. Massa further inquired what does the contact of the organization need? Chairman Washington shared that the contact has a list of things commissioners and community members can get. Bobb inquired, where will the event ultimately take place? Chairman Washington shared the event would take place somewhere in Windsor. Burke inquired when the event would be taking place? Chairman Washington shared probably at the end of January 2022 or early February 2022. Massa inquired where in Windsor the event would take place? Chairman Washington shared that the commission would plan the event and are not that far yet. Massa shared that she would help with setting up the event. Chairman Washington called a motion to approve this event, motion carries all in favor, 7 present 2 are absent.

7. Old Business:

A. BRIDGE BUILDER 2022

Chairman Washington shared that the commission is getting into the heavy part of the year which is January - March 2022. Chairman Washington inquired if the commission will be able to do the event in person? Burke suggested that the commission ask the health department about it since Covid-19 rates are going up, the commission will need to keep an eye on it. Burke also suggested that the commission play it by ear and keep social distancing since folks are coming off of the holiday season. Burke, Massa, and Armstrong all shared sentiments on the vaccination rates of Windsor community members and potential attendees for the event. Massa shared sentiments of concern about if folks are vaccinated or not and how the commission will keep attendees safe. Chairman Washington inquired if the commission should plan for food this year or not? Burke suggested that the commission can do that planning as the event gets closer. Chairman Washington shared sentiments of not wanting to wait last minute. Burke agreed and shared that the most critical thing for the commission is to decide

on the awardees, order the plaques, and figure out how to contact each of the candidates. Massa inquired if last year food was provided? Copeland shared that last year non-perishable items were provided to attendees and awardees. Armstrong suggested that the commission could do cupcakes in plastic containers so folks can take them with them and things will still be sanitary. Chairman Washington tabled the discussion thanking everyone for their ideas. Chairman Washington also shared that this next portion of the conversation is in confidence; this is not something the commission will need to go and broadcast since it is kind of a surprise for awardees, all points moving forward are to be kept in the room.

Chairman Washington goes through all of the applications and recipients for the Bridge Builder Awards. Secretary Copeland will read out all of the descriptions excluding the second recipient where Massa read out the description. The first nominee is Marva Speed Copeland and was nominated by Florence Barlow a previous recipient of the award. The second nominee is Mel Madigan and was nominated by Linda Massa a commission member. Chairman Washington shared that he knows her personally and knows her love for this community and what she does at her business and always looks for ways to get art and love into the community.

Chairman Washington shared that the commission often has to find nominees for the award and often does a bulk of the work as though commissioners see community members' dedication and hard work 'with our eyes open'. Copeland shared that she helped connect community members in working on nominations and had a hand in helping community members get nominations done on time. Massa inquired that maybe the commission needs more publicity to get community members to submit nominations. Chairman Washington replied historically it does not seem the case because it appears in many places such as WIN TV, the radio, the newspaper, via email, the newsletter, word-of-mouth, community posting boards, local businesses, and hubs. Chairman Washington shared that over the past eight years of being chairman, he has noticed community members have missed the deadline for nominations. Massa inquired how the commission could get more people? Chairman Washington shared that there has never been a flood of applicants from the community, mainly nominees are selected from people that commissioners have noticed from the community.

Copeland shared similar sentiments since she sent out reminders and had a big hand in making sure additional nominations were in on time including assisting in the write-up of most of the applications. Armstrong reiterated that this award is publicized to the community very well each year. Massa shared that speaking to others in the town is another way the commission can get the word out. Copeland inquired if this application could be online since it would help the application process go a bit smoother via technology. Chairman Washington shared that there were issues in getting it online. Burke shared that he and Sandra Brown set up the application in Canva but the Town of Windsor website is in WordPress. Therefore, Brown and Burke were not able to get it in time and format it correctly due to the formatting conversion error. Burke shared it was working fine but once the link was placed online it did not work; email worked but WordPress does not recognize it online.

