

# Needham Human Rights Committee Minutes

April 16, 2015

Recorder: Jeremy Sutherland

Present: Marlene Schultz, Amelia Klein, Michael Vaughn, Cynthia Ganung, JoAnne McCormick, Jeremy Sutherland, Ashok Mehta, Abdul Cader Asmal, John Schlittler

Guests: Ramin Abrishamian, Muriel Gehman, Zahra Haghighatjoo

## 1. Approval of Minutes

- Minutes of March 2015 HRC meeting were discussed and suggestions of edits were made. The revised edits were approved.

## 2. Town Issues

- Ramin brought to the meeting a situation for discussion which occurred recently in Needham near Ramin's residence. The situation involved an interaction between guests leaving his home (who were people of color), and a Needham Police Officer. The incident was reviewed from the perspective of the visitors and the Police Officer. An involved discussion occurred between all members of the committee, highlighting the need for dialog and community education forums.

## 3. Old Business

### Committee Membership

- Amelia has reached out to and will continue discussions with a past community member about rejoining the committee. Amelia and Marlene were also contacted recently by another woman who would like to join the committee. This is an ongoing process to fill the open spots in the committee.

## 4. Reports

### Needham Diversity Committee

- Cynthia gave an update on the work of the NDC
  - March 26 Debby Irving, author - "Waking Up White"
  - April 8 - Film "Forgotten Four" African American football players who integrated the NFL, 1946, with Wes Smith, executive director over 60 attended, many young people, positive interest in film and its message

### Needham area Immigration Justice Task Force

- Cynthia also updated the committee on the recent work of the IJTC
  - March 29 - Welcoming Needham event, co-sponsor w. Needham. Housing Authority at Chambers St, community room-around 40 attended. food, activities, singing, dancing and conversation. IJTF will have another event like this.

### Needham Schools

- Jeremy and Bud will try to find a time to meet with Dr. Pizzi about bringing *Traces of the Trade* to the high school.

## **5. New Business**

### Discussion of inclusion of names in newspaper reports

- John informed the committee that this is up to the Newspaper's discretion, as the police include names and arrest details in their public reports which the newspaper can include at their will.

### Recorders for upcoming meetings

- May 21- Amelia
- June 18 - Barry

## **6. Other**

- Marlene brought up an exciting discussion between herself, Amelia, and a Medford town official, Diane McCloud who organizes a MA human rights convention. This information will be included in future NHRC discussions.