

Chairperson
Edward G. Robinson

Vice-Chair
Jeremy Fontain

Clerk
Julie Feeney



**City of Worcester
Human Rights Commission**

Members:
Cara Berg Powers
Harry Danso
Kathleen Gervais
Edward Kwiypup
Eduardo Rivera
Barbara Zerillo

December 2nd, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Harry Danso, Jeremy Fontain, Julie Feeney, Eduardo Rivera, and Edward G. Robinson

Members Absent: Edward Kwiypup, Cara Berg Powers, and Barbara Zerillo, Kathleen Gervais
Staff: Catherine Nash, Human Rights Specialist

1. Call to Order:

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

2. Introductions:

With no members of the public present, a motion was passed to skip the introductions.

3. Approval of November 4th, 2013 meeting minutes:

The Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes as written.

4. New Business:

a) Dialogue: Racism in our community

Chair Edward G. Robinson presented the idea of addressing racism in our Worcester community and asked the Commission to work towards eliminating racism in the City of Worcester. Robinson remarked upon recent events in Lunenburg and other events involving high school football teams in Worcester where a person's race was targeted. Commissioner Eduardo Rivera suggested that the HRC act immediately to address the recent events in writing a resolution. After discussion it was decided that the HRC would prepare a statement condemning racism and work towards a longer term goal of writing a resolution as well as gathering information about racism in the City of Worcester. A request was made for the staff of the HRC to find out who the current Civil Rights Officer of the Worcester Police Department is as well as gathering information from additional sources. Members suggested inviting community groups such as the local NAACP to speak to the HRC. Commissioner Barbara Zerillo wrote a draft statement which was approved unanimously as a working draft.



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b) Nunnes Communication. Commissioner Robinson wrote to the high school football Coach Corey Nunnes at Hudson High School to inquire about the school's policy towards addressing racist remarks by student athletes. Coach Nunnes said that even suspicion that a player made a racist remark meant that a player would not play until the case was further examined by the athletic department and any remarks which were heard would result in immediate action of removing a player from a game. It was discussed that in Worcester a few years ago student athletes agreed to a pledge to respect. Commissioner Feeney suggested that this pledge could be revisited with current students.

5. Old Business:

a) Youth Essay and Poster Contest

Commissioner Jeremy Fontain presented different sized posters as suggested minimum and maximum sizes for the poster contest. Commissioner Fontain also presented the pricing for each that he found at a local drugstore. After debate the HRC approved the suggested sizes with the idea that they would be guidelines and not be eliminating criterion. The HRC also spoke about how to promote the poster contest and the staff was asked to contact a principal at one school as to ask for guidance as to how to approach the contest.

b) What Fair Housing Means to You

Commissioner Zerillo suggested that Community Legal Aid be invited to the next HRC meeting.

6. Review of the Bureau of Professional Standards Report

The Commissioners reviewed the report and asked staff to ask for clarification about some of the abbreviations used and the data gathered in regards to race and ethnicity.

7. Commissioners' Reports:

Commissioner Robinson reported that he was able to attend several community meetings during the month including one at a senior center and a P-FLAG meeting which the preference for referring to a youth's romantic orientation instead of sexual orientation was discussed as an identifier.

8. The other business was tabled for later discussion due to limited time and the lateness of the meeting.

9. Location of Next Meeting (January 6th, 2014): Main South CDC

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09pm.

**City of Worcester
Human Rights Commission
Planning Calendar**

3rd Quarter (January - March 2014)

1. Mediation video community screening (January 6th CDC Main South^h)
2. Mediation video community screening (February 3rd, SEAC)
3. Poster contest for Fair Housing Month