

CITY OF REVERE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

5:00 pm Eastern Time

Location: City Council Chambers or via Zoom

Monthly Meeting – April 4th, 2024

1) Call Meeting to Order

2) Roll Call of Commissioners

- Dr. Garcia
- Chief Callahan
- Father Wellington
- Somaya Laroussi
- Vice Chair Herby Jean-Baptiste
- Kourou Pich
- Chief Bright
- Attorney Molly McGee

3) Land Acknowledgment

- HRC Recognizes that Revere is on the land of the Pawtucket and extends an invitation for any Indigenous or First Nation's People to spectate the circle from zoom.

4) HRC reads the HRC mission statement

5) Approval of Minutes from the March 7th Monthly Meeting

- **Commissioner Laroussi motions to approve the minutes, Commissioner Pich seconds. All are in favor.**

6) Monthly acknowledgements

- **April celebrates:**
 - **National Volunteer Month**
 - **Earth Month**
 - **Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month**
 - **Arab American Heritage Month**
 - **Sexual Assault and Rape Awareness Month (Provided by Commissioner Pich)**
 - **Stress Month (Provided by Steve Morabito)**
 - **Alcohol Awareness Month (Provided by Steve Morabito)**
- **April 2nd – World Autism Day**
- **April 7th – International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Rwandan Genocide**
- **April 10th – Eid (end of Ramadan)**
- **April 13th to 16th – Khmer New Year, HRC acknowledges how Cambodians were a large part of Revere History, many of which concentrated in Shirley Avenue, which is true to this day.**

- **April 22nd - Earth Day**
- ❖ **Chair Hossaini gives Father Wellington an opportunity to formally introduce himself to the rest of the Commission**
 - From Brazil
 - Been in the United States for 16 years
 - Current pastor of Immaculate Conception Church
 - Serve as a judge to the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdioceses of Boston
 - Is happy to serve on this committee because he represents the Catholic and Latino populations of Revere
- ❖ Chair Hossaini states on behalf of the HRC that the commission is happy to have him, along with the rest of the new members who had join a month prior

8) Recap what was done in March

- a) Congratulate Vice Chair Jean-Baptiste on receiving the Black Excellence on the Hill from the Massachusetts State House
 - a. Vice Chair Jean-Baptiste: This was the most powerful award he had received; many people congratulated him on receiving this reward. Thanked his wife for being the person who pushed him to give his best and all to the city and the main reason why he got the award (THANK YOU JEAN-BAPTISTE'S WIFE)
- b) **HRC Women' Month Event**
 - a. **Vice Chair Hossaini: Believed it was a good event and a great turnout considering how much of a time constraint we had to work with**
 - b. Director Morabito: Thanks the commission for doing such a great job at planning and running the event and allowing it to be as successful as it was
 - c. Chief Bright: Had a great time, great event despite time constraint, everyone seemed to enjoy social aspect, the food, watching the women who were being honored
 - d. Commissioner Pich: Thanks the Cultural Events and Celebrations sub-committee for planning such an event, enjoyed the event, loved to see all the women who were being recognized as they should, loved to see all the men who came to the event and support such strong women. Is excited to see what next year will bring
 - e. Dr. Garcia: Loved to see all the encouragement coming from different leaders female leaders in the community and also the social aspect of the event and how organized it was. It was good to see uh members of the community being acknowledged as well as recognized for the work that they have done. A recommendation for next year would be to provide more recognition to even more female leaders in the community (business owners, mothers, community members) that need to be recognized.
 - f. Commissioner Laroussi: Loved the event and loved that there was a lot of consideration for people with food restrictions (like Halal, Gluten Free) and for those who were fasting. Echoed what Dr. Garcia had mentioned about if we were going to this event next year to consider more women, especially women in businesses locally and other invisible voices. Loved that we had women of all different generations, we had older women and we had young kids, and we had a couple of teenagers; would like to see more young adult women show up to such an event.

- g. Chair Hossaini: Agrees with Commissioner Laroussi and Dr. Garcia in terms of recognizing more people who are women in the community. Recognizes both Kourou and Molly for setting up a list for outreach. The goal going forward is to put in more of an effort to go to each business and talk to the owners themselves just to be more involved in the event um. Emphasized the fact that this was a group effort and that everyone had a role in making this event. Echoes Commissioner Laroussi that we had a lot of different generations of women, especially the people celebrated were mothers, grandmothers, and great grandmothers. Is glad that the event provided some sort of insight of the people who made the city the way that it is um now.
- h. Vice-Chair Jean-Baptiste: Just congratulates the commission for doing such a great job with the event.

