

Human Rights Commission
Thursday, October 12, 2017
Newburyport Senior/Community Center
Meeting Notes

Attendance: Rose Robinson, Judy LaCroix, Ahmer Ibrahim, Susan Viccaro-Superintendent of Schools, Owen Davis, Margaret McQuillan, Kat Preftes, Peter Blaiwas, Tom Getz, Kathleen Shaw, Katherine Goodkind, Sheila Trieff

Guest : Alex Looker, Hannah Kubat

Call to Meeting 7:05 P.M.

Meeting notes from September 14th approved with changes

Updates:

Schools

S. Viccaro-Superintendent of Schools or A. Bik-Assistant Superintendent will switch off every other month so that a school liaison is always present at HRC meetings.

Schools are planning a celebration in spring planting which will include the planting of a Horse Chestnut tree in memory of Anne Frank. She had written about a Horse Chestnut tree in her journal. Students at NOCK will participate and will tie into to 7th grade Holocaust unit. There is planning for a community wide celebration on a weekend (Sunday) as well as a celebration at the school.

Margaret McQuillan gave each commissioner a copy of a book she wrote on her family's Holocaust story. Designed for use as upper elementary and older school curriculum unit it gives a historical story.

Tina Los, new regional prevention coordinator, has been hired, grant funded 3-years. The next survey of youth will be the same across all five towns who are a part of the grant. The survey is based on the 40 Assets. T. Lose will be invited by Superintendent Viccaro to attend out next meeting to share the details of the plans for her position.

S. Viccaro shared the following. No one can access the students regarding immigration status. If a person inquires and is not on the emergency card for the student they will not have access to the student, unless they were identified as a custodial parent or designated as a safe person.

T. Getz asked about ELL students and whether they could be targeted. Superintendent Viccaro shared that all directory information is confidential. Adult Ed program for families of ELL is being offered for families. The largest population is from Brazil. Vicky Hendrickson and the Newburyport Adult Ed program oversees these classes, Last year there were 11 families who participated and it has now expanded outside Newburyport. T. Getz asked, If someone were to

target these adults how are they protected. S. Viccaro answered, Adult Ed is open to everyone . But we are an unlikely community to be targeted.

M. McQuillan asked if we could go to houses to offer tutoring. S. Viccaro affirmed that the opportunity to tutor would be there, just email her.

S. Viccaro described the last 10 months as being scary for immigrant families. Students -about 30 in the system have received a lot of counseling support. Young kids have been very fearful.

Ad Hoc Council meeting on Immigration status

T. Getz affirmed Newburyport as a welcoming community. Police are here to enforce local laws. The old ordinance for the CDT-section 2-125a-appears not to be updated with the new HRC ordinance. K. Preftes will explore. Next ad hoc meeting October 24th, 7 pm council chamber

We reviewed the HRC Mission statement. Perhaps include after, national origin, immigration status.....T. Getz will bring it up at the next Ad hoc meeting. Vote was unanimous.

T Getz and S Trieff are meeting with Marshall Murray Tuesday the 17th at 3 P.M.

Mayor briefing

Day of Service plans were cancelled last year. Mayor would like to have it happen. K.Preftes, P. Blaiwas and B. Horne to meet. Schools have a Day of Service in September.

Designated phone line. Mayor had legal concerns. Perhaps go back with more questions.

Student sub-committee- Mayor on board but wants to make sure there are rules in place including two adults present. S Viccaro concerned about replacing or replicating what the schools already are handling. The purpose as the HRC sees it is to help us see what advocacy is needed at the schools. R Robinson to see what is needed by contacting the schools. There are several private schools as well as NHS, see if there is a way for the schools to share resources.

Permission form for using photos is available through NYS. K. Shaw will secure.

Affordable Housing Meeting:

P. Blaiwas-Brown School as affordable housing. Likely to be the last parcel.

Community Task Force:

P. Blaiwas- Meeting led by Ellie Davis, Peter questioned whether there could be a way to pull the information together. We agreed to defer to the agencies in question. The next meeting is 12 noon on the 1st Wednesday per month at the Brown school.

Firehouse:

K Preftes, A. Ibrahim, and M. McQuillan met with John Moynihan, Executive Director and Colleen Cullen, Grant Manager of the Firehouse regarding upcoming events that we might support.

They are planning a three -day event, April 12-14. They will base it on the book, "I never saw another butterfly". They would like us to help put a panel discussion together. They hope to take the lessons of the holocaust and make it more current. Rabbi B. Resnick of the Ahavas Achim synagogue is involved with planning. They are planning two days of dramatic reading and then a legacy partner story. Perhaps this will become an annual event.

Children's (family) event: "Respective dialogue" with multi-cultural sensitivity. While still in the planning stages it is anticipate that this will be a theatrical performance-possibly improvisational. checking various group. It will be something interactive with the students be involved. The timing is for the spring.

We are to think about topics for the next meeting-racial discrimination, income inequality, microaggressions. (Gender roles, 2 moms, single parents) Email stories, scenes to Kat.

"Know your Neighbor Film"-Firehouse would be interested in screening it.

K. Shaw reported-Port Media-We could be trained for \$45 but may be less to be trained on using the equipment.

Student Videographers. Susan to check in with the class that does this. Students may be doing internships at Port media.

The writing group is to work on possible scripts and a mission statement. Below are the questions we generated.

If you were to come up with a motto for NBPT what would you design?

What brought you to NBPT?

What is your story in 6 words?

What do you think an upstander is?

What one word would describe you best?

What is the most important thing/priority in your life?

How would you describe your ethnicity?

What makes a person feel connected/part of a community?

What does inclusion mean to you?

What does diversity mean to you?

Who is a person that influenced you?

What makes up your identity?

Peace and Justice Center: K. Shaw

Racial Justice: Privilege and accountability for aspiring allies.

K. Shaw to look at what it would take to have them come.

Article topics-next month.

Check-In

R. Robinson and Hannah Kubat (guest) Hannah attends Bishop Fenwick.

They would like to create a club for girls at the Molin/Nock to create an empowerment group and offering leadership and advice.

Girls Inc. at Molin is put on by adults (middle aged women). The idea is to reduce the age gap by having HS youth be the role models.

This will be a topic for the subcommittee. The group will meet and discuss.

K. Shaw-Offered "Hate Has No Home Here" sign

M. McQuillan-Check out: Teaching Tolerance-10 Ways to fight hate community response. 7 ways to teach kids tolerance. Ten ways to encourage civility. Perhaps show video packets that they offer.

Alexa Looker (guest) shared that October 25th, 7 pm Black Lives Matter is speaking in Amesbury City Hall.

J. LaCroix thanked us for our support.

Meeting adjourned 9:05 P.M.