

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 7, 2019

5:00 PM

Recreation Center, Room 12

Members Present:

William Hay, Chair
Councilor Jan Manwaring
Pamela Knight
Mohammad Selah
Sophia Cunha-Vasconcelos

Staff Present:

Demitria Kirby, Youth Services
Elizabeth Brown, Youth Services Manager

Members Not Present:

Dottie Morris
Nancy Salwen
Tammy Parrott

1) Call to Order

Chair Hay called the meeting to order at 5:13 PM. He introduced the new Committee member Sophia Cunha-Vasconcelos, who was confirmed by City Council on July 18, 2019.

2) Approval of Minutes – June 5, 2019

Councilor Manwaring moved to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2019 meeting, which Mr. Selah seconded.

Ms. Knight added an amendment on page four under New Business, which reads in the discussion about the plaque honoring Jonathan Daniels as: “It incorrectly says he died in Alabama.” The preceding sentence should be corrected to say *Selma, Alabama*. A subsequent sentence should be added to the minutes reading: “It needs to read Hayneville, Alabama.”

Mr. Selah added a clarification on page three, the last sentence of the last paragraph regarding communication between members of the Committee should instead read: “Because e-mails count as a quorum, he reminded members not to respond to e-mails regarding discussions of issues related to the Committee.”

Mr. Selah asked for clarification about Number 7 of the minutes regarding the HRC taking over responsibility of an event on the Martin Luther King holiday.

The Human Right Committee unanimously accepted the minutes of June 5, 2019 as amended.

3) Approval of the Rules of Procedure

Ms. Knight made a motion to approve the Rules of Procedure for the functioning of the Human Rights Committee, which Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos seconded and the HRC passed unanimously.

4) Finance Report

Staff reported that the budget status on the last page of the meeting packet had not changed since the last meeting. The current budget total is \$4, 574.70.

Mr. Selah moved to accept the finance report, which Ms. Knight seconded and the HRC passed unanimously.

5) Committee Discussion

a. International Festival

Ms. Kirby stated that Mr. Bohannon suggested that the HRC have a booth at the International Festival on September 21, 2019 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Discussion followed on ideas for the booth, without a clear decision about moving forward. Councilor Manwaring will check with the City Clerk's Office about the populations of different nationalities in Keene. A final decision on the content of the booth will be made at September meeting.

Mr. Selah asked if there was a record of hate crimes in the city. He will ask Mr. Bohannon to invite the Chief of Police to the next meeting on this issue.

b. Public Forum & MLK Breakfast

A first a public forum on the State of Diversity in Keene was considered for October 2019, but it was thought that there was not enough time to put it together. Consensus was to put the forum with the MLK breakfast or an evening event in February 2020. Suggestions included music, a speaker, and discussion perhaps in the Michael J. Blastos Room or at Keene State College. More discussion next month.

6) New Business

a. Future Meeting Location

The HRC Committee would like to meet in the Booras Room at the Keene Public Library for the September Meeting.

b. Hate Crimes

Ms. Knight wondered if the defacing of signs for Mitch Greenwald for Mayor was an indication of anti-Semitism. In the recent talk by Vice President of Student Affairs at Keene State College, he reported that although he has experienced some racial slurs, generally he finds Keene an accepting community.

7) Adjournment – Next Meeting Date, September 4, 2019

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Councilor Jan Manwaring

Edited by Katryna Kibler, Minute Clerk