

Chairperson
Aaron Richman



Members:
Lilian Chukwurah
James Kobialka
Edward G. Robinson
Tracey Weeden

Vice-chairperson
Jacqueline Yang

**City of Worcester
Human Rights Commission**

Clerk
Elizabeth O'Callahan

**Monthly Meeting Summary – Monday, August 5th, 2019, 6pm
Worcester City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber, 3rd Floor, 455 Main St., Worcester, MA**

Members present:

Aaron Richman, Elizabeth O'Callahan, Edward Robinson, Jacqueline Yang, Lilian Chukwurah

Staff:

Jayna Turchek

1. Call to order and introductions

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

2. Approval of July 1st, 2019 meeting minutes

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

3. New Business:

A. Review of FY 19 annual report and discussion of goals for FY20

- Director Turchek summarized the purpose of the annual report, as a product developed per City Manager's request for a report from each board or commission on an annual basis

Activities:

- Initiative 1: Address police and community relations through continued follow up and communication with the Worcester Police Department
- Initiative 2: Conclude Neighborhood Watch Meetings Survey and present findings and recommendations
- Initiative 3: Host annual public hearing and hate crimes and reporting
- Initiative 4: Host Eleanor Hawley Human Rights Day Award
- Initiative 5: Collaborate with Worcester Tree Initiative to understand the environmental justice issues related to loss of tree canopy in different city neighborhood

Discussion:

- Executive summary from neighborhood meetings survey to be included
- Can Initiatives 1-3 be combined into one with a subheading under each?
- Commissioners reflected on the success of the Eleanor Hawley Award Ceremony, and discussed
- Tentative decision to hold the next ceremony in December 2020
- Commission to begin planning 6 months ahead (June 2020)



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Chairperson Richman will be meeting with City Manager in September to coordinate with City Manager's Office to help his office examine human rights' issues in the city

- Resources/support we might be able to utilize from his office and what matters we can work jointly on, and what he thinks about some of the things he's aware of, remembering that the Commission's role is to make policy recommendations

What potential initiatives can the Human Rights Commission take up in 2020?

Chairperson Richman asked commissioners to think about issues he can bring to the city manager

- The 2 year inactivation period for voting
- CCOPS Ordinance
- Continued work with Neighborhood Response Team of Worcester Police Department
- Affordable Housing
- Poll watching could be another initiative
- Any work to be done around helping our immigrant communities feel safe
- Focus on immigrants - hosting a citizenship day, lawyers helping with applications

B. Worcester PRIDE Update

- Commissioner Robinson spoke to the Commission about the upcoming Pride parade and festival taking place on September 7th.
 - Participants are asked to assemble at Institute Park at 10am
- Theme of the Pride Festival is "Stonewall 50"
 - Commissioner Robinson provided t-shirts for Commissioners.
 - "Stonewall 50" is going up the back of the T-shirt, because Stonewall is the "backbone" of the LGBT movement
 - Pink triangle was the symbol used in Nazi Germany to identify members of the LGBT community and was later used as a symbol of pride around the Stonewall Riots in 1969.
- Commissioner Robinson spoke with Reverend Judy regarding September meeting at Hadwen Park Congregational Church
- Officer Sharon McQueen will also be joining for September meeting

C. Director communication: Referral of discrimination complaint by Gordon Davis to MCAD per article 10, Section 18 of Revised Ordinance of 2015 Part Two, Organization of City Agencies

- Gordon T. Davis spoke on behalf of his son, Gordon J. Davis, to ask the Commission for policy clarification regarding discrimination complaints. Specifically, Mr Gordon asked:
 - How many discrimination complaints are sent to MCAD?
 - What happened to them? What is the process?
 - What is the city's policy on discrimination complaints?

4. No public Comment

5. Next Meeting: Monday, September 9th, location TBD

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Chukwurah motioned to adjourn, Vicechair Yang seconded. Motion passed with all in favor. Adjournment at 7:41