

**City of New Bedford Human Relations Commission
Minutes of Meeting**

A meeting of the Human Relations Commission was held on November 19, 2021 from 2:00 - 3:00pm in person at the Ashley Room. The meeting was called to order at 2:37pm by ED.

Present: Martin Bentz, Commissioner
Jeffrey Costa, Commissioner
Chad Freitas, Commissioner
Deloris Joseph, Commissioner

Also Present: Marcelina Pina-Christian, Executive Director

Absent: Marcus Chumack, Commissioner
Mike Mello, Commissioner

No minutes to approve from October. (There was an unofficial meeting between ED and Commissioners Bentz and Mello on October 18th but there was not a quorum.)

There was a quorum; Commissioner Costa took minutes.

Guests

1. Giovanni Sequeira

Old Business: Welcome New Commissioners and Introductions

1. Deloris Joseph and Chad Freitas confirmed to HRC; sworn in by City Council on October 14, 2021. ED will provide copy of city ordinance to new commissioners.
2. Commissioner Chumack required to be sworn in before allowed to vote.

Executive Director's Report

1. Housing Survey - A new intern from UMD, Ryan Costa, is working with ED to create a housing survey for NB. ED reported news of rental hikes of \$300-\$400 per month and multi-family homes being purchased by landlords who do not reside in NB. There has been a rise in homelessness and housing insecurity, noted as "a humanitarian crisis" for the city. City Councillor Abreu reported an affordable housing committee being formed via City Council to address concerns.
2. Essay Contest - The annual student essay contest in honor of MLK Day on January 17, 2022 is sponsored again by the HRC.
3. The MA HRC held its monthly meeting on October 8 - attended by ED and Commissioner Bentz. Next meeting Dec 10th via Zoom. All are welcome to attend.
4. On October 13 ED added the NB HRC to a Data Equity Bill (H.3115) to ensure equitable representation in the commonwealth and to fight Anti-Asian Violence and

amplify stories of all communities of color in partnership with the Attleboro HRC, MCAD and a coalition of 90+ other agencies.

5. ED attended an event on the opioid crisis in Custom House Square.
6. ED will meet with Chief Oliveira to appoint a new liaison from NBPD to HRC for monthly report on bias crime/ hate crime in the city.

Complaints

1. Complaint #1052021 against NB Housing Authority re: Tripp Towers first floor bathroom out of order. ED sent complaint to the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities. Will confer with Cynthia Walcrest in City Hall and with Steve Beurogard at the Housing Authority.
2. Complaint #102121 was submitted to ED by Raena Camacho on behalf of Jibreel Khazaan. Letter sent to Mayor Mitchell and City Council from HRC.
3. Complaint #10262021 submitted to ED by Adrian Ventura at CCT re: incident of alleged sexual assault of two Guatemalan men by employees of Bob's Tires.

New Business

1. Several Afghan refugees have moved to NB and are in need of housing and support. (Martin, please add any additional notes here. Thank you.)
2. Human Rights Day - This year in celebration of International Human Rights Day on December 10, 2021 the HRC will host a press conference at 3pm in NB City Hall. Mayor Mitchell and representatives of City Council and the HRC to honor three awardees: Peter Muise, Helena of Immigrants Assistance and Cynthia Delmas for their ongoing community work. Proclamations will be given to each winner.

Motion to adjourn. Meeting ended at 4:30pm.

Next meeting scheduled in person for Friday, December 17, 2021 at 2:30pm.

A true record attest: _____
Jeff Costa, Commissioner