8) Subcommittees

- a) **Ask new members if they have a subcommittee they would like to join**
 - a. **Chair Hossaini describes the different subcommittees and their member, will provide updated roster to all members**
 - b. Commissioner Laroussi opts to join the Education, Research, and Evaluation Sub-committee
 - c. Father Wellington opts to join the Community Engagement and Organization Sub-committee
 - d. Vice-Chair Jean-Baptiste: Will still think about which sub-committee to join, asks how the role comes to be for each sect.
 - e. Chair Hossaini: In response to the Vice Chair, it depends on what the HRC would like to focus on at that moment and whichever sub-committee it appropriately corresponds to is the one that spearheads that role
 - f. Commissioner Pich: opts out of the Education, Research, and Evaluation Sub-committee

9) Other Business

A) Continue discussion from previous meeting about planning trainings and events

- **Commissioner Laroussi: Thinks the commission is at a good place to start setting a date to start setting up workshops to determine what the plan is for the next fiscal year. It would be good to start outlining the objectives for the calendar year and then break down the different sub-categories of issues mentioned in the last meeting.**
- **Chair Hossaini: (In response to Commissioner Laroussi) To recap from the previous meeting -> The commission planned to have yearly objectives and really understanding what the mission statement means for each member of the commission, as well as diving into personal definitions of what education means.**
- **Commissioner Pich: Suggests that the commission can have a half a day training, and, in that training, can also go over the commission's priorities for the year.**
- **Chair Hossaini (response to Commissioner Pich): Should it be something that's within our break when the fiscal year ends and August or September? It is either that time or**

the ideal time to have that um to have that training would be within that break period or during the active period.

- **Commissioner Laroussi:** Asks what the fiscal year is.
- **Chair Hossaini:** (In response to Commissioner Laroussi): The fiscal year starts in July and then it ends in June
- **Attorney Molly McGee:** Thinks that the break would not be ideal because a lot of people were traveling and off duty
- **Chair Hossaini:** (In response to Attorney Molly McGee) Agrees with Attorney McGee, suggests that instead of having a monthly meeting, the commission we would have a retreat instead and would end the year off without a meeting to essentially train for the next fiscal year
- **Commissioner Pich:** Agrees with Chair Hossaini, if the commission plays up until July 1st, there would be information that can be shared with the public for the next fiscal year.
- **Chief Bright:** Mentions that scheduling things may be problematic after July 1st, agrees that if we can get something between now and June 30th.
- **Chair Hossaini:** Concludes that the plan is to plan a training within from now until June 30th and replace the last monthly meeting with this training. Asks in terms of organizing if the training would involve someone come in and mentor us, referred to the Undoing Racism training, who would the commission like to bring, etc.
- **Commissioner Laroussi:** It seems like the plan for the next fiscal year and to break down things like what the mission statement means for the commission, make it into a workshop between the commission and less like a training.
- **Director Morabito:** Mentions that we only know the budget for this year, we cannot plan something for next year now because we don't know how much money we will get from the city.
- **Commissioner Pich:** Points out that there are two things: one is the training one is that the Commissioners can work together and come up with a plan for like the next fiscal year, such as events in terms of community engagement and evaluations, and other goals for the next fiscal year. Two, to do the circle practice training if the budget for this year allows it.
- **Chair Hossaini:** Agrees with Commissioner Pich, states that we can do the circle training practice and double it into a workshop so that we can use what the commissioner had learned from the training to brainstorm events.
- **Commissioner Pich:** Brought up that Attorney McGee this create that bridge between us and the Cambridge HRC, and the commission can use them as a huge resource, suggests a possibility of meeting with them and workshopping through them.
- **Chair Hossaini:** Believes that would be like the best way to approach in terms of bringing both the training and the workshop concepts together; since it is not necessarily focusing on something as particular as Circle training, but something more general.
- **Dr. Garcia:** States that the commission doesn't have a clear understanding of what the role of the HRC, especially with so many things happening around the world, racial tensions, and people being killed right and left in the Middle East. People's rights are

constantly being violated nationally and internationally. Believes think that to start the year off and to build a shared understanding of what the mission is all about and what we are supposed to do as a body it would be great to bring a keynote speaker to do come to come and talk to us about what the Human Rights Commission is all about; it would set a tone for the year it would set a tone for the group and eventually, the commission, would have probably a very good understand where we stand. Recalls that there are so many times in the council chamber where people have shown up questioning the commission; whether it be Cambridge HRC and some sort of expert, that is where the commission needs to start.

