

Michael V. O'Brien
City Manager



CITY OF WORCESTER

**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Summary
Monday, July 2, 2012
6:00pm to 8:00pm**

Worcester Historical Museum – Auditorium, 30 Elm Street, Worcester, Ma. 01609

Members Present: Chairman Eduardo Rivera, Edward Robinson, Kathleen Gervais, Cara Berg Powers, Mable Millner, Udeme Ukpong, Jeffrey Millner.

Members Absent: Edward Kwiyp, Harry Danso.

Staff: Jayna Turchek, Director of the Office of Human Rights and Disabilities

1. Call to Order:

There being a quorum the Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

2. Introductions:

The Commission introduced themselves, and the Clerk reviewed the Agenda.

3. Approval of June 4, 2012 Minutes:

On a motion that was duly made and seconded, the Commission voted to approve the meeting minutes from the June 4, 2012 meeting as written, by a vote of 7 to 0.

4. New Business:

(a) Calendar scheduling

The Commission discussed the Calendar scheduling, and the format to be implemented.

There was a brief discussion regarding the update as to the progress made by the Youth and Human Rights Mediation Sub-committee, and the Know Your Rights Project. (See below for more details)

At this time, it was also proposed to acknowledge Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Transgender (LGBT) Pride Day, place it on the goals for this quarter and decided to table discussion until another meeting.

Planning Calendar at this time includes as its goals for this quarter:

- (a) Know Your Rights
- (b) Youth and Human Rights
- (c) Bi Annual E. Hawley Award Ceremony
- (d) Worcester Pride Celebration

The Planning Calendar shall be attached to the Minutes.



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5. New Business:

(a) Annual HRC Report

There was a discussion regarding what items shall be included in the Report and its format, as the Commission did not have a prior template to follow.

Some of the suggestions were as follows:

- Add dates
- Mention that HRC members began visiting districts at public meetings, (include list of meeting places in the appendix),
- Number of complaints received, and the outcome,
- Statement from the Commissioner Chair,
- Statement of what the Commission is about, its vision, and goal,
- Significant accomplishments, (completed goals of the prior year),
- Goals for the upcoming year, and
- Closing statement

There was a motion that was duly seconded to have the Chairman, Eduardo Rivera, prepare a draft introductory statement and work with the Director on an updated draft for the next meeting.

(b) Bi Annual E. Hawley Award

A sub-committee was formed to handle the event planning. Subcommittee members include Cara Berg-Powers, Mable Millner, and Henry Danso. The sub-committee members will schedule a meeting this month, (July). There was a suggestion that the sub-committee would possibly meet on July 19th, or the 24th. The Director will send out confirmation of the date, once set.

The sub-committee members were open to suggestions as to the format from the HRC members. It was proposed and agreed upon that the event will be geared toward the youth, thus any videos, entertainment/music shall be performed by the youth.

After taking a vote from the HRC members, it was found that each member had a different idea of what constituted an appropriate age bracket for “youths”. It was suggested and agreed upon by the HRC members that the sub-committee shall take a vote to determine the age bracket to which the event will be focused upon.

(c) Youth and Human Rights

The sub-committee met prior to the Human Rights Commission meeting and provided a report to the Commission. The sub-committee is steadily making progress on the “Lesson Plan” and is continuing to move forward with the progress. The sub-committee presented the proposed letter that is to be sent to the Center for Non-Violent Solutions. The HRC suggested a couple of minor changes. The changes will be made and the letter will be emailed to the Director.

Due to the earlier discussion, and the variance of the consensus as to what constitutes “youth” as an age bracket, the Youth and Human Rights Sub-committee is taking into consideration the age bracket regarding the “Lesson Plan”. As a point of information it was pointed out that the Mayor’s Youth Counsel consists of the age bracket 14 to 20 years old.

(d) Foreclosure Update

The Foreclosure Sub-committee received a legal opinion two months ago from the City of Worcester Legal Department as guidance for the action that can be taken by HRC regarding this issue. The Sub-committee is going to share this opinion with the Worcester Anti-Foreclosure Team (WAFT). The Sub-committee plans on holding an open meeting to listen to the concerns from the public regarding foreclosures relating to the possible violations of human rights, (no date has been set at this time). The

Sub-committee will draft a report. This report will be subsequently forwarded to the City Manager's Office.

Ines Beron, Housing Discrimination Intake Worker reported that she made a couple referrals to WAFT.

(e) Know Your Rights / Voting Rights

The Director proposed that the presentation be recorded on video tape. The HRC Committee Members unanimously agreed. There was a brief discussion, and it was agreed that this presentation should be aired on both channel 12 and channel 13.

