

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 3, 2025

5:00 PM

**Room 22,
Recreation Center**

Members Present:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos, Chair
Dr. Dottie Morris
Marti Fiske
Rabbi Daniel Aronson
Gina Burke (remote)
Debra Bowie
David Morill
Dr. Mohammad Saleh, Alternate
Gregory Kleiner, Alternate
Julie Odatto, Alternate

Staff Present:

Alyssa Bender-Jesse, Youth Services Manager

Members Not Present:

Ritu Budakoti
Councilor Catherine Workman

1) Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos read the HRC's statement: *"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."*

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM. Roll call was conducted. Ms. Burke stated that she is participating remotely due to having a call right at 6:00 PM, and she is in her home office, and no one else is in the room.

2) Approval of October 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Morrill noted a correction to make on page 5, line 167: *"to plan future events"* should be *"to plan the 2026 event."*

Ms. Bowie made a motion to accept the October 6, 2025 meeting minutes as amended. Ms. Fiske seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

3) Finance Report

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that as a reminder, this agenda item is informational and does not require a vote. She continued that there is a financial question they will address when they get to the “Indigenous Peoples’ Day Event” portion of the agenda.

Ms. Bender-Jesse stated that nothing has changed in the Finance Report. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if anyone had questions or concerns regarding the Finance Report. Hearing none, she moved on in the agenda.

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

Ms. Burke reported that everyone should have received the invitation, via Ms. Bender-Jesse, to the November 22 Community Conversation the Coalition is hosting, called “Building Community in Trying Times.” She continued that it will be a multi-generational event with a representative from the schools, workplace, and neighborhood to talk about what is going well in those three settings as far as building community. There will be various activities around the room to help people take action in school, the workplace, or their community. It will be at Heberton Hall, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, and everyone is invited. There will be food and coffee.

5) Racial Justice and Community Safety Report

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that Ms. Bender-Jesse sent them the two documents of interest. She continued that the HRC’s intent was to give the RJCS Report to the MDEIB, since the MDEIB can work with more of the partners that are mentioned, and the City is only one facet of what the report examined. Last month’s HRC discussion was to review what the City’s internal DEI Committee has put forward, which is the update Ms. Bender-Jesse gave the HRC in January, as the DEI Committee reached the limit of their ability to address any of the RJCS Report’s points. There was some question as to whether the DEI Committee was moving forward. The second document is the Executive Summary of the RJCS Report that the HRC created and provided, in 2024. The intent was to allow people to understand what the DEI Committee has done, to allow people to recall what the HRC’s recommendations were, and, having examined these two documents, determine if the HRC is ready to hand the RJCS Report off to the MDEIB and take it off of the HRC’s agenda. She asked for thoughts.

Dr. Saleh stated that he has a question, regarding the document of the HRC’s recommendations on the RJCS Report. He continued that the first paragraph has the City Attorney’s response to the HRC’s recommendation 1.A., “*It is recommended that the City of Keene take a position against racism starting with a strong anti-racism statement.*” It is not clear to him whether the City Attorney’s comments were in response to the HRC’s recommendation that the City take a

position against racism, or in response to the HRC's proposal to have a statement read by every City committee.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that those are City Attorney Amanda Palmeira's comments to the HRC, when she came to their meeting in September 2024. She continued that this reflects the conversation the HRC had at that point and their decision not to move forward at that time with 1.A. Ms. Bender-Jesse stated that the document with the quotes is a document she quickly put together in January, and as a time saver, she only pulled the title of each recommendation, not the recommendations' full text. Anything written under the titles is text that she added in, from conversations at the DEI Committee. The full text of recommendation 1.A. would be found in the original RJCS Report, like the specific recommendation about the anti-racism statement.

Dr. Saleh replied that that clarification is important, because the City Attorney's response seems a little too strong, without that context, saying it is a "slippery slope" to ask the City to take a position against racism. When he read that, it did not sound right. Now he understands that the City Attorney's words were in response to the HRC's request to have every committee read the statement. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied yes. She continued that she had just pulled quotes from the minutes, hoping that it would be easier to understand that way.

