

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Monday, October 2, 2023 at 5:00PM
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

Members:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos
Dr. Dottie Morris
Janis Manwaring
Dr. Mohammad Saleh
Marti Fiske
Hunter Kirschner
Rabbi Daniel Aronson
Councilor Catherine Workman
Gina Burke

Staff:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director
Alyssa Bender, Youth Services Manager

Alternates:

Ritu Budakoti
Tedd Benson
Jennifer Nascimento

Agenda:

- I. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of September 11, 2023 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Coalition Updates
5. Racial Justice Community Safety Report
6. Acceptance of Committee Event Reports
 - a. Indigenous Peoples' Day
 - b. Pride Event
 - c. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 - d. Black History Month
 - e. Juneteenth
 - f. Keene International Festival
7. New Business
8. Adjourn - Next Meeting Monday, November 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM
Tabled: Community Survey

"In our efforts to create a more equal and just society, we move forward with the firm intention to value the voices, opinions, and experiences of all people. We choose to proceed with the awareness and humility that the statements and decisions we make will have a different impact for those with different life experiences."

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
4
5 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Monday, September 11, 2023

5:00 PM

Room 22,
Recreation Center

Members Present:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos, Chair
Hunter Kirschner, Vice Chair
Dr. Dottie Morris
Dr. Mohammad Saleh
Gina Burke
Rabbi Daniel Aronson

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation & Facilities
Director
Alyssa Bender, Youth Services Manager

Members Not Present:

Councilor Catherine Workman
Jan Manwaring
Marti Fiske
Ritu Budakoti, Alternate
Tedd Benson, Alternate
Jennifer Nescimento, Alternate

8
9
10 **1) Welcome and Call to Order**

11
12 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos read the HRC's statement: *"In our efforts to create a more equal and*
13 *just society, we move forward with the firm intention to value the voices, opinions, and*
14 *experiences of all people. We choose to proceed with the awareness and humility that the*
15 *statements and decisions we make will have a different impact for those with different life*
16 *experiences."*

17
18 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM. Roll call was conducted.

19
20 **2) Approval of August 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

21
22 Dr. Morris made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 7, 2023. Mr. Kirschner
23 seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

24
25 **3) Finance Report**

26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that to remind everyone, the Finance Report is informational and does not need to be voted on.

Mr. Bohannon reported that the Finance Report is inaccurate. He continued that they are in the process of auditing it and some slight adjustments are needed. The City transferred to a new accounting system, and in doing so, the HRC, Keene International Festival, and Juneteenth (numbers) “got a little blurry.” Finance has done their piece and they are waiting on him to do his piece to clarify this. He will have an accurate budget for the HRC at the next meeting. Brief discussion ensued.

4) Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Coalition

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if Dr. Morris had any updates.

Dr. Morris reported that the Education Committee is meeting and working on things; the next meeting is next Tuesday at 7:30 AM at the high school if anyone wants to join. She continued that a subgroup has been creating a strategic plan and will present it to the full group in about a week. The subgroup may do further tweaking of the strategic plan based on the full group’s feedback, before the strategic plan can be presented publicly.

Dr. Saleh stated that there had been a big discussion about the recommendations that the committee made on the execution of the (Racial Justice and Community Safety Committee) report, and Mr. Bohannon was going to (send that). Mr. Bohannon replied that he was to submit a letter to the City Manager for that purpose. He continued that he took the item off the agenda since it had been moved on. He will give the HRC an update once he knows where the City Manager wants to take this; he does not know if it will go to a committee or not. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if he has sent the City Manager the executive summary and letter. Mr. Bohannon replied not yet, but he will.

5) Acceptance of Committee Event Reports

A) Keene International Festival

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that this event is in two weeks, and she looks forward to it every year. Mr. Bohannon stated that the event is in good shape; the organizers have received many financial commitments from people. Fourteen different countries will be represented. He shared more details of the event.