The goal is to conduct the presentation in the month of October.
The Commission agreed to hold the event on October 1, 2012.

A few of the items that need to be discussed further, and decided upon are as follows:

- Location of presentation,
- Invitations, and
- The translation aspects

(f) HRC Commitment to Anti-racism

Mable Millner had made contact with possible trainers to provide training to the HRC Members, so that the HRC can better understand and assist the public. Ms. Millner requested that the HRC determine dates for the training, and suggested that such a training would require at least two hours to be effective. It was motioned and duly seconded that the training be shifted to the last quarter, due to the amount of tasks the HRC is currently handling. A vote was taken and the HRC voted unanimously to move this training to the last quarter.

6. Commissioner's Report:

The Commissioners visited the following events and meetings:

- Indian Lake Neighborhood Crime Watch Meeting
- Forest Street Neighborhood Crime Watch Meeting
- Lutheran Social Services' World Refugee Day Celebration
- Juneteenth Festival
- Asian Festival
- Main Street Neighborhood Crime Watch Meeting
- Pleasant Street Neighborhood Crime Watch Meeting

The Commissioners were informed by the Chair that the Worcester NAACP is re-organizing, and suspended general meetings at this time.

The Chair requested approval from the HRC to act as an advisor to the Worcester Immigrant Coalition (WIC), there was a motion on this issue that was duly seconded, and then the Commission voted unanimously in favor of Eduardo Rivera to act in the capacity as an advisor to this important community group.

Edward Robinson donated flags to the Commission for use by the Commission and the Public. (He donated (2 pride/rainbow flags, 1 United Nations flag, and 1 Massachusetts state flag).

7. Office of Human Rights Director's Report:

The Director advised the HRC; that her office has moved to room 311, in City Hall, that she will be on vacation and will not be present at the next meeting, (Note: later in the meeting the date for the

upcoming meeting was changed and the Director will be attending the next meeting). The Director informed the HRC of the following:

- City Council moratorium for issuing new livery licenses,
- City Council request for a plan from the City regarding pan-handling,
- The Executive Order by President Obama regarding possible relief for undocumented children who entered the U.S. as children,
- Invitation by the City's Coalition Against Bias & Hate to co-sponsor a public discussion with the Director of the film "Bully", (there was a motion that was duly seconded, and by a unanimous vote, the co-sponsoring was approved by the HRC members.)

8. Location of Next Meeting:

Director announced that the location of the next HRC meeting shall be held at the YWCA.

9. Public Comment:

Members of the public expressed interest in the Youth Human Rights Project. One requested that those the age group of 18-25 year olds be included in the work of the Project or be the focus of another initiative.

Roger Comeau from the Worcester Historical Museum commented that the museum was happy to host the Commission's meeting and that we are welcome back in the future.

10. Adjournment:

On a motion that was duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 7:59PM.

**City of Worcester
Human Rights Commission**

Planning Calendar

1st Quarter (July-September)

1. Know Your Rights
2. Youth and Human Rights
3. Bi Annual E. Hawley Award Ceremony
4. Worcester Pride Celebration

2nd Quarter (October-December)

3rd Quarter (January-March)

4th Quarter (April-June)



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CITY OF WORCESTER

HRC Subcommittee on Peer Mediation

Monday, July 2nd, 2012

5:45 – 6:00 PM

Location: **Worcester Historical Museum- Auditorium, 30 Elm St Worcester, MA 01609**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
 2. Youth and Human Rights Program Development
 3. Mediation Services
 4. Adjournment
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Human Rights Commission (HRC)

Monthly Meeting – Monday, July 2nd, 2012

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Location: **Worcester Historical Museum- Auditorium, 30 Elm St Worcester, MA 01609**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions (Commission Members and Guests)
3. Approval of June 4th, 2012 Meeting Minutes
4. New Business:
 - a) Calendar scheduling
5. Old Business:
 - a) Annual HRC Report
 - b) Bi Annual E. Hawley Award
 - c) Youth & Human Rights
 - d) Foreclosure Update
 - e) Know Your Rights / Voting Rights
 - f) HRC commitment to anti-racism
6. Commissioners' Report
7. Office of Human Rights Director's Report
8. Location of Next Meeting
9. Public Comment (3 minutes per individual)
10. Adjournment

The Human Rights Commission is dedicated to its service of safeguarding the civil liberties of all persons who live or work in Worcester. May the public kindly take notice to respect the order and decorum of the meeting. Please silence all cell phones and similar electronic devices. Refrain from speaking on cell phones or to others until recognized by the Chair that you have the floor.



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