Mr. Morrill stated that he had a question about that paragraph, too. He asked if it is correct that the HRC acts in some regard as an advisory committee to the City Council. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied yes, on an ad hoc basis, when requested. Mr. Morrill replied that the City Council requested that the HRC offer recommendations. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that it is two-fold. She continued that the recommendations are in this document. With respect to 1.A. specifically, members of the HRC desired making the request directly of the City Council to have the statement read for every meeting of any City body. The HRC then learned a little more about its limits and its role and lack of powers, being a Committee, not a Commission. The City Attorney explained to the HRC what the process would be for the HRC to make such a request. The HRC's conversation was about pushing 1.A. forward, whether that would be appropriate, and what the implications of that would be. That is what is under 1.A. – not just the recommendation that was made, but also the follow-on action the HRC considered taking. She asked if that answers Mr. Morrill's question, or if she is missing the mark.

Mr. Morrill replied that he thinks so. He continued that it is semantics, but he was looking at the word "request." He did not think the HRC "requested" that the City Council do this, but recommended it. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that the HRC considered requesting it, but ultimately never made that request. Mr. Morrill asked if it is correct that the HRC made the recommendation, which was ignored, then thought about making the request, and decided not to. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that is correct.

Rabbi Aronson stated that he thinks the response to 1.A., as written here in this document, is nonsensical. He continued that whether it is a "recommendation" or a "request," the HRC is not trying to "control" the other boards. The City Council can deny the recommendation and vote to

not act on the request. For the City Attorney to say that and then say “*nothing prevents the HRC from making this request*” is contradictory to her statement that the HRC making a request is seen as “*controlling*.” He does not know what the point is of having public committees, if they cannot make requests or recommendations.

Dr. Saleh stated that it is very disheartening. The spirit of the RCJS Report, which was very well attended by the community, was that they would really make an effort, and it is very disheartening that the City comes back in such a dismissive tone.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that they need some clarification here. She continued that she knows it has been a while since all of this happened. This document that they are looking at today was not the response of the City. This is language that was taken from an explanation of the City Attorney, who came to the HRC and explained what the process was and what the implications would be. This is not a response, by the City, to the HRC’s statement. This entire document is not a response from the City. The DEI Committee came about organically, as she understands it. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied that when the HRC submitted its Executive Summary of the RJCS Report, that is when the City Manager tasked every department to have a representative come together to create an internal DEI Committee.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that this document they are looking at today is not the City’s official response to the HRC’s Executive Summary. She continued that the document consists of notes that Ms. Bender-Jesse put together on what the DEI Committee was doing and talking about. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied yes, it is a Word document from her computer, with the notes she took when she was a member of the DEI Committee. Dr. Saleh replied that he understands that Ms. Bender-Jesse was trying to capture the overall sentiments and the words are not exact. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied yes, other than the three bullet points that are quotes, which are from the approved minutes of the HRC’s September 2024 meeting. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos added that to reiterate, that was not Amanda Palmeira explaining what the City’s position was, that was her explaining the process and potential implications, and these are quotes from a rather long discussion. This is not anything official from the City; she wants that to be clear.

Dr. Saleh replied that he understands. He continued that his second question is, those responses are related to that specific request about the HRC proposing the statement be read. However, regarding the rest of the recommendations, some of them are rather generic, inclusive recommendations. There are responses to a few of them, and others have no responses. His question is what the City’s position was on the ones that do not have responses.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she again cautions that this is not the City’s official response. She continued that if there is no response to a recommendation, it means the DEI Committee did not feel that they had the ability to act on those items. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied that is correct. She continued that when she first put this together and sent it to everyone, there were recommendations that did not have anything under them. City employees did not have authority to affect other organizations; they could only affect what they could do internally, in

the City. That is why there are responses to what the City has been doing, not other organizations. She met with Ms. Burke between the HRC's last meeting and this meeting, to dive into each recommendation individually. That is where she was able to show which recommendation might be better suited for a regional coalition, instead of just a few City employees getting together. That is why some recommendations do not have responses under them.

