

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
MEETING MINUTES**

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BOARD/COMMITTEE NAME: Hamilton Human Rights Commission

2021 AUG 19 AM 9: 57

DATE OF MEETING: JUNE 16, 2021

MEETING LOCATION

Memorial Room, Hamilton Town Hall
Hamilton, MA 01936

DATE OF ACCEPTANCE: August 18, 2021

Attendees: Town Manager: Joe Domelowicz, Student Member: Maya Beach, Police Chief Russell Stevens, Anne Brady, Christina Holz, Jared Hughes, Jamie Knudsen, Alaina Walsh

Absent: Joanne Copeland, Nancy Stehfest

1 Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Chair Brady at 5:02pm.

Chair Brady said that she had consulted Robert's Rules of Order and found that for small in-person meetings we didn't have to take roll call votes to approve motions.

2 Public Comment for Issues not on Agenda

None.

3 Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda.

Motion made by: J. Knudsen

To approve the consent agenda of 6/16/21

Motion seconded by: Chief Stevens

Result: The motion carried unanimously.

4 Update on HHRC policy presentation at BOS 6/7/21 meeting and next steps

Chair Brady gave an overview of the meeting. J. Knudsen and N. Stehfest were also in attendance. The BOS agreed that we should not include women and atheist in the list of protected classes but that we should research adding a definitions section. Discussion on forming a subcommittee to do that research. J. Hughes, A. Walsh and M. Beach volunteered. C. Holz will share previous research on definitions.

5 Discussion of flag policy next steps

J. Knudsen led the discussion. Discussion on the spreadsheet N. Stehfest made. J. Knudsen explained that the towns represented in the spreadsheet are at various levels of progress. Some towns, such as Hingham, have decided not to implement a policy at all. Some towns, such as Amherst, have a very involved and detailed policy. N. Stehfest and J. Knudsen had recommended that we temporarily not have a flag policy. Discussion on the Hingham letter. Discussion on creating a fair policy that does not favor any particular group. A. Walsh asked if pushback issues were flag dependent. The Hingham letter had first surfaced at a recent School Committee Meeting. J. Knudsen stated that the letter explained why you might not want a flag policy. Chair Brady and J. Domelowicz stated that the BOS wanted HRC to suggest a policy. Chair Brady suggested giving the BOS the spreadsheet. M. Beach stated that a lack of a policy would present a BOS debate for every flag flying request. Chief Stevens asked which groups had requested to fly flags. Discussion that requests had primarily been made by the HRC and Hamilton citizen Tosh Blake. J. Hughes suggested that we hold off further discussion until N. Stehfest was in attendance.

6 Progress on Proclamation re: Hate Speech (work with Wenham HRC) and

Chair Brady discussed that after our last meeting she had worked with Martha Brennan on the draft proclamation that was shared with the board before the meeting. Chair Brady said that the Wenham HRC discussed their participation at their June meeting. Discussion on which town groups needed to sign on to the proclamation. M. Beach questioned where any resistance came from. Recounted how the history dept. was alone in making a statement last year in the wake of the murder of George Floyd. Chief Stevens questioned whether or not we were stepping out of bounds by making a proclamation. Discussion on moving forward if Wenham does not participate. Discussion on how any communication should be drafted. Discussion on the preference of the Beverly letter example instead of a proclamation. Discussion on how there had not been a response by the School or the School Committee. J. Domelowicz stated that the school would not disclose much because of the ages of those involved. J Knudsen discussed that we could operate independently. C. Holz discussed being in support of making some sort of statement, preferably following the Beverly model. M. Beach discussed that the students were already talking about it. Chief Stevens discussed being in support of the Beverly model. Discussion on forming a subcommittee to work on the communication/statement re: hate speech from the HRC. Chair Brady and Chief Stevens volunteered.

7 Inclusivity/Acceptance Forum Planning for Fall (working with Wenham HRC)

Discussion on the forum for inclusivity and acceptance. Chair Brady shared that R. Kennedy is very keen on promoting discussion on “how to disagree without being disagreeable.” J. Domelowicz shared that the February forum has been well received. Discussion on forming a subcommittee to work on the forum. C. Holz and J. Hughes volunteered.

8 Discuss development of template language for response to events in town

Chair Brady shared that N. Stehfest had wanted us to discuss a fast predeveloped style of response that we could deploy when issues arose without having to wait for an HRC meeting. J. Domelowicz shared concerns that we couldn't anticipate all the responses that might be needed and did not think it was a good idea. M. Beach expressed concerns that responses might appear too canned and could be ignored if they were issued frequently. J. Domelowicz discussed developing a subcommittee that might be formed to respond to issues in between meetings. Clear guidelines would need to be established for the subcommittee. J. Hughes discussed having the subcommittee bring ideas to the BOS. Chief Stevens questioned if they would be speaking for the HRC. Discussion on whether they would be. Put aside to discuss further at our next meeting.

9 Discuss formation of a subcommittee to study establishing a Peace and Justice garden in Patton Park.

Chair Brady suggested tabling this idea until our next meeting when Nancy was present.

Chair Brady brought up the web-based translation service offered by gloucesterconnection.org. M. Beach suggested the conversation be tabled until next meeting.

10 Discuss continuing Zoom hosting for future meetings

J. Domelowicz discussed the hybrid model of meeting that HWCam is implementing. BOS is considering a policy for future hybrid meetings. Discussion on moving to the hybrid model or staying on Zoom until March, 2022.

Motion made by: J. Hughes

To hold the July meeting by Zoom

Motion seconded by: C. Holz

Result: Discussion about vacation plans in August

Amended Motion made by: J. Hughes

To hold the July and August meetings by Zoom

Motion seconded by: C. Holz

Result: The motion carried unanimously

11 Adjourn

Discussion that New Business was not included on the Agenda and therefore we are not able to consider any new business. J. Domelowicz discussed including a disclaimer on all future agendas stating that agendas include items that the Chair was reasonably able to foresee.

Motion made by: Chief Stevens moved for adjournment.
Motion seconded by: J. Knudsen seconded the motion

Result: The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Christina Holz

Respectfully submitted as approved at August 18, 2021 meeting. Nancy Stehfest, Clerk