

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

A meeting of the Human Relations Commission was held on March 16, 2023, at 5:30pm in person in the Ashley Room. The meeting was called to order at 5:40pm by Chairman Bentz.

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

Also Present: Executive Director, Marcelina Pina-Christian

There was a quorum; Commissioner Freitas took minutes.

February 2023 minutes will be reviewed and approved in April meeting.

NBPD

Lt Carola was not available for the meeting.

Executive Director's Report

1. ED briefed the commission on various correspondence and events
 - a. New Bedford Light article about neo-Nazi groups
 - b. Communication from Commissioner Costa to Andy Pollock
 - c. HRC brochure changed to reflect new name
 - d. Improvement made to HRC web page by Geovanny Sequeira
 - e. Equity declaration statement prepared and sent to HRC
 - f. Governor Healey's press release regarding Tyre Nichols
 - g. Chairman Bentz added statement to HRC web page
 - h. MHRC meeting
 - i. Final copy of Declaration of Human Rights sent to Councilor Gomes
 - j. Standard Times article on HRC name change
 - k. Standard Times article about ED appointment by Governor Healey to Advisory Council for Black Empowerment
 - l. ADL presentation online and sent to community partners
 - m. Commissioner Mello sent link to Brookline Public Schools religious and cultural calendar
 - n. Email from Chairman Bentz requesting a meeting with school administrators on the calendar project
 - o. Emails about offshore wind project hiring
 - p. Commissioner Murray sent post on Back union being left out of Longshoreman's union.

- q. Email of apology to Brian Turner from ED acknowledging receipt of Human Rights Day nominations that were directed to spam folder. Nominees will be added to 2023 list with new nominees.
- r. Notification from Lt. Carola that he cannot attend March meeting.
- s. Email from Chairman Bentz about No Place for Hate Forum and flyer
- t. Flyer on Black History Tribute presentation by students at Roosevelt Middle School sent by Steve Norwell.
- u. February 16 “Getting to Functional Zero” homelessness event at Whaling Museum
- v. Community of Practice Health Equity forum
- w. Bethel AME 200 Year anniversary concert
- x. Inaugural meeting of Black Empowerment Council at state house
- y. March 9 Women’s Day event at Unitarian Church

Old Business

1. Land Acknowledgement – ED emailed Chief to review statement. Chairman Bentz referred to MHRC meeting dedicated to acknowledging Indigenous People’s month. Discussion about working with Mayor, City Council and Solicitor as well as representative from Wampanoag tribe.
2. Status of pending applicants – Sidney reached out to Mayor’s office regarding applicant – new application requires references, but applicant was using old version of application that didn’t require the references.
3. Cultural and Religious Calendar project – received feedback at school committee meeting that this was almost complete. If acknowledged, the calendar will give dispensation for students observing those holidays to be excused. HRC will follow up to ensure calendar is updated and observed.
4. Commissioner Updates
 - a. Commissioner Costa provided updated on student protest of Councilor Oliver. Motion made by Councilor Galan to invite Councilor Oliver to next HRC meeting and then facilitate future discussions with Oliver and LGBTQ students. Seconded by Commissioner Costa. Unanimous vote. Motion carries. ED will send invitation to Oliver.
 - b. Commissioner Mello mentioned the convalescent home and synagogue board meetings and the upcoming Yom Hashoah events at Buttonwood Park on April 16 and UMass Dartmouth on April 18.
 - c. Commissioner Murray gave an update on the May 19 Health Equity event at the state house and inviting different elected officials to attend.
 - d. Commissioner Joseph provided an update on the school committee meeting and discussion about new proposed safety and security manager position and discussed her involvement in addressing Dartmouth High racism incidents and upcoming presentation.

New Business

1. Spread of Hate presentation – discussion about timing and location of presentation and trying to get it scheduled for early May.

2. April Fair Housing Event – this will be held April 25 from 4-5:30pm at the Library downtown with representation from HRC, SouthCoast Legal Services, AGO, MCAD, NB Housing and Community Development, Mass Housing and new Bedford face to Face Mediation Program.
3. Black History Tribute – March 23 from 5:30-6:30pm at Roosevelt Middle School; will be on ED's cable show

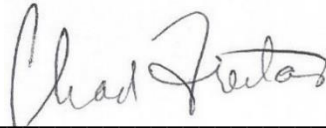
Complaints

1. Complaint received in early March regarding employment discrimination and has been referred to MCAD.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Freitas, seconded by Commissioner Joseph. Meeting ended at 7:23pm.

Next meeting currently scheduled in person for Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 5:30pm in the Ashley Room at City Hall

A true record attest: _____



Chad Freitas, Commissioner