

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, January 7th, 2019, 6pm
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber, 4th Floor, 455 Main St., Worcester, MA**

Members present: Aaron Richman, Robyn Kennedy, Elizabeth O'Callahan, Edward Robinson, Jacqueline Yang, Tracey Weeden

Members absent: Lilian Chukwurah

Staff: Jayna Turcheck

1. Call to order and introductions

A quorum was established and Chairperson Richman officially called the meeting to order at 6:19pm. Commissioners introduced themselves. The Chairperson welcomed the Commissioners and those present.

2. Approval of December 17th, 2018 meeting minutes

Commissioner Robinson motioned to approve minutes as written. Commissioner Weeden seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

3. New Business:

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

Program History:

- Main south CDC received federal Byrne grant
- Community stakeholder interest in a Youth-Police Dialogue program
 - Initial survey of youth:
 - 13% respondents rated police response “very good”
 - 19% strongly agreed neighborhood safety of residents was priority for police
 - 33% strongly agreed they would call police if a crime was committed against them
 - 25% would call the police if they witnessed a crime
 - 6% strongly agreed the police treated people with respect
 - Approached by YWCA Of Greater Boston
 - Agreed to do 3 pilot programs in a two year period
 - Initial feedback was so positive, the pilot was eventually, expanded from 3 to 5 programs

Pilot Program

- Location: 3 groups in Main South Public Schools, 2 groups in Boys and Girls Club
 - Moving forward would like to see it happen in schools rather than outside of schools
 - Universal level if it's in schools



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- Difficult to compete with other after school programs
- Participants: 4-6 officers, with 4 officers per 20 youth, and 2 Facilitators for each group
- Duration: Groups held in weekly sessions for 6 weeks
- In addition to groups, the grant also funded extra police on foot in the neighborhood
- Officers must complete the youth-police dialogue program before being eligible for foot beats

Participant Selection:

- Youth selected at school level, came down to scheduling
 - Some participants were not happy there in the beginning
- Police – CDC didn't have part in selection process.
 - Intention was operations officers working the neighborhood
 - Majority came from neighborhood
 - School resource officers from North and Claremont, and some mounted unit officers

Curriculum/Format

- Police are in full uniform, including with a gun
 - Rationale: to break down barriers of the uniform being unapproachable
- Focus on relationship building and trust
- Program intentionally “screws up power dynamics”
- Sessions involved Facilitated dialogue and Game-Focused Activities
 - Icebreakers and facilitated games were peppered with heavy conversations
 - Deeper conversations don't happen until relationship is established
- Session #1
 - Police are not there
 - Facilitated conversation about the police coming
 - Youth get to set ground rules
 - Facilitators solicit written youth feedback (pre-test)

Newly Added Component: “Know the Law” Workshop

- Worked with juvenile defense attorney with police
- Police attend as audience members

Results:

- Police:
 - Reported understanding where youth were coming from in a new way
 - Reported understanding youth perceptions and realities
 - 100% officers recommended other officers participate
 - Statistically significant: Police more likely to agree race relations affect neighborhood and police department
- Youth:
 - Reported more favorable perceptions
 - Increase in agreement that police cared about their safety and made them feel safe
 - Increase in agreement that they are likely to report a crime committed against them
 - Saw police as people that were more like them than they realized
 - Some youth were clear that while they felt better about the police they met through the dialogues, it did not generalize necessarily to an increased trust of all police officers
- Know your law piece was added in case they encounter other police who did not go through the program and didn't behave the way the program officers did

Update on Current Status

- YWCA of greater Boston decided they wanted to rehome their curriculum
- Purchased curriculum- Rights in Worcester county to implement curriculum without restriction
- Raising money for funds for the program

Would Schools make it part of curriculum?

- Program's coordinators have a prior relationship with schools
- Many school officials were part of planning process
- Process came from a place of partnership
- For it to be successful, it would need to be universal

Additional Commissioner Questions:

- Could it be part of police academy?
- Could NRT participate?
- Could every officer start out from this place?

Chairperson Richman invited the group to participate in Human Rights Day Award Breakfast for the activity portion of the day on February 23rd

B. Follow up discussion on model ordinance covering community control over police surveillance (CCOPS) (Chris Robarge, ACLU)

Chris Robarge from the ACLU Provided Commissioners with an update regarding the proposed CCOPS ordinance, first discussed during 08-06-18 meeting

