

**Chairperson**  
Aaron Richman

**Vice-chairperson**  
Vacant

**Clerk**  
Elizabeth O'Callahan



**City of Worcester  
Human Rights Commission**

**Members:**  
Lilian Chukwurah  
Robyn Kennedy  
Edward G. Robinson  
Tracey Weeden  
Jacqueline Yang

**Monthly Meeting Summary – Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 6pm  
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber, 4th Floor, 455 Main St., Worcester, MA**

**Members present:** Aaron Richman, Lilian Chukwurah, Elizabeth O'Callahan, Edward Robinson, Tracey Weeden

**Members absent:** Robyn Kennedy, Jacqueline Yang

**Staff:** Jayna Turchek

**1. Call to order and introductions**

A quorum was established and Chairperson Richman officially called the meeting to order at 6:11pm. Commissioners introduced themselves. The Chairperson welcomed the Commissioners and those present, including the Commission's newest member, Tracey Weeden.

**2. Approval of October 15th, 2018 meeting minutes**

Commissioner Robinson motioned to approve. Commissioner Weeden seconded. Motion passed with all in favor. Chairperson Richman took a moment to reflect on the passage of MA State Ballot Question 3, discussed during the October Human Rights Commission Meeting.

**3. New Business:**

**A. Observance of Int'l Human Rights Day - Community reading and discussion of Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

In observance of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Commissioners watched video messages from United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, and Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Commissioners took turns reading the abbreviated version of the 30 articles



OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS & DISABILITIES, CITY HALL ROOM 101  
455 MAIN ST., WORCESTER, MA 01608  
TELEPHONE (508) 799-8486 | FAX (508) 799-1218



## **B. Hani's Story: from Iraq to Worcester**

- Commissioners listened to Hani's story about his time working with the US Army, his escape from ISIS-controlled Iraq with his family and safe passage to the United States in 2017
- Hani worked with US army 2004-2008 south of Baghdad, 3 years with engineers looking for IED's and 1 year with military police
- When ISIS took control of the area in 2011, Hani fled to Northern Iraq for 3 years until he was able to contact the American embassy, where colleagues vouched for him
- Hani received a visa and came September 2017 with wife and children. Two adult children remain in Iraq and he hopes to be able to bring them to the US.
- He expressed gratitude for the support he and his family received to come to the United States
- Although his early months here were difficult, he described the community as being welcoming and helpful to Hani and his family.
- On behalf of the Human Rights Commission, Director Turchek and Chairperson Richman expressed gratitude to Hani for his bravery and service and for taking the time to share his story, and welcomed Hani to reach out to the Commission again in the future

## **C. Planning for Eleanor Hawley Human Rights Award (February 20th)**

- Subcommittee - creates same requirements as regular meeting, setting and posting agenda
- Could meet more informally without establishing official subcommittee

### Proposed Human Rights Day Award Details:

- Day/Time: 2/23, 9:30 am - 1:00 pm
- Advertising/Outreach:
  - Application posted on city's website & sent out through constant contact
  - Paper copies available at City Hall
  - Advertise to local high schools and colleges
- Keynote speaker, other speakers and guest ideas:
  - Invite Eleanor Hawley's daughter
  - Diversity Officer
  - Sgt Boykin
  - Fire Department Diversity Officer- Lt Mosley out of Burncoat station
  - ACLU
  - CLA
  - Refugee Resettlement Agencies
  - Worcester Dept Public Health - CHIP - Megan Denublia
  - Previous Recipients: Dr. Joyce McNickles
- Location: YWCA
- Activities:
  - History of and Information about World Day of Social Justice

- Ask people to share how they've supported human rights on signs (before keynote speaker)
- Every seat has a 3x5 card - anyone that feels like they want to share how they've been involved in social justice
- Ways that they think a social justice issue should be addressed
- Spokesperson at each table to share a few
- Community partners available to offer information, educate attendees
- Visuals:
  - Facts/Cards about World Day of Social Justice on each table
  - Articles hung either on the way in or around the room
- Food
  - Continental Breakfast \$300-\$400
- Schedule
  - Award Ceremony - 10:00-11:30
- Follow Up:
  - Secure Location - Aaron
  - Keynote Speakers - All send additional ideas; Aaron to reach out
  - Individually review information World Day of Social Justice
  - Write out activities - Liz
  - Tracey to start to build a program of partners who can participate in fair/action summit after awards ceremony
  - Create Google Doc to organize information- Jayna will send out

#### **Upcoming Events:**

- Longest Night of the Year 12/21, Hosted by Homelessness Outreach & Advocacy Program
  - Candlelit Walk 5:00-5:45 pm, Worcester Common
  - Vigil and Service 6:00-7:30 pm, Worcester City Hall, 3rd Floor

#### **4. Next Meeting (January 7th, 2019):** City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber

- Presentation of evaluation of youth-police dialogue program (Casey Starr & Prof. Laurie Ross)

#### **5. Adjournment at 8:06 pm**