

Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

July 21st, 2022 at 5PM via Zoom due to COVID-19

Present: **Commissioners:** Chairwoman Reyes Coll-Tellechea and Commissioners Anne Rousseau, Robert MacEachern and Leonard Lee
Others: Approximately 5 individuals from the public attended this meeting.

A. Introductions

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea called the Meeting to order at 5PM.

B. Chairwoman and Interim Director's Report with Administrative Updates

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea informed the Commission that the non-profit Tech Goes Home has secured \$2 million in ARPA Funding to advance digital inclusion. The research of our intern Thalia Viveros Uehara was put to good use as her research was included in this decision!
2. Chairwoman also thanked Commissioner MacEachern and Director Helmy for their help over the past two months in drafting the Bylaws. They have been reviewed by the attorneys and are now ready for discussion and vote.
3. Chairwoman Coll- Tellechea ended her report with a statement about the rise of hate incidents in Boston
 - a. "We are all a witness of hostile and antidemocratic sentiments in our City."
 - b. "The Human Rights Commission is ready to stand against this and not just with words but with actions."
4. Interim Director Helmy began her report by stating that the Administration is still working on the vacancies on the Commission and welcomes any recommendations the current Commissioners might have.
5. As for staff, the Education and Outreach Position should be posted online in the upcoming week - once it is, all Commissioners are encouraged to share it with their networks.
6. Director Helmy is working with the City Analytics team to have a dashboard created to show a breakdown of the intakes the Commission has received thus far. This breakdown will include the race and gender of the complainant, protected class associated with the complaint and much more. Once this dashboard has been created, it will be uploaded to our website.
7. Next week will be the start of the RFP Coalition that the Human Rights Commission will be a part of. This coalition was created by the Office of Police Accountability and Transparency (OPAT). This RFP will focus on the creation of

equity assessment tools to evaluate BPD policies and procedures and a semi-annual report on BIPOC, hiring, promotion and retention.

8. HRC's current pilot partnership with the Boston Police Civil Rights Unit ends at the end of August. Director Helmy informed the Commission that they will look to extend it or make it permanent.
9. Director Helmy is working on an Anti-Hate Campaign. This will feature two parts, one of which will be a coalition and the second will be of outreach/education. This will include educating residents and visitors on what a hate crime and hate incident is and the resources that are available.
10. The City Council has proposed an order for a hearing to discuss the increase in racist incidents in Boston and the Boston Human Rights Commission's role in tracking, reporting and addressing discrimination and civil rights violations. The date for this hearing has not been set. Several Commissioners would like to attend this hearing.
11. Director Helmy ended her report on the topic of staff trainings. Amber and Director Helmy have completed the "Addressing Housing Discrimination" training offered by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). There are 4 upcoming trainings in the next couple months, Addressing Sexual Harassment, Public Accommodation Requests, Mediation and Employment Discrimination. Both Staff members have also completed the human rights training hosted by Amnesty International.

C. City Council President Ed Flynn

1. City Council President Flynn spoke to the importance of the work of the Boston Human Rights Commission. Councilor Flynn represents the largest Asian community and the most residents living in public housing among others. Underreporting especially with hate crimes is a big issue. Many do not want to report it even if it is an assault. Residents need to know what the Human Rights Commission does, how they can contact the Commission and access the intake forms. This work is important to help combat hate crimes in Boston.
 - a. "Boston is not exempt from this type of hate."

E. Bylaws: Discussion and Vote

1. Unanimous vote to adopt Bylaws.

F. Public Comments

1. There were no public comments made during the meeting.

G. Votes

- 1.** Five votes were taken during this meeting.
 - a.** Unanimous vote to approve 5.19.22 Meeting Minutes.
 - b.** Unanimous vote to approve 6.16.22 Meeting Minutes.
 - c.** Unanimous vote to adopt Bylaws.
 - d.** Unanimous vote to approve the Anti-Hate Statement.
 - e.** Unanimous vote to adjourn at 5:32pm.