



Town of Lexington Human Rights Committee

Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, Nov 8, 2023
Conducted in remotely on Zoom

Call to Order 8:53 am

LHRC MEMBERS PRESENT

Christina Lin, Chair (CL); Stephanie Hsu, Vice-Chair (SH); Mona D. Roy (MDR); Sal Jarmillo (SJ); Lieutenant Colleen Dunbar - Town of Lexington Police (CD); Melissa Interest - Town of Lexington, Human Services (MI)

Absent: Amber Iqbal (AI); Larry Freeman - Lexington Public School District (LF)

The minutes recorded by Stephanie Hsu, LHRC Vice-Chair

1. Minutes - September 2023 Minutes - CD motion to approve, SH second - passed 5-0. October minutes will wait until we have full quorum.
2. Housing and Planning Board Updates - Abigail (Abby) McCabe (AM), Planning Director presented - Articles 33 & 34 which were passed during Spring 2023 Town Meeting led to the updating of the online application process. The Planning Board would like to send applications to the LHRC for input around equity recommendations with a planned 4-6 week turnaround. Abby will meet with the LHRC to give an overview for us to provide comments at the first hearing. The Affordable Housing trust meeting voted to contribute funds to LexHab for the 497 Mass Ave project which will create a 2 family home. The Town is working with consultants on a housing feasibility study and are looking lots at 173 Bedford St. to see if mixed purpose units could be built. A video presentation is available and they will be wrapping up study soon. They are trying for a grant to fund another housing assessment in 2024. LHRC members requested a link to the application for us to review, and for further support in the process when an application comes through.
3. Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration in Lexington 2024 - Pastor Brent Maracle and Stephanie Stonefish Ryan asked for the LHRC support in planning an Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration for October 14, 2024. Lexington has not recognized Indigenous Peoples Day in the past, so this is a positive step forward.
 - a. Will be a social gathering vs. a Pow Wow - a social gathering allows for building relationships, educating and connecting.
 - b. Lexington has an opportunity to do this correctly and create a collaborative effort with surrounding communities.
 - c. Co-Sponsor Lexington Indigenous Peoples Day 2024 - CL motion to approve; MR second - Approved 5-0
4. Updates

- a. Lexington Lyceum - Sabine Clark gave her appreciation for the LHRC co-sponsorship of their program on Civil Discourse. They had their highest turnout to date and the survey response was 50% response rate, with 4.5 out of 5 satisfaction rating, and 92% of attendees interested in this topic. Members shared some concern about the demographics of attendees and how we can do more outreach to cultural and affinity groups to encourage attendance.
 - b. Collaborative Reform Group (CRG) held their first program, Breaking down Stigma around Mental Health, Neurodiversity and Less Visible Disabilities on November 1, 2023. More than 50 people attended in person, with another 50-60 tuning in through LexMedia/Zoom. Link to the program can be found on LexMedia under the title Human Rights Committee 11/1/2023.
 - c. MLK Day Conversation on Race - planning is well underway and we will be calling on all of the team to help out the day of the event.
5. Housekeeping business for next time
 - a. Julie Fenn – looking for co-sponsorship of Parent Academy – March 24
 - b. Diwali celebration this weekend
 - c. October was Hindu Heritage month
 - d. Transgender Remembrance Day – November 20
 - e. November – Indigenous Peoples Month – there is work happening to create banners
 6. Unexpected Items Not Reasonably Anticipated in Advance
 - a. Mona Roy and Sal Jarmillio are stepping down from the LHRC. They have been valuable members of our committee and they will be sorely missed. SJ is moving out of Lexington and on to higher education, but we are fortunate that MR will continue to reside in Lexington and provide sage advice to all of us.
 7. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda
 8. Meeting Adjourned at 10:20 am