

NEEDHAM HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

December 16, 2021

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89930144310>

7:30pm - 9:00pm

In attendance: Tina Burgos, Cynthia Ganung, Amelia Klein, Marlene Schultz, Kerry Hurwitch, Bud Schram, Julie Venables, Lt. Belinda Carroll, Katie King, Jennifer Howard, Rinaz Mala, and Emme Ward.

Welcoming New Members - Rinaz Mala, Emme Ward (Needham High School student)

- Public participation - Alyssa Kence, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Needham

She had a presentation about the Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Listening Session Overview,

Who are they? they are a non-profit hospital and as a non-profit hospital they are required by the state and the federal government to invest money in the community to address unmet health needs. **Their goals?** are to prioritize health -related and social needs of those living in BID Needham community Benefits Service Area and work with community- based organizations, leaders and residents to ensure the project is collaborative and engaging. They have done community surveys; key informants interviews focus groups.

What do they need from NHRC ? They would like to reach more diverse demographics because they will have community listening sessions on February 2nd, 2022, at 9:30am and February 8th, 2022, at 3:30pm both virtual. They would like us to attend and promote these sessions. Alyssa was wondering if the NHRC could co-host one of the sessions to promote the event and help recruit residents' facilitators. They are trying to have community facilitators not the hospital. They have two training sessions for the community facilitators in January.

Tina asked about the data and who compiles the data? They have a consulting firm that compiles data, then the hospital put a three-year implementation strategy plan to address the needs of the community.

Marlene endorsed HRNC cosponsoring them because people's health is a human right.

Jennifer: suggests if we can have a different timing for the listening sessions (maybe an evening) so we can accommodate the time of people who have a full-time job.

Bud: also agrees with Marlene. How can we assist in promoting this program to a specific population? Reaching out to the houses of worship. Note. Alyssa met with the Needham Clergy Association.

Amelia: What information does Alyssa need? How can we help her? And she also agrees that we should be part of this initiative? if this only applies to Needham residents, do people who come to schools in Needham qualify? Have you touched based on the council of aging and the board of health? The answer was yes, everyone who works and/or lives in Needham.

Cynthia: suggested Nicole Argo who knows a lot about people who might not have their voices heard. One way of reaching out is through the employers or places of work,

Rinaz, suggested sending fliers through the donations that goes from the resiliency garden group on a weekly basis to promote the BID plan.

Kerry, second the timings should be different so more people can attend.

Alyssa provided her contact information if people would like to reach out to her,

All members voted on co-sponsoring the initiative for the listening sessions of BID Needham.

- Martin Luther King Day Program, Jan. 17 (virtual)- (Cynthia and Amelia)

Amelia, this year we are taking a different approach, it will be through MUSIC , we are inviting different musical groups. The focus will be music and it will be shorter.

Cynthia, we already invited Plugged in band program and some spoken contributions.

How NHRC can help. Some distribution of the fliers would be nice if it is in physical not on social media. What other ways we can promote the event?

Emme can make a social media post and invite her friends to see or she can put things up in NHS .

Bud, there is a Capella group in the town we should invite.

Tina, if we know the songs we can create a Spotify list .

Cynthia, was wondering if Amy knows any a Capella groups in the HS to invite them to participate.

Julie, suggested if we can add things in the schools newsletter.

Tina will help distribute the fliers to businesses in town.

Katie – will circulate the flyer to town groups.

- Community Education Event (Jen/Bud/Tina)

Sub-committee met to discuss demystifying critical race theory. (Bud and Jen)

Jen was able to reach out to Mary Lammi and she agreed to meet with them maybe in January. She heard back from her colleague from Northeastern who is a CRT scholar who is happy to brainstorm ideas about speakers.

Bud, reached out to some people at the racial initiative a couple of professors in BU are getting him the contact information. He reached out to Jonathan Holloway who is the president of rectors.

Marlene: Florida has banned the critical race theory, First Parish was also interested in doing something around this topic, we may connect with them to work together, so we are not duplicating efforts. Tina would like to know the contact person at First Parish

- Police in discussion

Katie, we are looking at a two part series 1st the history of policing nationally and here in Needham , 2nd* diversion programs , youth , and trying to finalize the first of the two series that will be held mid to late February. We are trying to get the second in April but the police department is moving that is what causing the delay .

- Discrimination complaint process.

Tina , Two members of the select board suggested that we ask the Needham Resiliency Network to take a supporting role for our efforts , we are meeting (Tina, Julie and Marlene) with Matt Borrelli and Marianne Cooley to present our initial draft to the Select Board in Jan. They are very supportive of our efforts.

FYI, an email came through to the NHRC Gmail account, because there was something decals posted on the crosswalk of some streets about one of the white supremacist group so (Tine, Katie, Belinda, Nicole and Beth) trying to find a way to appropriate response, the decals has been removed.

Katie thinks there is no value in feeding any discussion about it (this group).

- Massachusetts Association of Human Rights commission (MAHRC):

Marlene, this group meets once a month on Friday, they meet on Zoom. They had so many discussions about the complaint process which might lead us to revising some of our ideas regarding the complaint process. These are human rights groups from all over MA, we can learn a lot from them. Another town had one person who took this mission and they attended every month and they reported back what was going on like what Educational Groups have done, or we could send one person to present the race critical theory or putting together something like policing and learn what did these groups do regarding these topics. It is very important to be part of that table.

Cynthia thinks this a great idea, people should take turns in attending these meetings.

Amelia it would be great to also have the yearly topics. If we see the agenda that would help too.

New members

We still have one non-student seat that is open. We have interviewed one student this evening.

Marlene, maybe Chip Wild might be interested, she doesn't know him but she knows the name.

Amy, how many students do we need more? Tina, we are good with students for now but thank you. Cynthia thought someone was going to ask Marcus if he knows someone because he was on the HRC. Tina will circle back.

At My Neighbors Table, Jan. 23, 5:00-6:30pm - "Leaning into challenging conversations"

Marlene, will the committee cosponsor at my neighbors table because we sponsored every one before and this is our 13th one. Our presenter is Leora Norwich, she is going to be our facilitator and presenter, then we will go into breakout rooms and discuss with our neighbors about how to have challenging conversation, we are reaching out to the House of worship, NDI, and many other groups, we need to make sure the committee approves it.

Cynthia will take it to the clergy association to put it in the January newsletter. Just having a couple sentences to save the date.

We had a vote and all approved to cosponsor the event in January.

Tina on the 27th there is a book discussion HRC, NDI (Kerry and Jen) are leading the book discussion.

The book is called "Do you want to talk about race" by Ijeoma Oluo
Rinaz was asking if she can get a copy of email addresses

Marlene, we used to have a list that we put together every year with people's names phone numbers

, Tina will put a google doc and circulate it to have it updated.

Other business.

Marlene -somebody mentioned to Marlene that they are hoping the HRC will take a role in terms of restorative justice, we are working on a complaint process , she is a restorative justice person and would like to come and have a presentation to the committee . Marlene will arrange it .

Cynthia, heard from Jeanne McKnight regarding the group, which is discussing housing plans for the community, they are trying to develop some kind of forum or community event, they are not asking for anything now,

Amelia, Emme I want to welcome you to the group, and I think you will play a critical role.

Rinaz Mala, Recorder

Future Meetings and Note Recorders

January 20, 2022 - Julie Venables

February 17, 2022 - Marlene Schultz

March 17, 2022 - Amelia Klein

April 28, 2022 - Kerry Hurwitch

May 19, 2022 - Cynthia Ganung

June 16, 2022 - Bud Schram

No regularly scheduled meeting in July and August.

