

**Human Rights Commission
December 6, 2010 Meeting Summary
Levi Lincoln, Jr. Chamber, Worcester City Hall**

Present: Cheryl Pope, Chair; Eduardo Rivera, Vice Chair; Mable Millner, Clerk; Trin Huynh, Ed Robinson, Edward Kwiyp, Kathy Gervais
Unable to Attend: Maria Florez, Cara Lisa Berg Powers
Members of the Public: Herbert S. Cremer

Cheryl Pope, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

1. Approval of November 2010 Meeting Summary: Approved with revisions, as noted by Mr. Cremer.
2. Old Business:
 - a. "Know Your Rights When Stopped By The Police": Himel, our student at Clark University, requested Fran and Eduardo attend a meeting of student leaders on December 8 to present this project.
 - b. Liveries: Eduardo provided a brief update on liveries in the City of Worcester.
 - c. Worcester Social Justice Roundtable: Kathy Gervais reported that the November meeting included productive, small group discussions. Next full meeting will be held on January 27, 2011, 5:30 PM at the YWCA. A strong contingent of youth from a range of backgrounds is involved. Fran noted that the partners will meet with consultants on December 8, 2010. On the agenda is a discussion about leadership; Fran informed Commissioners that she is not volunteering for any additional responsibilities!
3. Chairperson's Report: Cheryl noted the following items:
 - Cheryl's term expires on April 30, 2011 and she would like to work with the next Chair prior to her departure. The primary responsibility of the Chair is to preside over meetings. In addition, Cheryl meets monthly with Fran to prepare for the upcoming agenda. They connect by phone, generally at least once per week, to discuss issues/concerns in the office and in the community. The Chair makes every effort to attend public programs. The Chair requests meetings with the City Manager, or other City officials, as needed. It is imperative that the Chair not project personal opinions into the work. Cheryl and Fran have worked together on developing and following-up on work plans.
 - Cheryl would like to resolve as many outstanding issues (see attached) as possible before her departure. Fran will add one more item: Expansion of the HRC from 9 members to 11 members, with consideration of youth appointments.

- The reality is that the Office has lost staff resources, while Fran has gained additional duties. The Commission must be realistic about what one full-time director can accomplish.

Public Comment: Herbert S. Cremer, member of the Commission on Disabilities, noted that perhaps the youth involved in the Worcester Social Justice Roundtable could assist with efforts to prevent and intervene with bullying. Herb also commented on the ongoing anti-Semitic activity in the City of Worcester as evidenced by the slides shown at the November 17, 2010 bias and hate educational forum sponsored by the City Manager's Community Coalition on Bias and Hate.

Mable Millner, who also serves as Chair of the City Manager's Community Coalition on Bias and Hate, commented that the November 17, 2010 educational forum held at the YWCA was very well organized and very well attended. Community service agencies, college public safety officials and clergy members participated. We had an excellent panel, including the Office of the Attorney General, the District Attorney, Worcester Police Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office/Dept. of Justice. Kathy Gervais and Ed Robinson provided valuable assistance with registration.

Mable also reported that the City Manager's Community Coalition on Bias and Hate met last week for a review of its mission and work. With strong attendance and new members (Jewish Federation of Central MA and the U.S. Attorney's Office), there was a renewed commitment to the work of the coalition. Discussion held about quality of life issues, including the impact of bullying and how can the coalition be more helpful to individuals with resources and support. Looking at the future, the Community Coalition would like to collaborate with other groups to make Worcester a place that truly values diversity and makes it a place where we want to live.

4. December 10, 2010 Educational Event: Fran distributed proposed schedule/agenda for the upcoming combined event of the Eleanor Hawley Human Rights Awards and the annual celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Minor adjustments made in the agenda.
5. New Business: Bullying – Joint meeting with Commission on Disabilities. Cheryl reported that the Commission on Disabilities has requested the assistance of the Human Rights Commission to address the complex issues of bullying. Following discussion, Cheryl requested that Fran convey to the Commission on Disabilities that they take the lead; members of the Human Rights Commission may be interested

6. Director's Report:

- Fran announced that the Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (CMWIB) developed a memorandum of agreement with our office to provide consultation and facilitation in the development of a Cultural Competence Advisory Council. An item went to City Council recently, detailing the relationship, including \$2,000 donation.
- Fran and Ines Beron, housing discrimination worker, will work with the City's Cable Services Division to film a public service announcement to promote the Worcester Fair Housing Project. We would like to accomplish this by mid January 2011.
- Fran spoke with Chief of Police Gary Gemme, who is unfamiliar with "Secure Cities" and offered to attend a future HRC meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Manocchio
December 21, 2010