

Human Rights and Relations Commission
Town of Hamden
Minutes of a Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 11th, 2021
7:00 pm

2/11/2021 - Minutes

1. Call To Order

Chairman Cardwell called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

2. Attendance

1. In Attendance: Sean Cardwell, Chairman; Rabbi Herbert Brockman; Tracy Bowens; Mike Thompson; Weruche George; Ganiyu Mimiko
2. Absent: Martha Walker; Wanda Harris; Judith Goldberg
3. Also in Attendance: Jay Tulin; Liana Paglia, Commission Clerk

3. Approval Of Past Minutes

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3.I. January 14th, 2021

Because a quorum was not met at January's meeting, the December 10th minutes needed to be approved as well. Chairman Cardwell requested a motion to approve both the minutes from the December 10th and January 14th meetings. Mr. Bowens made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Rabbi Brockman. All were in favor.

4. Correspondence

N/A

5. Old Business

5.I. Covid-19: Update

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Chairman Cardwell updated the commissioners that there have been 4000 confirmed Covid-19 cases in Hamden. There was a brief discussion about the free testing being done at the Cornell Scott Hill Health Center and the vaccination shots now available at CVS pharmacies for the elder population. Rabbi Brockman questioned if the commission posted about Hamden's declaration of racism as a public health crisis on the group's Facebook page. Chairman Cardwell answered no, but that he will post as soon as possible.

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5.II. Mask Donations

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Ms. Goldberg had previously suggested donating masks to the Hamden Partnership with Young Children. Chairman Cardwell noted that he was unable to get in touch with a representative at this time, but will continue making an effort. He questioned if any other groups are in need of masks. Ms. George suggested the Refugee Resettlement Agency, which is in New Haven. Chairman Cardwell agreed that if the Hamden Partnership does not respond to his inquiries, the masks will be donated to the Resettlement Agency or even to the Dinner for a Dollar church group.

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5.III. Monthly Movie Series: Discuss January Showing

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Chairman Cardwell expressed that overall he felt the movie showing was successful. Ms. George agreed and commented that as a group, the commissioners have a responsibility to generate interest and build momentum via their social media platforms, whether by sharing a link or commenting on a post. She also suggested Ava DuVernay's "13th" for the February movie; a movie that explores racial inequality, specifically in United States' prisons. Mr. Bowens commented that the film may be too long. Ms. George expressed the importance of keeping the viewings cost-free. She explained that many of the potential documentaries are heavy in nature, but that is the nature of human rights. She suggested a film targeting the Chinese population. Chairman Cardwell expressed his interest in showcasing other cultures/ideas, especially given the proximity of the Chinese New Year and President's Day.

Mr. Thompson commented on the issue of potential copyright violations when sharing films. He suggested a Frontline documentary about PTSD. He explained that Frontline consists of original, free content, including content regarding the struggles of living undocumented during the pandemic. He explained that about 100 of the Frontline Films are free, whereas the remaining have viewing fees.

Ms. George commented that the goal should be to reach as many viewers as possible. She believes it is more ideal to post a viewing link, than to have an actual video posted. Chairman Cardwell noted that they could simply post the name and description of a film on their Facebook page. There was some brief discussion of finding a way to stream a movie during real time on Facebook. The commissioners will continue researching this for future showings.

5.IV. Connecticut Human Rights Commission Forum: Update

Chairman Cardwell thanked Mr. Tulin for assisting in gathering participants from other towns. Chairman Cardwell hopes to meet with the participating chairs in March with a rough agenda, comprised of at least three main topics for discussion. He would like a guest speaker as well, possibly Ms. George. Chairman Cardwell has already informed the mayor, who may wish to speak at this initial forum meeting. Chairman Cardwell would also like to have some form of a panelist discussion or q&a with the public. He believes the commission should aim to hold the forum in June.

In regards to the March HRRC meeting, Chairman Cardwell suggested someone from the CHRP. He asked Mr. Bowens to reach out to his contacts there and confirm their availability.

Rabbi Brockman noted that there should be a discussion regarding any ordinances and/or missions established by the other human rights commissions.

Chairman Cardwell will compile the key points of this discussion to draft a letter for the chairpersons of the other commissions. It will be sent out to the Hamden HRRC to be looked over and finalized.

5.V. Black History Month Postings

Chairman Cardwell notified the commissioners that Rabbi Brockman is being celebrated for his MLK contributions

on February 26th at 7pm. Mr. Bowens commented that the distinction is well deserved. Chairman Cardwell will post about it on the Facebook group page.
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Chairman Cardwell asked the commissioners for any Facebook post ideas. Mr. Bowens reminded commissioners of the Black History Trivia night in March. The goal of the evening is to raise funds for Hamden High School graduates.

6. New Business

6.I. Monthly Movie Series: February/ March Selection

See above.

6.II. Guest Speaker- March Selection

See above.

6.III. Community Assistance

Chairman Cardwell reminded commissioners to be conscious of individuals and/or organizations that need assistance so the group can post about it on their social media platforms.

7. Thoughts And Ideas

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Ms. George commented that she was unable to connect with a potential guest speaker for the Forum in June. She will continue efforts to get in touch with him and report back.

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8. Executive Session (If Required)

N/A

9. Adjournment

Chairman Cardwell requested a motion to adjourn at 7:38 pm. Mr. Bowens made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Rabbi Brockman. All were in favor.

Submitted by: Liana Paglia, Commission Clerk