

CITY OF REVERE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

April 1, 2021 on ZOOM

Meeting time: 5:00 pm EDT

Meeting Minutes

- 1) Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra called Meeting to Order.**
- 2) Roll Call of Commissioners** - All members are present.
- 3) Arrive & Settle** – includes brief silence in honor of Asian community and recent racist attacks.
- 4) Approval of Minutes from the March 4th Meeting**

Chief Bright MOTIONS and Jalon Fowler seconds; All are in favor.

5) Pending Topic Updates:

a. Community Listening Series

- March 2nd and 13th sessions were valuable for the Commission to model open dialogue around race and related topics; however, the March 24th session was cancelled since people from the community were not registering to speak at the meetings and hearing from the community was the intention.
- ACTION: We will revisit this important project in the future with more outreach and as public awareness of HRC increases.
- Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra mentions that we have added a “public forum” section to our monthly meetings. The last 10 minutes or so can be dedicated to hearing from the community. Community members can request to speak at our monthly meetings by visiting our HRC webpage on the City website.

b. 311 Request – History of Revere

- Gratitude to the Commissioners who visited the museum and to Bob Upton and Toby Pearlstein of the Revere Society for Cultural and Historical Preservation (RSCHP) who hosted the museum tours and are receptive to cultural diversity in the museum.
- Since the last meeting, Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra emailed the 311 complainant with an update and to join the monthly HRC meeting for an open conversation with the Commission and RSCHP Board members to address the 311 request. However, the email bounced back twice as an “undeliverable” address.
- ACTION: Bob Upton and Toby Pearlstein of the RSCHP were not available to join today’s meeting. They will attend the May 6th meeting for further discussion and collaboration about the 311 request regarding the Revere museum and the narrative of Revere’s history.

6) Topics for Discussion:

a. Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Training for Commissioners

- Prior to the meeting, Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra emailed the Commissioners details of two training options from Courage of Care Coalition.
- All Commissioners prefer the customized training proposal which would be for the HRC members only.
- Main reasons are that 1, we have more input on the scheduling and 2, being in our own group allows for greater bonding. Rachid Moukhabir mentioned that since we are a newly established group, we would benefit from the opportunity for deeper group bonding.
- Although the cost for phases 1 & 2 in the customized proposal is \$10,000 compared to \$7950 for the alternative training program with other groups and a fixed schedule, Kourou Pich mentioned that this is a good investment.
- After the last meeting Kathi Reinstein shared a MA non-profit resource for possible Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion funding. City staff Reuben Kantor states that he emailed the group, but the email bounced back.
- Reuben Kantor also stated he would investigate other possible City funding sources for HRC training.
- Lynn Alexis MOTIONS that we proceed with the customized proposal if we can secure funding. Kathi Reinstein seconds; all in favor
- ACTION: Reuben Kantor to investigate funding. Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra to follow-up with Commissioners and Courage of Care Coalition representatives once we have more information about funding.

c. Asian Solidarity (anti-Asian racism) Statement

- Prior to the meeting, sample statements were emailed to the HRC members for reference if we create our own statement. This included a Revere Anti-Asian Racist Statement from the Mayor and RPS Superintendent Dr Kelly, shared by Dr Garcia who feels we should support this statement as it is very comprehensive and complete.
- Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra mentions whether the HRC make their own statement or simply support the statement from Dr Kelly and the Mayor. The Chair also points out that if we create our own statement, then we consider selecting two Commissioners to work on it based on input at this meeting and give them authority to finalize. This prevents having to wait until next month for the full HRC to approve.
 - Two commissioners: Chaimaa Hossaini and Kourou Pich, volunteered to work on this if the Commission agrees to create their own statement.

- Guest from the Community, Lisa Benlail, joined the meeting to inquire: How many hate crimes have been reported in Revere last year and this year? What measures have been put in place to protect Asian Americans?
 - Chief Callahan responds that to his attention, none have been reported and that police are being more diligent overall.
 - Chief Bright asks if Lisa Benlail has seen or experienced anything which she responds none personally but is concerned because of all that is currently happening.
 - Lisa Benlail, Chaimaa Hossaini, and many Commissioners mentioned that although people have not reported Asian-Hate crimes (or other hate crimes), individuals receive micro-aggressions from other people in the community. Personal experiences are shared with the group.
 - Chief Callahan states we should not revictimize anyone. The police want to help.
- Lynn Alexis asks, what are the repercussions for the person committing a hate crime?
 - Chief Callahan: Fullest extent of the law and reach out to the appropriate agencies such as the State Attorney's Office, U.S. Attorney's Office, and the FBI.
- Discussion continued about how some people who are minorities are afraid to come to the police because of their past experiences, or simply just distrust in the police. Sometimes it is intimidating to go to the police for safety. Considering this, the HRC should acknowledge that these issues are happening and how can we encourage people to speak up and stand up.
 - Chief Callahan: People should not be scared to come forward with their concerns and experiences.
- ACTIONS:
 - After a thoughtful and informative discussion, the group agreed we will not create our own Asian Solidarity statement at this time.
 - During discussions with guest attendee, Lisa Benlail, the Commission invited her to share a poem from her 12-year-old daughter about anti-Asian racist attacks (which she mentioned) as well as to visit the HRC webpage to stay in contact with us and to submit written feedback about her story and concerns on the [Revere.org/engageHRC](https://www.Revere.org/engageHRC) webpage.

c. Cultural Holidays & Celebrations Subcommittee

i. Report from Kathi Ann Reinstein, Chairperson

- Kathi Reinstein informs the full Commission that the City Calendar “filter” of “Cultural Celebrations and Events” was changed by the subcommittee to “Cultural and Awareness Events” which encompasses more. She also mentions that it would make sense for the subcommittee to have the authority to approve any submitted events so the full HRC body does not have to be involved with each submission but would instead update the Commission as needed.
- Chief Bright MOTIONS to use the City Calendar for cultural events and awareness and that the subcommittee has authority to approve requests. Jalon Fowler seconds; All in favor.
- ACTION: Reuben Kantor and Kathi Reinstein will email Commissioners any follow up information about the Calendar and details of how to submit events. Subcommittee minutes from 3.30.21 meeting to be submitted for review and then approved at next month’s meeting.

7) Other Business

None

8) Public Forum

None

9) Adjournment

Lynn Alexis MOTIONS to adjourn; Chief David Callahan seconds; All are in favor.