Dr. Saleh stated that if the City does not have any authority other than asking the MDEIB to handle it, his next question is whether the City Council expressed any desire to do anything further, such as be a partner in this process of improving inclusivity in the community. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she does not think that has been put in front of the City Council. Discussion ensued. Dr. Morris stated that she thinks it *was* put forward, which was part of the frustration – the Mayor asked the HRC to provide an Executive Summary of the RJCS Report's recommendations, and they did it. Then, when the HRC provided those recommendations, it was like everyone was saying "not mine" and pointing fingers to others, and that is why they sit here tonight having the same conversations again. Ms. Fiske added that the Mayor who had put together the RJCS Committee was on his way out of office within two months of receiving the report, so there was no time for that Mayor to take any action, either. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that her understanding is that the report was forwarded to the City Manager, which is how the DEI Committee came about. She continued that she is not aware of anything else that has come out of the RJCS Report. Dr. Morris agreed.

Discussion continued about the quotes from City Attorney Amanda Palmeira from the HRC's September 2024 meeting minutes. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos reiterated that the quotes are not official. She continued that her recollection is that the City Attorney was warning the HRC that if they request the City Council to have the statement that the HRC wrote read at every meeting of all City boards, commissions, and committees, the HRC has much authority as any citizen, and any citizen who wanted to request a different statement be read at meetings could then come forward and request that. She thinks the City Attorney was saying, sure, you can request this language, if you understand what might happen. It reminds her (Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos) of what happened when the Planning, Licenses, and Development (PLD) Committee had a request to approve a statement, and asked the HRC to come up with language for the statement. It became quite an unpleasant experience even in this room shortly thereafter. She thinks that was the intent of the City Attorney's comments a year ago – yes, the HRC can make a request, but they need to understand the backlash that might come, which the City cannot stop from being heard. Ms. Fiske replied yes, and another committee or group of citizens could ask for the statement to be changed to a statement that more accurately reflects their view. She continued that there would thus be a constant request for changing statements.

Mr. Morrill stated that he is trying to more clearly understand what is going on and what the City Council's position is, since the quote says "[City Council] are concerned about the 'slippery slope' concept," and the parentheses make it unclear whether that was really attributed to the City Council. He continued that it would be helpful to know the City Council's position. The

City Council asked the HRC to do something, and the HRC did it, so it is not just any citizen group or citizen going to them with a recommendation. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she understands, and the City Attorney was not empowered to give the HRC any of the City Council's opinion; that is not her role. She continued that the City Attorney was absolutely not providing the HRC with any political message of any kind. So to clarify that, she does not think that is what the quoted statement meant, in context. Yes, the City made a request of the ad hoc RJCS Committee, and Dr. Morris was on that team that created the report in the first place and spent a great deal of time and effort doing that in the best way possible, and the HRC spent a few two- or three-hour extra meetings digesting the report so they could provide guidance. A lot of effort was spent, with a lot of good intent, and yes, there is a lot of frustration about the lack of action and why that happened. As she and Dr. Morris have both commented, it is a "lesson learned." Before the HRC takes on another remit like that, the question needs to be who will take it on once the information is provided, and what will happen to it.

Dr. Saleh stated that this brings up the fundamental question of what the mission of the HRC is, and what exactly they are supposed to do. He continued that he and Dr. Morris started this committee, when it was the Martin Luther King/Jonathan Daniels Committee. When it converted to the Human Rights Committee, they spent a month or two coming up with a mission statement. They are obligated to stand for human rights, and to promote human rights, equity, and fairness. He thinks it is dismissive to compare the HRC with any other committee. They are not any other committee; they have a purpose and a mission. He thinks whether they are asked or not – and it was just a coincidence that they were asked – they have the right to make recommendations, based on their observations of what is happening in the city, without waiting for a request from the City.

Mr. Morrill asked if it is correct that the HRC made the recommendation on 1.A and the answer was "no." Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that is correct. Ms. Fiske stated that she would say the response was more, "We don't recommend it, because of these reasons." Others replied that is still "no." Ms. Fiske replied that they saw what happened when the City Council asked the HRC to wordsmith another document/statement. They have to be honest. They know what the results will be.

Dr. Saleh stated that he does not think the HRC works for the results. He continued that they have an obligation to propose the right ideas, regardless of whether it is rejected by the City Council. The City Council is political. They understand there is a difference between a political process and the human rights committee. The City Council may or may not accept a proposal from the HRC, because they are elected and the City Council is political, but the HRC is non-political. They are Keene citizens selected to stand for human rights, and they should not care about whether they will run into difficulty or not. If something makes sense, they should propose it.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she thinks the point the City Attorney was trying to make is that once the box is open, you cannot control it. She continued that she is not worried about

what the City Council said, when they voted on the language the HRC wordsmithed. She is worried about the marginalized people in the community who had to hear absolute venom come from their neighbors about them and feel unsafe in our city. She worries about the people on this committee who had to sit in this room, who perhaps are part of that marginalized community, and had to listen to what was coming out of the mouths of the people lining that wall, and how they might come away feeling less safe than they did when the HRC made that recommendation.

