

HRC Meeting Notes
May 17, 2018
Newburyport Public Library

Attendees: Kat Preftes, Peter Blaiwas, Tom Getz, Kathleen Sullivan, Margaret McQuillan, Ahmer Ibrahim

Purpose: We met to discuss the recent detainment of undocumented immigrant, Newburyport resident, Lucas Andrade because commissioners were concerned and wanted to see what we could do. We had questions and concerns and deemed the issue important enough to call a special meeting. We decided to release a statement and spent time discussing what should be included in the statement. The writing subcommittee presented a draft of the statement and Commissioners determined what they would like included in the statement. The writing subcommittee will incorporate the HRC's feedback.

Meeting began at 8:05 pm

Peter expressed the importance of due process ... saying that all people, regardless of status, have the right to due process.

Ahmer said he and his fellow commissioners were enraged with how Mr. Andrade was picked up and the fact that he has no access to his child.

Kat asked Kathleen if in her experience as a social worker the immigration status of a parent is considered during custody hearings in family court since Mr. Andrade shared custody of his son with his former partner/wife according to an article in the Daily News.

Kathleen said documented status does not affect family court outcomes. Theoretically ICE is detaining/deporting those individuals who are found to have committed criminal offenses and that she does not believe it is a criminal offense but rather a civil offence to cross the border (more than 1x) without documentation.

Tom said what bothers him is the effect/impact on the local Brazilian community, especially given that Asst. Superintendent of Schools Angela Bik said in a previous HRC meeting that Brazilian students comprise the largest foreign linguistic group in Newburyport schools. He is concerned about their sense of security.

Points to include in our statement:

- Margaret referenced an interview in the Daily News with State Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives and would like to reinforce what she said about US-born children being separated from their undocumented parents.
- Acknowledge that facts are still coming out at this point but reiterate that we support Mr. Andrade's right to due process
- Important to not jump to conclusions or pass judgement as information is still coming out
- We've crossed a threshold – this is the 1st incident of its kind here in Newburyport – but this will likely happen again
- Concerns about security for immigrants whether documented or not
- Letter to the Editor Format