B) Pride Event

Mr. Kirschner reported that the film for Pride will be on Tuesday, October 17, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the Mabel Brown Room at Keene State College. He continued that he is working on

69 promotional materials and drafted a press release today. He gave more information about how
70 they hope to involve the community, particularly KSC and educators. Mr. Bohannon suggested
71 involving the high school and middle school communities. Discussion ensued. Dr. Morris stated
72 that she can bring it up at next week’s meeting of the MDEIB Coalition’s Education Committee.
73 Ms. Bender spoke in support of the idea and offered to connect Mr. Kirschner with one of the
74 high school’s assistant principals. Discussion continued. Mr. Kirschner and Dr. Morris will talk.

75
76 **C) Indigenous People’s Day**

77
78 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that Marti Fiske is not here to share an update. She asked if
79 anyone else had an update. Mr. Bohannon replied that he has not talked with her recently, but
80 she gave an update at the last meeting. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she thinks the
81 HRC has one more meeting prior to the event. She continued that based on what Ms. Fiske
82 shared at the last meeting, it sounds like this event is in the works, and presumably the HRC will
83 do some marketing of it prior to the next meeting. She suggested she and Mr. Bohannon reach
84 out to Ms. Fiske and see if she needed any support from the HRC.

85
86 **D) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

87
88 Rabbi Aronson stated that he sent a message to Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles to see if
89 Father Gregg Boyle would be available for this upcoming Martin Luther King, Jr. Day or in
90 2025. He continued that he hopes to hear back soon. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day working
91 group will meet Tuesday, September 19 at 7:30 on Zoom and welcomes HRC members.

92
93 **E) Black History Month**

94
95 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if Black History Month was on the event list before. Mr.
96 Bohannon replied that he added it, since the HRC screened the movie “Till,” and he was thinking
97 maybe the HRC would want to do something again. Dr. Morris spoke about an exceptional
98 musician she recently saw live in VT, who would be a great performer for Black History Month.
99 She will share a link to some of her music with the HRC members. Mr. Bohannon asked if Dr.
100 Morris wants to pursue this opportunity. Dr. Morris replied yes, she has begun conversations
101 with this musician’s agent/manager/booking person. Discussion ensued about venue
102 possibilities.

103
104 **F) Juneteenth**

105
106 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that there is not much to report, since Juneteenth was just a
107 couple months ago, but the Juneteenth working group meets in October to get started with
108 planning next year’s event.

109
110 **6) Community Survey**

111

112 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she saw in the minutes that last month there was a question
113 as to where the community survey stands, and she looked in the minutes from the meeting before
114 that to see where the HRC had landed. Mr. Bohannon and Ms. Bender replied that the HRC had
115 tabled this. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the minutes say the HRC questioned whether
116 such a survey would focus on the Monadnock region or just Keene, but in the meantime, HRC
117 members could send suggested edits (of the survey questions) to Mr. Bohannon if they wanted
118 to. She asked if anyone recalls why the HRC was tabling this topic. Others replied lack of
119 capacity; lack of clarity regarding the purpose/what the HRC would use the data for; and the
120 possibility of redundancy, given that the RJCS ad hoc committee did this type of information
121 gathering already.

122
123 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if HRC members currently have interest and bandwidth for
124 revisiting the topic of the community survey, or if they want to keep it tabled and leave it on the
125 agenda to check in next time. Others replied that they would like to table it. Discussion ensued
126 about the work of the MDEIB/the Coalition. Mr. Kirschner stated that Councilor Workman had
127 spoken about how the Coalition is creating a hotline that would gather data in a different way.
128 Mr. Bohannon stated that maybe KSC, Antioch, or Franklin Pierce could be involved with this
129 (survey) work. Discussion ensued. Dr. Morris spoke of how Franklin Pierce might not have the
130 people or space for this right now. Discussion continued about tabling the community survey
131 topic for now, until the HRC finds the right fit.

