

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

A meeting of the Human Relations Commission was held on September 29, 2022, at 7:00pm in person at the Ashley Room. The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairman Bentz.

Present: Martin Bentz, Chairman  
Jeffrey Costa, Commissioner  
Chad Freitas, Commissioner  
Deloris Joseph, Commissioner  
Michael Mello, Commissioner  
Sidney Murray II, Commissioner (remote)

Also Present: Lt. Scott Carola, NBPD; Geovanny Sequeira, Community Services; Elise Rapoza, ARPA; Jessica Wilder Fidalgo, Executive Director, Marcelina Pina-Christian

Absent: Genesis Galan, Commissioner

There was a quorum; Commissioner Freitas took minutes.

ED had invited Elise Rapoza to discuss ARPA RFR for Vacant and Abandoned property. Elise explained the application process and timing and there was discussion about the application review committee, amount and use of funding, reporting of awards, etc.

August 2022 minutes reviewed and accepted with one change to the dates under old business item 3. Motion: Chairman Bentz. Second: Commissioner Joseph. Unanimous. Motion carries.

### **NBPD**

1. Lt. Carola gave an update regarding two recent Civil Rights violations, one involving racism and the other a juvenile violation involving a LGBTQ+ minor. ED offered to have HRC members available for victim advocacy and Lt. Carola said he would inquire within the NBPD and with the victims.

### **Executive Director's Report**

1. MLK Essay contest – Committee has been meeting weekly and will be sending to schools soon, including Dartmouth, Fairhaven, New Bedford and Acushnet.
2. Complaint forms – have been translated to Portuguese and Spanish and are now available on the website.
3. ED referred to various correspondence, news and events
  - a. Emails from MHRC on Land Acknowledgement statements and discussion on whether to support or not
  - b. SouthCoast Today article about Bob's Tire and DEP fine
  - c. Invitation and acceptance for Elise Rapoza to discuss ARPA funds

- d. Email from Chairman Bentz congratulating and acknowledging the 2-year anniversary of Sangha and the article in New Bedford Light
- e. Liga Maya granted permission to have final games at McCoy field
- f. Email from CCT requesting HRC to speak at Central American Independence Celebration (Chairman Bentz spoke in ED's absence)
- g. Receipt of MHRC minutes.
- h. Revised letter to City Council on explanation of HRC name change.
- i. Received letter of support from B Andrade and Margaret Mott on Abandoned Properties RFR and request for 1 year extension.
- j. Email from Commissioner Murray regarding Right to Shelter information and article on Brockton's Director of Housing Authority.
- k. New Bedford Light article on lack of written policy in NBPD for active shooters, officer training in coming months.
- l. Gun Violence 101 event
- m. H.O.M.E. Group meeting
- n. EPA Planning meeting

### **Upcoming Events**

- 1. A Community of Practice – Moving Forward with Health Equity Driven Excellence – October 11, 2022 from 10am-2pm at Fort Taber Community Center
- 2. Human Rights Day – Monday December 12, 2022 TBD
- 3. MLK Day – Sunday January 15, 2023 TBD

### **New Business**

- 1. MLK Update – Geo gave an update and mentioned that the name of the essay contest is changed to the “MLK Creative Expression Contest” and the them is “Opening Doors: Creating Life's Blueprint.”

### **Old Business**

- 1. MHRC Martha's Vineyard – discussion about refugees.

### **Complaints**

- 1. No new complaints

### **New Business**

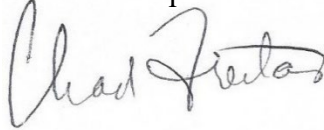
- 1. ED referred to letter to Mayor that was distributed to HRC regarding timing of required responses for RFR for Vacant or Abandoned Property Rehabilitation using ARPA funds. The ED will distribute for further discussion by email.

HRC members and guests unanimously agreed to the following HRC meeting schedule changes:

- 1) New meeting time will be 5:30pm going forward (still on 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month)
- 2) Next meeting on October 20 will be held at new Community Services offices at 181 Hillman St. (for that meeting only).

Motion to adjourn by Chairman Bentz, seconded by Commissioner Joseph. Meeting ended at 8:40pm.

Next meeting currently scheduled in person for Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 5:30pm at **181 Hillman St.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chad Freitas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

A true record attest:

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Chad Freitas, Commissioner