



City of Chelsea

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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Members

Mark C. Rossi, Esq.,
Chairperson

Susana Carella, Vice
Chairperson

Amy E. Fenton

Olivia Anne Walsh, Esq.

Utibe R. Essien, M.D.

Maria Belen Power

Rev. Sandra G. Whitley,
DMin.

Minutes of the
February, 1, 2018
Meeting of the
Chelsea Human Rights Commission

Members present for start of the meeting: Rossi, Fenton, Power, and Carella. Also present were City Solicitor Cheryl Fisher and Asst. City Solicitor Elizabeth Caiazz. Members Whitley and Carella joined after meeting began, absent was member Essen. Fenton motioned to adopt the minutes of the December 5, 2017, Meeting. Power seconded. All present then voted in the affirmative to adopt.

The staff presented an updated as to examples of typical types of discrimination to educate the board as to what they could expect in their role on the Human Rights Commission. Several scenarios were mentioned, including alleged sexual harassment and alleged inappropriate racial and religious comments in a place of public accommodation, brought to light by an anonymous complaint but also concerning to other employees. The City Solicitor's role, post investigation, is also to mediate, a role that the HRC Members may consider as the function of the HRC as they investigate future allegations as a body. Similarly, just as the City Solicitor's role is to educate, the HRC Members may wish to take an active role in doing the same.

Chairperson Rossi asked if the complaint was made in a "form" or if public documents were available. The City Solicitor explained that city complaints follow a typical investigation process, all with the goal of preventing recurrences of any illegal conduct.

Carella asked if these investigations are then made a "public record" and it was explained that most of the complaints and investigations are confidential in nature due to personnel laws and school confidentiality laws.

A discussion was held as to the laws and staff informed them that a new protected class in Massachusetts is Homelessness which should be included in their scope of understanding of the types of discrimination impacting Chelsea residents. Rossi requested training materials further explaining types of civil rights violations. The City Solicitor agreed to provide the HRC with presentation materials that she uses to educate employees of the School Department.

Carella suggested obtaining statistics showing the types of discrimination complaints made to the Law Department (against the School and City employees) as a means of determining which areas of focus the HRC should pursue.

The discussion then turned to the Meet and Greet. Staff handed out a "Come and Meet the Chelsea Human Rights Commission" proposed invitation as well as a "Draft handout for Event," that, once approved, would be distributed at future Meet and Greet meetings.

Member Whitley joined the meeting at 6:10 PM. Carella suggested that the Meet and Greet take place at the Chelsea Collaborative; the City Solicitor pointed out that the Meet and Greet was the HRC's, not the Collaborative's. Rossi suggested rolling locations to include the Chelsea Collaborative as it was capable of generating an audience. Whitley liked the idea of rotating venues. Power suggested rotating months with one month devoted to the scheduled monthly HRC meeting and one month dedicated to Meet and Greet meetings. The members agreed and suggested venues at the following venues; Collaborative, Senior Center, ROCA, CBC, St Lukes, Chamber of Commerce, The Rotary, Soldiers Home, and to tailor the meeting to address the various groups. Rossi would like at least two members at any event. Rev Whitley would like all members at the first Meet & Greet and think it should be at the Collaborative. It was decided that Staff would contact the various venues and solicit from them dates and times at which the HRC could appear and conduct their Meet and Greet meetings. The first will be at the Chelsea Collaborative, to be advertised in the Chelsea Record, the City's Social Media Page, and the Spanish newspaper. Carella suggested that the hand out that is utilized contain only one or two sentences as to each category of discrimination to minimize confusion. Dates and times will be discussed at the next, scheduled HRC meeting on 3/1/18. Carella motioned to adjourn, Fenton seconded. All members present voted in the affirmative and the meeting was adjourned.