Dr. Morris replied that if you are one of those marginalized people, you have already heard a lot of that. She continued that they would not believe half the stuff people have said to her face. She has heard it. If people are not responding to it, it feels even worse, to her at least. She feels even more unsafe when people are not talking about it (the venom), because then she feels gaslit, because it is still happening and no one is talking about it. That is how it is for her, personally. Other people might not have known the venom was there, and then when they heard it, it became scary. People might think it is bad in the south, but at least there you have some backup when people say certain things – you feel like you have a community to support you. She hears what Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos is saying, and it is true. But she is just concerned that when they do not call the question, it makes marginalized people hide even more because then they do not know who has their back. You want to know somebody has your back. If you go out at night and if you scream, you want to know someone will do something, not just say, “this is Keene, that doesn’t happen here.” Her students tell her things they hear and have been exposed to, and it is why some of those students leave this community. She is amazed by what they tell her, and it is very painful.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that as someone who is not a part of many of these marginalized communities, she does not necessarily feel like she has the right to call the question and risk putting people in these communities in the position of hearing that venom in a public forum in their own community. She continued that however, if those marginalized communities are giving the HRC that direction, then she would feel more comfortable. For example, if their direction is, “take the thorn out and let the lion scream,” then she would feel safer about it. Dr. Morris replied that she understands, and it is hard, and gets to the questions of what it means to be an advocate, to be an ally, to be a co-conspirator. Those are all questions she is constantly asked. There are times when people from the dominant group have to be the ones to address the people spewing the venom, because if people from the marginalized community do it, the people spewing the venom accuse them of “having an agenda.” It is hard. That is why she thinks that groups that tend to do this work together for years really talk about what it means to do this work, because it is hard work for everyone. She understands and respects what Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos is saying.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that it occurs to her that what Dr. Morris is saying brings up a part of her (Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos’s) privilege – she does not have to hear the venomous things that Dr. Morris hears all the time. She continued that if it is confronting to her to have heard those venomous things in this room, perhaps the answer is to hear them openly and to share in having to hear them. Dr. Morris replied yes, to bear witness.

Dr. Saleh stated that he understands the City's position and is not questioning the legitimacy of it. He continued that he is offering his opinion, as an HRC member. The City did take some initiative on some of these recommendations, and concrete actions were taken. He applauds the DEI Committee for their work, knowing they had to work within their operational boundaries. His point was that the HRC should not be hesitant to make recommendations just because the City will not act on it.

Rabbi Aronson stated that as a point of clarification, in the quote taken from the meeting minutes about 1.A., where it says "[City Council]" in brackets, it is clear to him that it should be "The City Attorney's Office," because it follows from a series of statements where the City Attorney is talking about the view of the City Attorney's Office. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied that she, too, re-read it and got that same understanding.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that to clarify, it was never her understanding that the HRC said they did not move forward with the request because they were afraid the City would say no. She continued that at least, those were not her reasons. She asked if anyone else is concerned about hearing a "no" from the City. Dr. Morris replied that "no" is a word she hears quite often, so it is fine.

Dr. Morris stated that recommendation 4.B. would have been such an easy lift, had they known who to go to, to ask how to implement that. She continued that typically, you would work with Human Resources to do that. Some of the work the Town of Brattleboro did with their municipal employees, they did three rounds of it with everyone. However, it is a different culture there. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied that every City employee hired has to go through harassment education and DEI professional development. The DEI Committee offered two or three in-person trainings, had speakers come in, and offered different times and different days so they could reach people working different shifts. The DEI Committee was also able to attach five questions to a survey that went to all employees, to get input from employees so they could better target certain trainings. In the current climate, saying "Come to this DEI training" results in people not going. Thus, the DEI Committee was looking for ways to create more opportunities for open communication. They looked at a restorative justice approach to start the community-building. Dr. Morris replied that she had not been aware that was happening. She continued that the model Brattleboro used was one in which all employees were required to participate.

