

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., JONATHAN DANIELS**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, March 6, 2019**

**5:00 PM**

**Room 12 Rec. Center**

**Members Present:**

Bill Hay, Chair  
Mohammad Saleh, Vice-chair  
Nancy Salwen  
Pam Knight  
Jan Manwaring  
Dottie Morris

**Staff Present:**

Andrew Bohannon, Parks & Rec. Director

**Members Not Present:**

**1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Hay called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM. Roll call was conducted.

**2) Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2019**

Ms. Knight motioned to approve the minutes of February 6, 2019 as submitted. Mr. Saleh seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**3) Finance Report**

Mr. Bohannon reported there were no expenditures for the past month; the current balance is \$4,574.70.

Ms. Manwaring made a motion to accept the Finance Report as presented. Ms. Morris seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**4) City Resolution-**

Mr. Bohannon distributed copies of Resolution R-2019-04 and the background notes from the City Council meeting held on February 21, 2019. He said the Resolution was adopted noting the name change is part of the Ordinance. Mr. Bohannon said he wanted to address the Committee, referring to the Ordinance, regarding membership. He asked if there were any official groups that the Committee should ensure have seats on the Committee. Mr. Bohannon suggested organizations

such as the Interfaith Clergy, KSC, somebody from higher education (Antioch). He explained how other City Committees have designated seats. This Committee currently has seats for nine members; and this is the opportunity for restructuring if that is what the Committee desires. Mr. Bohannon continued he recommends not being so specific otherwise the membership process could be slowed down.

Questions/comments from Committee members:

- Is there an active PFlag group in town
- Do we have a limited number of seats- naming the groups could be hard
- The Committee previously discussed having a high school student on the Committee; this is not an official group
- Should we have a member from the Asian, Indian, Chinese, Thai communities
- We should be a diverse community because otherwise we are not fully understanding the needs we are trying to address
- Are we tied to the current structure or could there be a restructuring
- Could we have someone from the Chamber of Commerce on the Committee – relating to workforce diversity
- Could we have someone from a specific company’s HR Department on the Committee – would this be biased
- What is it like to be a minority in Keene, what would be useful and helpful – are these things the conversations the Committee would want to be having (membership)
- Membership should support our mission – our primary thoughts should be what we are trying to accomplish and then figure out who should be members to support that
- Maybe this does not require a language change but could be something the Committee thinks about
- Could there be a mechanism in place for people to come to the Committee and express their concerns – perhaps an advisory group to the Committee (structure change)
- Should we do an assessment of what does not feel welcoming about Keene – these people would not have to be part of the Committee - the Committee could develop the process and call upon people to help
- Is US citizenship a requirement for Committee members
- Committee members should still make recommendations for new members
- Is it the Committee’s responsibility to let the community know about multi-cultural events taking place

Chair Hay commented he is not in favor of having an Asian, or Jewish, etcetera because as he looks around the table the Committee is pretty diverse. He continued the name Martin Luther King/Jonathan Daniels sort of implied we were dealing with racial things and the new name implies we are expanding the things we address. At this point Mr. Bohannon read the current Ordinance language “The Human Rights Committee shall consist of nine regular members. In addition, and at their option the Mayor and City Council may designate one or more City Councilors as City Council liaisons to the Committee”. Mr. Bohannon continued the only change here is the name -Human Rights Committee. Continuing he referred to previous discussions noting the Committee agreed to have someone from the Library on the Committee (grant

opportunities), an educator, a student, and six remaining members. Mr. Bohannon reported he has someone from the Library willing to serve on the Committee but she is not able to until the language is changed in the Ordinance. He explained further that City staff currently cannot serve as members of a City Committee, hence the language change to state a member from the Keene Public Library as one of the designated slots.

Discussion continued with Mr. Bohannon noting language in the Ordinance “The Human Rights Committee shall consist of nine regular members in support of the purpose”. He indicated the words “in support of the purpose” will dictate people will have to meet the criteria. Mr. Bohannon hoped this would help Committee members in their thought process. Ms. Morris mentioned the East Indian community in Keene as a group to communicate with. Chair Hay suggested contacting Sandra Wallace.

#### Ordinance/Resolution Language Changes Suggested

- Replace “purpose” with “mission”
- Remove or replace “ In the Year of Our Lord”
- Change “equality” to “equity” (give people what they need to be successful)
- Minorities is not part of common language anymore- most people just say “under represented”

As the discussion continued Ms. Morris agreed to provide a graphic to Committee members depicting the differences between equity and equality. Ms. Morris will also provide Mr. Bohannon language recommendations for the proposed Ordinance. Mr. Bohannon will bring a draft of the Ordinance to the next meeting for Committee review prior to submittal to City Council. Due to the process Mr. Bohannon recommended not requesting changes to the newly adopted Resolution. Committee members were in agreement.

#### **5) Committee Charge – Future Action**

#### **6) Upcoming Events-**

Noting the hour Mr. Bohannon asked if there is anything the Committee wants to start thinking about and capturing moving forward to make an impact? Things staff can find information on and bring back to the table for next month.

- Can/should anything be done to change the sign at “Keene Ice”. With it being located next to the Police Department it can be disturbing to some members of the community who may see it as meaning Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Is this not relative to the Committee’s Charge of making people feel welcome in Keene?
- The East Indian community will be holding a Holi Festival, in the Maple Brown Room, on April 6, 2019 at 1:00 PM. Is there any role this Committee could play in this event? Council members have already received invitations. The group can be found on their Facebook page- Keene India Association.
- Mr. Bohannon will check on the policy for promotion of outside events and report back next month.
- International Festival- Ms. Manwaring will provide Mr. Bohannon the contact information. He would like to propose working together and possibly shifting the

event to Fuller Park.

- 7) **Membership** – Discussed under agenda item #4.
- 8) **New Business**
- 9) **Adjournment**

There being no further business Chair Hay adjourned the meeting at 6:01 PM.

**Next meeting date:** April 3, 2019

Respectfully submitted by,  
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute Taker  
March 7, 2019