- Link to 08-06-18 Meeting Minutes: <http://www.worcesterma.gov/agendas-minutes/boards-commissions/human-rights-commission/2018/20180806.pdf>)
- Update on CCOPS in Other Municipalities:
 - Somerville and Cambridge have adopted ordinance
 - Additional cities around Boston are also considering adopting
- Follow up on question on language around requirements that interventions be evidence-based
 - Currently looking into at the national level
- In the absence of available literature supporting efficacy/lack of harm of interventions involving new technology, Clerk O'Callahan suggested the evidence-based requirement could instead be substituted for a requirement for measurable outcomes
- License Plate Readers:
 - Recently found another license plate reader at Lakeview apartments
 - Additional license plate readers are known to be on the north end of Kelly square, Lincoln across from Adcare and Green Hill Park
- Body Cameras have taken priority given sudden movement in City Council
 - Were agreed to in labor contract with city
 - Language is very broad; Includes length, minimum number of officers and stipend
- Clarified on the intent for surveillance technology, "The problem is not that police departments are trying to do anything nefarious, the problem is they haven't thought of these things."
- A substantial portion of this information in Boston was publically available for an extended period of time for anyone to see. Fortunately, was found by a journalist, who reported it.

CCOPS Current Status:

- Still speaking to City Councilors around introducing it; current priority on body cameras
- Seeking other organizational support, building a visible set of community support, working to get postcards signed, doing coalition-building work
- Potentially significant piece is some sort of recommendation or advisement from HRC to administration in support of it
- Response from Chief Sargent from 08-06-18 meeting:
 - Will research requested information and follow up with the Commission
 - Relayed that they have access to numerous cameras through camera initiative but do not store any of that footage. If they need it they go to the citizen or business and retrieve if it was saved.

Follow Up Questions:

- Would data from surveillance technology be considered public data?

- Can a third party request body camera footage?
- Is there consideration about private health information?
- Is data storage HIPPA compliant if it needs to be?
- Could it make sense to attend Neighborhood Watch Meetings about license plate readers to ask officers in those meetings?

Public Comment by Jo Hart public:

- Jo Hart of Worcester asked how surveillance technology benefits public. Ms. Hart recounted her experience being hit by car in a crosswalk in a busy intersection, with no cameras in the area. She also asked where surveillance technology is being used and who knows about it.
- Mr. Robarge remarked that an open public process required under this proposed ordinance would provide opportunity for public input by requiring public hearings, so that these questions could be answered, and public concerns could be addressed

Chairperson Richman invited Mr. Robarge and members of the ACLU to participate in Human Rights Day Award Breakfast for the activity portion of the day on February 23rd

C. Follow up discussion on Worcester Tree Initiative Environmental Justice concerns was tabled for a future Human Rights Commission Meeting

D. Election of Officers

Chairperson Richman spoke about the roles of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk, and encouraged Commissioners to consider nominating themselves or someone else for any in which they have an interest

Jacqueline Yang self-nominated for Vice-Chair. Commissioner Robinson seconded. Director Turcik initiated a Roll Call; Unanimously in favor. Jacqueline Yang elected as Vice-Chair.

4. Old Business:

A. Planning for Eleanor Hawley Human Rights Award (February 20th, 2019)

Chairperson Richman recapped the discussion from the last meeting for Commissioners

- Speakers:
 - Director Turcik suggested someone with expertise in protection of migrant workers from exploitation and human trafficking
 - Proposal to have someone speak on World Day of Global Justice specifically:
 - Chairperson Richman wrote to head of ILO asking if anyone local is available
 - Tracey put call out to Ascentria Care Alliance
- Activities:
 - Proposed: Know Your Rights Session on Workers Rights/Fair Labor Laws
 - Human Rights Squares Handout - Consideration to have both a structured group and open activity where people can post it notes up on the wall as an approachable alternative
- Catering: Director Turcik to reach out to Cafe Reyes to consider catering the event
- Possible Commissioner Roles During Ceremony (Partial List):
 - Greeting people at the door
 - Handing out cards to tables and explaining the activity
 - Directing people up to speak
 - Making sure everyone has what they need

Proposed Schedule of Events (Draft)

10:10-10:15 - Reading of Mayoral Proclamation: Both Mayor and City Manager will attend

10:15-10:30 - Ally Activity speaking on World Day of Social Justice

10:30-10:40 - Introduction of Keynote

10:40-10:55 - Speaker on Theme

10:55-11:05 - Introduction of Award
11:05-11:15 - Introduction of Award Recipient
11:15-11:25 - Remarks by Award Recipient
11:25-11:30 - Closing by Tracey
11:40-12:00 - Transitional Performance
12:00-2:00 - Set up
12:10-12:40 - Activity: Put Declaration of Human Rights in Sequence
12:40-1:30 - Human Rights Squares Activity specific to migrant workers' rights

B. Update on timeline for completing survey of community meetings

Commissioners were provided with packets to help survey remaining Neighborhood Watch Meetings

5. Next meeting (February 4th, 2019): City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber

- See 2019 Board Meeting Calendar

6. Adjournment at 8:11