Ms. Fiske stated that she can add that this work is continuing. She continued that the City has a new setup for Assistant City Managers. Andy Bohannon, the previous staff liaison for the HRC, is now the Assistant City Manager who has employee education under his purview. He has a series of classes set up for the entire year. Dr. Morris replied that they can then add that information to the document. Ms. Fiske replied yes, that is new since this document was written. The work is continuing. This is a snapshot from 11 months ago. Ms. Bender-Jesse agreed, and added that she is no longer part of the DEI Committee, which is why she has not added anything

to this document. She continued that any further updates on the DEI Committee's work will need to come from Ms. Fiske.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that one of the reasons why they talked about sending the RJCS Report over to the MDEIB is because there are aspects of this that, arguably, because there is potentially a lack of accountability, are ones that the MDEIB is better placed to develop the partnerships and so forth than the HRC or DEI Committee are. She asked if there is something the HRC would rather do than hand it over to the MDEIB. Hearing none, she asked if they are ready to take it off the HRC's agenda.

Ms. Bowie stated that it would be good to understand what the MDEIB is going to do with it. She continued that maybe the MDEIB can keep the HRC updated on progress that is made with it, or concerns. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that it would be nice to look at how to partner with the MDEIB going forward generally.

Rabbi Aronson made a motion to remove the Racial Justice and Community Safety Report as a standing agenda item from future agendas, and to do a regular check in with the Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Coalition (MDEIB) at each meeting. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

6) Acceptance of Committee Event Reports

A) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Rabbi Aronson stated that he has no changes from the written report that is in the agenda packet. He continued that he is working on scheduling the next meeting of the working group, to put some more details together. He would be glad to answer any questions about the written report.

B) Black History Month

Dr. Morris stated that the working group has not met, but she spoke with one of the people who produced "Shadows Fall North," a documentary about the African burial ground in Portsmouth, NH. She gave more information about the film, and continued that the film was produced by a husband and wife. She spoke with the wife to see if she would come to Keene. She said that it would be hard, because her husband is suffering from dementia, but she would consider coming with her husband. Dr. Morris continued that she has not heard back from the archeologist who did a lot of the work. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that it sounds like a fantastic film. Ms. Fiske stated that the film is a good idea, and she likes having a film that is NH-based. Dr. Morris replied yes, the film tried to show that people of African descent have always been in NH.

Rabbi Aronson suggested showing the film and having Jenna Carroll offer reflections based on her work/presentation. Discussion ensued. Dr. Morris replied that she will reach out to her. Ms. Burke and Ms. Bowie stated that they would be glad to help Dr. Morris with Black History Month, too. Dr. Morris replied that they will find a time to meet.

C) Juneteenth

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos reported that the working group had their first and second meetings and are zeroing in on a program. She continued that an important preliminary question is what space the event will be in, not yet knowing what condition the downtown will be in at the time, given the construction project. She reached out to the Mayor about Juneteenth as a holiday for the City, and he directed her to the City Manager, who let her know what the process would look like. It is a fairly involved process and comes with a price tag. It might be one of those things that the HRC has to understand the limitations of and be patient about the timing of. Initially, they thought that budget season, January, would be the best time, but ultimately, it might have to wait for contract negotiations with the City's six unions. Each one's contract comes up at a different time.

Dr. Saleh stated that one of the ideas he heard from the Selectmen in Rindge was that they implemented it as a floating holiday that is cost neutral. You keep the same number of holidays. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that that is definitely something they will look at, and has been brought up.

D) Pride Event

Mr. Morrill stated that he is working on assembling a team, hopefully meeting at least once or twice before the end of the year to touch base and get some ideas going. He continued that one artist from last year has agreed to join the working group, and a second artist from last year is considering it. Anyone else who wants to join can email him.

E) Keene International Festival

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos noted that no KIF representative is present, so people can read the written update on their own.

F) Indigenous Peoples' Day

Ms. Fiske stated that the afternoon before the event, she received a last-minute request to move it to Zoom. She continued that it would have been a hybrid event with equipment that was in storage because they had not used it since COVID days, and they would have needed more time to advertise the Zoom link, so there was no way for her to pull it off in time. She sent a couple proposed dates for early December, and had not heard, so emailed again. Dr. Morris asked if that would be a Zoom event. Ms. Fiske replied yes, and because it has moved to Zoom, the presenter has offered to do it at no cost, if they can come up with a date.