After sharing these sentiments, Chairman Washington continued through the nomination forms. The third nominee is Monique Sanders, who was nominated by Charles and Castella Copeland. Chairman Washington knows this person very well in addition to the countless events and works she has done in Windsor over the years. The fourth nominee is Helen Jones, nominated by Pastor Nicole whom some commissioners know for her work at First Church in Windsor. The fifth nominee is Nathan Wolliston, nominated by Liz Dupont Deihl a previous recipient of the award. All commissioners shared sentiments of his work as a newly appointed Democratic member on the Board of Education. The sixth nominee is Hilary Carpenter, who was nominated by Charles Copeland. Chairman Washington also noted that Carpenter was a co-chair for family resettlement in IRIS that helped a refugee family resettle in Windsor, CT. Chairman Washington shared about a family coming to live in Windsor Pierson's house. Massa shared that she has a bunch of toys to give them if possible. Chairman Washington shared that to donate toys they must be vetted to make sure they are safe enough to play with.

The seventh nominee is Shontay Gibson nominated by James Copeland. Copeland shared that this person is beloved by the Copeland family and has been doing incredible work in education within the Windsor community. Other commissioners shared that they have seen Gibson at many local events volunteering and being hands-on with the community. The eighth nominee is Lisa Tatko was nominated by Castella Copeland who knows her personally for her work in social justice education.

Chairman Washington inquired if anyone has any objections to any of the nominations. No objections were made all were in favor of the nominees. Massa and Armstrong noted that there is a diverse pool of nominees from across disciplines, occupations, and ethnicities that represent Windsor. Chairman Washington shared he will reach out to the candidates personally. Chairman Washington then moved on to the four chairmen awards to give out.

Chairman Washington shared each of the nominations and a little bit about what they have done for the Windsor Community. The first nominee for the chairman award is Donald Jepson who was on the Town Council for close to 20 years. The second nominee is Mariah Cubano, the young girl who wrote an inspirational book for elementary students and she did a toy drive to raise 100 toys to give out to Windsor members. Massa and Copeland are not sure if Mariah is from Windsor to receive the award, Copeland did a quick search on the internet and could not find additional information. The new second nominee shared by Chairman Washington is Richard Armstrong who has helped out with everything in Windsor and is an ex-commissioner of 12 years. The third nominee is Diandre Satterwhite who created the Juneteenth logo and hosted an event last Juneteenth 2021 at the Wilson Library. Satterwhite is currently a Windsor High School student. The fourth nominee is Lillian Hutchinson who is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion coordinator at Loomis Chaffee school. She has previously participated in Juneteenth and conversations on race series. The fifth nominee is Patricia Mack, who is a current commissioner and school teacher who has helped countless children in learning about the world.

Chairman Washington suggested giving an award to Jim Burke and Sandra Brown. Chairman Washington nominated Burke, however, Burke declined and instead suggested to nominate Windsor Historical Society the organization. Burke shared that as an institution the Windsor Historical Society has made diversity a pillar of their operation and increased their participation. Burke shared more about all the work the Windsor Historical Society has done to make equity, racial, and social justice reach out to people and bring more voices to the front. Burke offered to personally write the profile. All commissioners want to recognize Burke and Brown, but neither want to be recognized publicly. Bobb inquired what is the total amount the commission has now for the bridge builder awards? Chairman Washington shared there are now, 13 recipients total.

Chairman Washington made a motion to approve all nominees for the Bridge Builder Award 2021. Motion carries, all in favor with no objections. The commission will have a final list and publication of confirming the spelling of names and items to come soon. Chairman Washington asked Mack and Copeland to continue the tradition of having nice boards that were created last year with all of the nominee's information to make sure everything looks nice. Mack and Copeland help with the boards for the upcoming celebration.

B. ONE BOOK ONE WINDSOR

Chairman Washington shared the commission is getting into January and reiterated that the One Book One Windsor program will be tied into Black History Month to have community involvement. Chairman Washington requested that a commissioner reach out to the library and place out a flyer around town. Burke volunteered to contact the library. Copeland inquired if there could be a podcast chat or Instagram live with other organizations such as The National Black Cooperative (TNBC) to get more social media involvement. Copeland will reach out to see if this organization wants to be involved in the upcoming events. Chairman Washington asked Copeland to reach out to the CCSU John Lewis center to see if there can be a trip arranged to view the institute in February. Massa is concerned about wheelchair accessibility for the events to which Chairman Washington shared that accommodations can be made for people with disabilities or other needs.

C. BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2022

Chairman Washington shared that the schedule for Black History Month is out already. Chairman Washington also shared that community members are looking forward to the Black Jeopardy. Chairman Washington inquired who the commission will have to help program it? Burke suggested that the commission can see if there is an alternative to help get the program off the ground since the person who usually runs the event moved to Manchester. Chairman Washington suggested having the program be set by the first of January to have it all set to go for Feb 1st. Burke suggested that first, the commission needs to find a programmer to help set up all the information. Copeland shared that she knows of online templates the commission could use and reach out to some technology programmers. Chairman Washington shared that in the past the commission did run the event in the Alex Tribeck way with sound effects 2-3 years ago. Chairman Washington would like to put the word out starting next month so community members can form teams. Chairman Washington knows that the First Church in Windsor, Loomis Chaffee, and Grace Episcopalian will have participating teams.

Chairman Washington shared that the goal is to have a Windsor High School team and Town Council team. Chairman Washington also shared that a six-team max is needed due to time constraints. Mack suggested that the Democratic Town Committee have participated in the past and maybe up to participating as well. Copeland inquired if this event will be live-streamed? Mack suggested that the commission needs to get a message to Win TV to get them to broadcast. Burke shared that each year the event is recorded and shared on Win TV afterward but is not live-streamed. Chairman Washington also shared that the Hartford courant had an article on it last year which helped spread the word and to share more about the event with others. Chairman Washington shared that he will reach out to Kevin Booker who has previously co-hosted the event. Armstrong shared that she will be away most of January and February and will be unable to attend upcoming events in the Winter. Chairman Washington concluded the December events at and all 2021 agenda items at 7:48 pm.

8. Items from Commissioners: Round Table Sharing

Swade shared a programming idea which is to have a West Indian festival with the town of Bloomfield. Burke shared that the commission needs to pay attention to Councilors Walker and Black-Burke from the town council who are having something in the works. For now, the commission will step back and see what happens. Massa shared that Hartford does a dance parade.

Armstrong shared that the annual drive for fundraising has been better than normal for the food pantry and banks. Windsor is a very giving and supportive community. Massa provided a pet food shelter update. Massa ended up meeting with Kim the new animal control person and got two new kittens. Massa talked with the new parol about the animal pantry issue and found out that Kim is raising new money for the shed and is on Marshal Phelps road. Massa shared that she wants the shed in the Deerfield Wilson area. Armstrong shared that the issue previously was that they did not want to work outside in the heat and cold. Massa shared that she and others are willing to go out and work with others to get the shed to be moved elsewhere. Massa questioned why people can not put a shed at LP Wilson? Massa also inquired additional information about the Wilson Firehouse. Massa contacted them, but they did not know anything about it. Massa is still working with Kim who is collecting food.

Chairman Washington shared he will contact South Park Inn and will contact the Police department to see if they will contribute to upcoming events. Armstrong shared it would be a great idea to see if these two organizations have connections as well. Chairman Washington will also reach out to Windsor Historical Society about potentially assisting in the South Park Inn donation event. Armstrong mentioned that she previously participated in Socktober in November for another organization and it was super successful. Massa shared that many homeless men walk around all day so they need socks. Chairman Washington inquired about homeless women's needs. Copeland shared in the past that feminine hygiene needs such as pads, tampons, soap, or things to help clean

themselves were requested from local shelters. Massa shared that women have access to more services if they have kids. Armstrong agreed and shared that there are battered women services.

Burke inquired if there would be a January conversation on race event? Copeland shared at the last event community members suggested three potential events including one event on the intersection of race and age, one on the intersection of race and class, one on the intersection of race, class, and gender. Copeland and Chairman Washington will communicate dates and event details on this after discussing further.

Armstrong shared that there would be a Walden Woods Toy Drive this Saturday 12/11/2021 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Chairman Washington requested Armstrong to send out the information on this event via email for commissioners to spread the word in their network. Commissioners Copeland, Mack, and Byron did not have anything else to add.

9. Adjournment:

Chairman Washington adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Castella Copeland, Secretary