

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

5:00 PM

Room 12 Rec. Center

Members Present:

Mohammad Saleh, Vice-chair
Pam Knight
Jan Manwaring
Dottie Morris
Nancy Salwen (Late)

Staff Present:

Liz Brown, Youth Services Manager

Members Not Present:

Bill Hay, Chair

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Chair Saleh called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Approval of Minutes – April 3, 2019

Ms. Manwaring motioned to approve the minutes of April 3, 2019 as submitted. Ms. Knight seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report

Ms. Brown reported there were no expenditures for the past month; the current balance of \$4,574.70 remains the same. By consensus, the Committee accepted the report as informational.

4) Human Rights Proclamation

Acting Chair Saleh referred to the Proclamation provided in the meeting packet. He noted this is a continued discussion from the April 3, 2019 meeting. Acting Chair Saleh continued noting the changes recommended by the Committee at that meeting.

- Change “celebrate” to “commemorate”
- Change “Gay Pride” to “LGBTQ” (Pride or Awareness)
- Remove the 4th paragraph

Ms. Brown provided background information by noting this was the first proclamation of its kind in the City of Keene. She explained Mr. Bohannon's idea for this meeting was to see if the Committee could come up with a more generic proclamation that was not derived specifically from the Night Club incident. The Committee agreed they are trying to express less of the negativity and violence happening in the world. Ms. Brown commented it is called Gay Pride Month because it is supposed to be celebrating diversity. She explained the Stonewall Riots that took place 50 years ago and the continued violence. Ms. Brown said you do not want to say we celebrate Gay Pride Month because people rioted and got shot. Discussion continued with Ms. Salwen commenting because of this movement it has made it so that young people/people can come out more easily; a place where people can feel free to be themselves. A lengthy conversation with many changes ensued. The following is the culmination of the recommended and agreed upon changes to the Proclamation presented.

WHEREAS: The purpose of June as Pride Month is to recognize the impact that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning/Queer (LGBTQ) individuals have had on history locally, nationally, and internationally. It is also to recognize the role and contributions of the LGBTQ community in creating a safer and more accepting world for all people; and

WHEREAS: The LGBTQ populations of the United States and the world have faced systematic discrimination, oppression, hatred and violence as a consequence of their sexual and gender identities; and

WHEREAS: The United States remembers and commemorates the June 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City, a major landmark in the movement for equal rights for gender and sexual minorities; and

WHEREAS: The City of Keene condemns violence and discrimination of all sorts, and recognizes the inherent right of all persons to live free of fear and violence.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kendall W. Lane, Mayor of Keene, do declare the month of June as LGBTQ Pride Month in Keene, as an expression of our community's support and concern for our LGBTQ residents and their allies.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and the official seal of the City of Keene this ____ day of June, 2019.

Ms. Salwen motioned for the Human Rights Committee to approve the changes to the proclamation as presented above. Ms. Knight seconded the motion. which carried unanimously.

5) Committee Decision

a. International Festival – Acting Chair Saleh reported the group came to check out the facility and will decide whether or not they want to use it. Committee members noted they did not receive any information about attending the International Festival Committee's meeting as was discussed at the previous meeting.

6) New Business

1. Acting Chair Saleh reported the Historical Society has raised the idea of doing something to recognize the month of Ramadan. Noting the time frame he asked if the Committee would like to collaborate with them on something for next year.
2. Committee members discussed what their year would look like and what they would be able to do. They discussed various ways to see what is going on in town and picking events to collaborate on. Acting Chair Saleh suggested asking the citizens of Keene what they would like to see the Committee do. Councilor Manwaring noted the change from the MLK/JD Committee to the Human Rights Committee and said we as a Committee need to decide what that means and what we can/cannot do. She liked the calendar idea and suggested reviewing the events there before reaching out to the public.
3. Ms. Knight reported she had been contacted regarding a banner at the Hospital with incorrect information on it regarding Jonathan Daniels place of death, and how this could be corrected. Ms. Knight agreed to take a picture and bring it to the next meeting for discussion.

7) Adjourn

There being no further business Acting Chair Saleh adjourned the meeting at 6:05 PM.

Next meeting date: June 5, 2019

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute Taker
May 2, 2019

Reviewed by,
Andy Bohannon, Staff Liaison
May 28, 2019