

## NEEDHAM HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

### Minutes January 20, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Tina Burgos @7:33pm

In attendance: Marlene Schultz, Julie Venables, Cynthia Ganung, Rinaz Mala, Amelia Klein, Tina Burgos, Jen Howard Schroeder, Finn McKeon, Emme Ward, Ex Officio: Katie King, Belinda Carroll.

Absent: Kerry Hurwitch, Bud Schram

Minutes from 12/16/21 were approved as presented.

There was no public participation

Membership: We welcomed new member, Finn McKeon, a sophomore at NHS. Julie Venables will be leaving the committee in March due to the impending birth of her 3<sup>rd</sup> son. We will have 2 openings, need to publicize and reach out to find new members. Ask Cindy Gonzales to post on her weekly communication to the community.

MLK Day program: Program was well received from the community. There 300 people in attendance. We were once again glad to be co-sponsors of this very important program and remembrance.

Community Education Event: Demystifying critical race theory. Jen has been in touch with Mary Lammi, NPS, and they are interested in working with us on a program for the fall along with Amy Goldman and Needham Community Education. Seeing this topic as a 2- part series, we discussed and decided that we want to do an initial program this spring in conjunction with First Parish, possibly others, that has an educational focus. Our target audience is parents who have children of all ages from preschool through high school. We should reach out to PTO presidents for help publicizing the program. Meetings are scheduled with our partners and possible speakers to begin the planning process.

Community Conversations on Race: Will be focused on policing. First program is scheduled for March 1 and will present an educational and historical look at policing in America and in Needham. Chief Schlitter and Gloria Greis will be presenting. Additional conversations will be held in April and May, focus is still in the planning process.

Discrimination Complaint Process: The sub-committee met with the Select Board chairs last week. Concerns raised were about privacy, the process and impact on businesses. There needs to be more clarity about the process. The sub-committee will continue to fine tune the process, being clear about what areas it would not get involved in, i.e. anything criminal, complaints that were against town employees, etc. They are planning to write up a narrative that explains who the protected classes are, give some examples of possible scenarios and include a restorative justice component. The hope is that through this process, people will come together to reach a common understanding. Need to be clear about what we can and can't do so that citizens are not disappointed. The first year will be a pilot year with an evaluation at the end of that year in order to continue to tweak the process to meet the needs of the community.

Family Unity Network: The network brings middle school (Needham and Metco) children and parents together for conversation about multi-cultural issues. Currently there are 5 families signed up for the 6 sessions. They are looking to recruit additional families – please reach out to those who might be interested and let Tina know. Tina and her children are involved in this program that is based on Boston Bridges – a suburban/urban partnership. The group is facilitated by Beth Pinals and Joanne Allen-Willoughby.

### Announcements

1/23/22; 5pm - 6:30pm via Zoom: At My Neighbor's Table: Empowering Yourself to Have Challenging Conversations; Speaker: Liora Norwich, Network for Social Justice

1/27/22, 7pm (ZOOM) Book Discussion - sponsored by Trustees of Needham Free Public Library, NHRC and NDI Diversity and Discussion Book, Needham Connects: Building Empathy through Books and Conversations Book - "So You Want To Talk about Race." by Ijeoma Oluo

1/27/22, 7pm (ZOOM): Needham Housing Plan Working Group Public Education and Listening Forum. For more information: ([https://www.needhamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24807/Housing-Listening-Session-Press-Release-FINAL?bidId=&ct=t\(EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_5\\_18\\_2021\\_14\\_31\\_COPY\\_01\)\)](https://www.needhamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24807/Housing-Listening-Session-Press-Release-FINAL?bidId=&ct=t(EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_5_18_2021_14_31_COPY_01))))

2/15/22, 7:00 pm. Needham Diversity Initiative in collaboration with Needham Community Farm: Movie & Panel Discussion on Soul Fire Farm's Documentary "Uprooting Racism: Seeding Sovereignty", Racial & Food Inequity.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Marlene Schultz

### Future Meetings and Minute takers

February 17, 2022 - Julie Venables

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.