

Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

September 22nd, 2021 at 5PM via Zoom due to COVID-19

Present: **Commissioners:** Chairwoman Margaret McKenna, Reyes Coll-Tellechea, Ben Goldberger, Leonard Lee and Anne Rousseau (Commissioners Leslie Harris and Robert MacEachern were absent)
Staff: Program Manager Susan Helmy and Education and Outreach Manager Quincey Roberts
Others: Approximately 15 individuals from the public attended this meeting

A. Introductions

1. Chairwoman Margaret McKenna called the Meeting to order at 5PM with a majority of Commissioners present.

B. Chairwoman McKenna's Report and Updates

1. Chairwoman McKenna started her report by announcing that Executive Director Evandro Carvalho has extended his leave until November. He has been on leave since early August.
2. Commissioner Ben Goldberger has also resigned. His resignation is effective on October 8th as he will no longer meet the residency requirement.
3. Chief Celina Barrios-Millner of the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet gave some opening remarks. The Human Rights Commission sits in this Cabinet. She looks forward to working and getting to know the Commission more. Chief Barrios-Millner also spoke to the press signing held earlier that day by Mayor Kim Janey on the new Commission of Black Boys and Men that HRC and the Equity Cabinet will work together in.
4. Our newest staff hire, Quincey J. Roberts Sr. introduced himself. Quincey is the Commission's Education and Outreach Manager. He is a former BPS teacher. He has worked for City Hall for the past 10 years under 4 different Administrations. Most recently, Quincey worked as the Education and Outreach Manager of the Fair Housing and Equity Office. He and his husband also found and ran a nonprofit organization, Hispanic and Gay Coalition from 2009 to 2016. Quincey also serves as the Mayor LGBTQ+ Citywide Liaison.
5. Program Manager Susan Helmy informed the Commission that Amber Garcia Gonzalez will also be joining the team. She will serve as the Commission's Investigator and will start the upcoming week.
6. Commissioner Reyes Coll-Tellechea provided a brief introduction on the Commission's newest interns. One intern, Thalia Uehara is returning and will continue her research on the Digital Divide. The second intern, Wael Altali, will

focus his work on the recommendations made by the Boston Police Reform Task Force while also comparing Boston's response and actions to other major cities.

7. In terms of the Director of Research and Analysis role, Chairwoman McKenna and Susan have conducted interviews and have narrowed the field down to two candidates. Commissioner Coll-Tellechea and Commissioner Lee have volunteered to conduct second round interviews for the 2 candidates.
8. On the Commission's website there is an intake form and an Anonymous Incident Report Form. The intake form is more in depth and allows a constituent to go through a thorough intake process. The Anonymous Incident Report, which is translated into 11 languages, allows a constituent to report a hate incident anonymously and are given the option as to whether they would like to be contacted. For those that we do not contact, we will simply use it as data.

C. Administrative Updates

1. Logo

- a. The Commissioners reviewed the 5 proposed logos and narrowed it down to one. Some of the Commissioners asked to see the logos in grayscale.

2. Mission Statement

- a. With some friendly amendments offered by Commissioner Coll-Tellechea, the Commissioners have voted and approved the Mission Statement.

D. Updates on Initiatives

1. Digital Divide

- a. Acting Mayor Kim Janey commenced a study focused on the issue of broadband access or "Digital Divide." This study will be conducted by a Consulting firm, CTC Technology & Energy.
- b. Chairwoman McKenna and Susan met with Chief Osgood and Mike Lynch to see how HRC can partner or become a part of this initiative. Chief Osgood stated during this meeting that Chairwoman McKenna and the Commission should be included throughout this process. The Commission would like to make sure the CTC measures the reliability of speed in each neighborhood.

2. Beyond Pride Initiative

- a. Over the past 4 months, HRC has created a coalition on how to better serve the LGBTQ+ Community. After meeting with several community advocates and city departments, Quincey and Susan have developed the Beyond Pride Initiative. This initiative allows the Commission and the City to listen and hear directly from the Community instead of speaking

for the Community. This Initiative will have focus groups, and departmental training.

- a. The format of this initiative will serve as the first in a series for Resident Rights. It will also be used for the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community and the Black Boys and Men Community.

E. Letters on behalf of the Commission

1. Commissioner Lee brought up the unsafe and inhumane conditions at the encampment at Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard. A letter was requested by the Commissioners to be sent by Chairwoman McKenna to the Acting Mayor and Governor urging immediate action on this issue.

F. Public Comments

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

G. Votes

1. Three votes were taken during this meeting.
 - a. Majority vote of approval of the June 29th 2021 Meeting Minutes.
 - b. Majority vote of approval of the Mission Statement.
 - c. Majority vote to adjourn at 6:30pm.