Ms. Fiske stated that funds had been set aside for the in-person event that did not happen. She continued that the Mayor asked her to be part of his Youth Council, which decided they want to

do a Native American Heritage event for the 7th graders who are studying American History, and potentially the 8th graders if the principal can arrange for them to participate. That is 180 7th graders. The youth who are on the Youth Council will be dismissed from school for a day to do an all-day fair, and the other 7th graders' Social Studies period will be spent at this fair. The fair will have different kiosks set up for students to learn about different aspects of Native American culture. Ms. Fiske gave more information about the kiosk content. She continued that the Youth Council asked if she could find someone who would do a representation of basket making. She could not find an Indigenous basket-maker, but a non-Indigenous basket-maker said she will come for the entire day and show examples of wood versions of baskets in different processes. Because it is an all-day event and will take the basket-maker away from her work, she has asked whether she could collect a fee. Thus, she would like to ask the HRC whether they would take \$150 of the \$500 that would have been spent on a Native American Heritage program and donate it for this cause so they can do this education program for the students.

Dr. Morris asked if the Youth Council is working with Indigenous people here to create this. She continued that she speaks from experience, because she made a misstep due to not having done enough research, and it meant she had to drive to Concord to make a formal apology. Ms. Fiske replied yes, the Mayor has reached out to the Mount Kearsarge Indian Museum and a member of the community was brought in. She continued that they also got recommendations from the outreach person for the Cheshire County Historical Society. For example, a student was interested in doing the music, and the outreach person said, do not do the music, instead find videos and audio recordings of Native persons doing the music. They are making it very clear that this is a non-indigenous person doing basket-making that is of a similar process.

Ms. Burke left at 6:00 PM.

Dr. Saleh made a motion for the HRC to approve \$150 for the Youth Council's event on Native American Heritage. Ms. Bowie seconded the motion.

Ms. Bowie stated that she thinks it is wonderful to give this opportunity to students of that age. Ms. Odatto stated that she thinks it is great that the students are planning it. Others agreed.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Ms. Fiske stated that when she has a new date for the event, she will send it to Ms. Bender-Jesse to share with the group.

7) New Business

A) Chair Position

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she is reminding the HRC again that she is terming off of the Committee and they will need a new chair. She continued that they can vote next month. She encourages everyone to give it some thought.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that they had some ideas last month that she would like to revisit. She continued that Dr. Saleh had an idea around educating HRC members, because they focus on educating the community, but as he rightly pointed out, they do not necessarily program in time for their own education and growth on these subject matters. The other question was about whether/how to extend the HRC meetings.

Ms. Bender-Jesse stated that the HRC was thinking of maybe extending their meeting time every other month or four times a year. She continued that the only challenge will be the HRC minute taker's schedule, because she is now scheduled to cover another meeting half an hour after the HRC meetings. She has to connect with the minute taker to see what would work for her, or look at having a new minute taker, or maybe only extend the HRC meetings twice a year or so.

Discussion ensued about ideas for the logistics for the extended meetings, such as having another minute taker cover the portions of meetings that extend beyond 6:00 PM. Dr. Morris suggested the idea of having the MDEIB coordinate these educational sessions/trainings, which the HRC could be invited to. She asked if that would be okay, even if a quorum of HRC members was present. Ms. Bender-Jesse replied yes, it would be okay to technically have a quorum of members at an outside/community event like that, because they would not be having an HRC conversation. Discussion continued, and Ms. Bender-Jesse stated that it might be possible for the DEI Committee to spearhead the trainings. She will talk with the HRC's minute taker and see where things are at. Ms. Fiske stated that she recommends everyone attempt to attend each other's events, and take a meeting on at least an annual basis, to set up a topic for a training.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that it occurs to her that it makes sense to first develop the intent of the trainings, before they can decide what the trainings will look like. Ms. Fiske suggested they make it an agenda item to discuss what topics they might do. Others agreed.

8) Adjourn – Next Meeting December 1, at 5:00 PM

There being no further business, Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 6:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Alyssa Bender-Jesse, Youth Services Manager