132
133 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she recalls conversation about an active effort to tie the
134 HRC in better with the Coalition and the efforts out of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr.
135 Bohannon replied that as a Chamber board member, he can say that this conversation does not
136 come up anymore. He gave more information about how people from the Chamber board are
137 mostly doing DEI work through the Coalition subcommittees now. Discussion continued. Dr.
138 Morris spoke about the strategic plan that a Coalition subcommittee is working on.

139
140 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she thinks they should leave this on the agenda, just to keep
141 it in their minds. Discussion ensued about the capacity-building work of the Coalition.

142

143 **7) New Business**

144

145 Rabbi Aronson stated that Hundred Nights had an amazing race this past weekend. He continued
146 that the funds raised far surpassed the expectations of leadership. Leadership and volunteers
147 created a fantastic program that participants, including him and his wife, really enjoyed. He
148 continued that it was “one of the best community-building events he has ever been part of,” and
149 gave more information about it. Dr. Saleh asked if he could talk more about the format of the
150 event. Rabbi Aronson replied that it was a series of 17 or 18 fun challenges for teams of two to
151 complete, in various locations throughout the city. He shared more details and some examples,
152 such as a sack race and moving a ping-pong ball to a goal line only by squirting it with squirt
153 guns. Money is raised by each team paying an entrance fee and gathering sponsors. Discussion
154 ensued.

- 155
156 **8) Adjourn – Next Meeting October 2, 2023**
157
158 There being no further business, Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 5:47 PM.
159
160 Respectfully submitted by,
161 Britta Reida, Minute Taker
162
163 Reviewed and edited by,
164 Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

7/1/22- 6/30/23	HRC	KIF	7/1/23- 6/30/24	HRC	KIF	7/1/24- 6/30/25	HRC	KIF
Balance 7/1/22	\$ 2,991.88	\$ 3,985.44	Balance 7/1/23	\$ 3,997.75	\$ 5,951.74	Balance 7/1/24	\$ 5,497.75	\$ 3,985.44
Income			Income			Income		
City of Keene	\$ 1,000.00		City of Keene	\$ 2,000.00		City of Keene	\$ -	
donations TILL	\$ 1,800.00							
donations Juneteenth	\$ 3,150.00							
Donations KIF		\$ 8,312.00	Donations KIF		\$ 4,300.00	Donations KIF		\$ -
subtotal	\$ 5,950.00	\$ 8,312.00	subtotal	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,300.00	subtotal	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 5,950.00	\$ 8,312.00	Total Income	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,300.00	Total Income	\$ -	\$ -
Expenses			Expenses			Expenses		
Martin Luther King Day	\$ 45.55		Martin Luther King Day	\$ -		Martin Luther King Day	\$ -	
	500.00			500.00			500.00	
Black History Month TILL	\$ 1,800.00		Black History Month	\$ -		Black History Month	\$ -	
				500.00			500.00	
Juneteenth	\$ 3,098.58		Juneteenth	\$ -		Juneteenth	\$ -	
	500.00			500.00			500.00	
International Festival		\$ 6,345.70	International Festival		\$ 1,040.00	International Festival		\$ -
Indigenous Peoples Day	\$ -		Indigenous Peoples Day	\$ -		Indigenous Peoples Day	\$ -	
	500.00			500.00			500.00	
			Pride Event - Story Clear Film	\$ 500.00		Pride Event		
				500.00			500.00	
Total Expenses	\$ 4,944.13	\$ 6,345.70	Total Expenses	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,040.00	Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
Net 22-23	\$ 1,005.87	\$ 1,966.30	Net 23-24	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,260.00	Net 24-25	\$ -	\$ -
Balance on hand	\$ 3,997.75	\$ 5,951.74	Balance on hand	\$ 5,497.75	\$ 9,211.74	Balance on hand	\$ 5,497.75	\$ 3,985.44