



CITY OF FITCHBURG

PUBLIC MEETING

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Date: August 11, 2020

Time: 5:30pm

Location: via Zoom

In attendance were: Commissioners: Barbara Nealon, David Roth, Cheryl Maguy-Stewart, April Maldonado, Senovia Bolivar, Martiza Knight and guest Rev. Thomas Hughes

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm

- Welcoming and attendance of meeting conducted.
- Review of previous meeting minutes from: July 14, 2020 meeting minutes accepted as written.
- Public Comment Period-*Opportunity for the public to speak during a Commission Meeting*

Chairperson or designee will ask if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on any matter appearing on the agenda. If you wish to address the commission, raise your hand, when recognized, you must stand state your name and address and the reason for your speaking. Rev. Thomas Hughes presented concerns specific to the re-opening of schools during the pandemic. He attended a community meeting last evening with the School Committee on Pandemic planning.

Discussion followed with Commissioners who agreed more information is needed including clarity specific to reopening of schools. Concern for health equity, access and safety noted and thanked Rev. Hughes for his attendance and participation in tonight's meeting and bringing his thoughts forward. Several commissioners planned to also follow up on school system reopening directly with various members of the school committee directly including the Superintendent to obtain additional information for clarity.

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- New Business-no presentation provided. Will plan to reschedule presentation with:
 - The Leominster Haitian American Community Center
Rev Beatrice Cayo, ADN, MA in Divinity
President of Leominster Haitian American Community Center
leominsterhaitiancommunityctr@gmail.com
 - Racial Justice Issues-Local, State and National News discussed.
 - Acknowledgment: National and State news specific to how much more work needs to be done to end systemic racism and continued need for community engagement at all levels is needed.
 - Addressing racial justice within the City

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- a. Anonymous resident concern for fellow neighbor-Barbara provided report from a neighbor witnessing event within his neighborhood. Barbara followed up with person who preferred not to share information re: specifics, address etc. but agreed to provide our information directly to the neighbor. Neighbor over heard landlord using the “N” word toward his neighbor. Mass Commission Against Discrimination information was shared with the resident to provide neighbor as well as her phone number if he/she wished to speak directly to her. No follow up has been made as of this date.
 - b. HRC efforts on drafting recommendations to City Council on Racial Justice initiatives continues in process with Adrian’s lead.
 - c. City Block Health notified Barbara of the HRC’s \$1,000 grant award to go towards our Racial Justice initiatives. Commissioner April Maldonado, submitted the Commission’s name in for funding and we were selected. Thank you April! Commissioner’s to think of ways we may be able to use these resources towards our racial justice initiatives moving forward.

- Old Business
 - Performance Improvement Policy with AA Plan & EOE specific measurements -Adrian
 - SURJ -Racial Justice program update-deferred
 - Other items, topics, programs for discussion for future meetings
- Adjournment at 6:20pm.

Meeting minutes submitted by,

Agenda submitted by,
Barbara Nealon