- Commissioner Laroussi: Agrees with Dr. Garcia; favors the idea of like joining the workshop and the training; wants to make sure that the two parts are on separate days or times. That way, the commission can take what it learned from one day and apply it to a workshop another day.
- Chair Hossaini: Believes that it makes sense for it to be at two separate times, like we did with the Undoing Racism training. Agrees with Dr. Garcia that this would be the best approach.
- Commissioner Pich: Would like to have the community informed; reintroduces the listening learning tour with the community either through the communication and community engagement focus groups, that way we can see what the real issues are in the community and close that gap between the commission and the community. All the meeting and agenda making that occur at the meetings may not be what the community needs. Additionally, it suggests having an audience with the city councilors, since they are the voted leaders of our city.
- Chair Hossaini: Thinks that both approaches go together but asks how it would go sequentially; tour first then the training or training then the listening tour.
- Commissioner Laroussi: Confirms with Commissioner Pich that is what she was trying to suggest, especially when it comes to spacing out the two parts of the training/workshop. That way, the commission can get an idea from other people what they're doing in different cities, how they set up their HRCs and what they do and then go back into the community. Once all that information is gathered, the commission can come back to consider why there is a Human Rights Commission. There is a whole history of how the commission came to be and all the community members that were very crucial in making the HRC possible.
- Vice-Chair Jean-Baptiste: Agrees with Dr. Garcia and mentions that there are people in Revere who don't even know that this commission even exists. Some people don't know where to go if they were to face any kind of discrimination. Mentions that each HRC has its own by-laws, so we need to know what Revere's by-laws are. Reinforces the fact that we can bring another city to come to Revere to do some kind of training or we can go to another city.
- Attorney McGee: States that she feels that everybody on the Education, Research, and Evaluation subcommittee and in the entirety of the commission is on that subcommittee because she utilized everyone for the history of Revere project. Commended Director Morabito for connecting and supporting her, and from the mayor's office with connecting her to the IT department. Appreciates that the mayor's

office seeing this vision and understanding the history of the HRC and wanting to make it a part of City Hall. Wants to get as many people as possible from Revere involved in this history and then also make it clear why the commission exists. Claims that some of the laws that are in place are meant to be re-written and that is what the commission is here to do.

- **Commissioner Pich:** States that after a long time being on this commission and not being able to understand the mission statement, it is ultimately our fault, especially in the sense of not being able to transfer that information to the new commissioners. Also, the commission has been doing a lot of work, and we should not cut ourselves short. It all comes down to how the commission delivers that information that it has gathered between ourselves and to the community. This commission consists of people who come from different backgrounds, and we need to find the opportunity for the commission to come together. We need to establish requirements and training that every commissioner must go through, such as: oppression, undoing racism, unconscious bias trainings, and other trainings that are needed. All these things must happen to gather information to then disseminate to the public.
- **Chair Hossaini:** Responding to Commissioner Pich, agrees that it is a good idea for us to have all these trainings, especially if they can be done separately and individually, and online.
- **Commissioner Laroussi:** Agrees with commissioner Pich and Chair Hossaini and that the commission should do all that first before coming together or doing a listening tour. Believes that a project like this is too overwhelming for the group that is as big as ours. It is important to know our role in the city and list the commission's priorities. The circle training makes sense to prioritize because it would be guiding how the commission ran its meetings going forward.
- **Father Wellington:** Takes a community to form who a person is, there are these groups of people in Revere but they do not really work as a community; there is a lot of separation regarding many things: religion, ethnicity, race, social class. If the HRC does not present itself as a solution, these we would just be going around in circles. The commission must understand the value of the human person, and for that, it needs the training of someone equipped with that sort of knowledge. If the community does not defend each other and if we do not understand what hurts in the other, then our work is futile.
- **Chief Callahan:** Agrees with what everyone is saying in terms of what the commission plans for training. We need the training to overcome barriers and fully understand the community and what they need.
- **Father Wellington:** Suggests that each of the commissioners split and go to different trainings and then at a meeting, come together and share what they had learned from that training to the rest of the commission and the public.
- **Commissioner Pich:** Is willing to put a list of trainings and share it with the commission.
- **Attorney McGee:** Commends Commissioner Pich for coordinating and putting the list together at the very last minute.

- **Chair Hossaini:** I Echo that sentiment of what Attorney McGee had said. Suggests to make a list available for the rest of city hall for anyone who is available. Asks if anyone wants to add on to the idea or anything that we should do to really spearhead the rest of the year.
- **Commissioner Pich:** States that the circle training normally takes two and a half days. Asks if we can commit to two and a half days and asks if Morabito can see if we have the funding for such training. Will ask Strong Oak for their availability but would like to see three days that we can commit to in June.
- **Chair Hossaini:** Will send an email to list off three days in June and see which days will work best with people.
- **Commissioner Laroussi:** Asks Commissioner Pich what the set up looks like for the training.
- **Commissioner Pich:** Consists of two module and can be cut down to 2 days instead of 2 and a half days. It is 9-5, the commission will be sitting in a circle together going through those trainings; one can become a trainer themselves.
- **Director Morabito:** States that the city will have the Racial Equity Institute doing a training, asks if anyone from the commission would like to sign up for it (it is a two-day training in May)
- **Chair Hossaini:** Asks what the dates are for that, there are no dates known at the current moment.

10) Open Forum

No one was on zoom or in person.

11) Adjournment

Attorney McGee motions to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Laroussi seconds. All are in Favor. Meeting is adjourned.