

**Minutes of Barnstable County Human Rights Commission
And Town Representative Council Meeting
Meeting date: March 1, 2010**

Call to order:

A meeting of the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission was held at Barnstable County Superior Court on March 1, 2010 at Barnstable County Superior Courthouse, Commission Chairperson Elizabeth Swanson-Goldberg presiding. . The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM, and Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) recorded the minutes.

Members in attendance: Elizabeth Swanson-Goldberg (Commission Chairperson); Andy Murray (Commissioner); Rev. Malcolm McDowell (Commissioner); Bob Freedman (Commissioner); Stephen F. Whitmore (Commissioner); Paul Houlihan (Commissioner); John Reed (Commissioner), Angelina Raneo Chilaka (Town Representation Council, Harwich); Marie Stone (Town Representation Council, Wampanoag Tribe); Beverly Knox (Town Representation Council, Eastham); Anne Manton (Town Representation Council, Bourne); Scoba F. Rhodes (Town Representation Council, Falmouth); Tom Saltonstall (Town Representation Council, Dennis)

Approval of minutes:

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2010 Barnstable County Human Rights Commission meeting. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment: none

Chairperson's Report

Sub-Committee structure

The group discussed adopting the subcommittee structure and designations. The sub-committees previously outlined were: Immigrant Communities; Media Response and Public Relations; Strategic planning/ Fundraising; Education and Outreach. Materials were presented by the Media Response and Public Relations; Strategic planning/ Fundraising; Education and Outreach sub-committees identifying each respective mission statement/goals.

The discussion turned toward defining the overall goal of the HRC, and then toward the issue of having an entire subcommittee devoted only to immigrant issues. Some on the Commission seemed to feel that the Commission need not focus only on one population. Mr. John Reed (Commissioner) commented that there are many people in need of intervention, not just immigrants, and urged the Commission to take a more "universal" viewpoint. Mr. Stephen F. Whitmore (Commissioner) suggested that HRC may want to create committees around particular groups and ethnicities. Mr. Andy Murray (Commissioner) suggested that having a subcommittee on Diversity may be a good way to acknowledge all the many different groups- In addition, Mr. Andy Murray has agree to stand on the Education and Outreach sub-committee.

Mr. Paul Houlihan (Commissioner) offered to draft a sub-committee proposal to "put the pieces together". The proposal will include a basic operating plan and likely require one to two strategic planning meetings. Mr. Houlihan will be drafting the proposal in the next week.

All present appeared to agree on moving forward with all of the subcommittees except the Immigrant Community subcommittee, which will be refined and resubmitted after more consideration.

International Human Rights

Chairperson Elizabeth Swanson-Goldberg requested that members of the HRC and TRC consider the Commission's role in international human rights. Thomas Ryan (Town Representation Council, Orleans) has

previously suggested more commitment to global issues, and suggested HRC involvement in bringing awareness and community events around the Holocaust commemorative day, Yom Hashoah (April 12, 2010).

The HRC investigates Bourne Vandalisms

Chairperson Elizabeth Swanson-Goldberg and Commissioner Andy Murray investigated reports of racial and anti-Semitic graffiti in the Bourne area earlier in February. The two collaborated with the Bourne Police Department and viewed photos of the destruction. The Bourne police was unable to charge the suspects with hate crimes though the graffiti was hateful; the defacement was not directed at a particular person or group, and appears to be random. The investigation will continue and the HRC will follow this case closely as it progresses.

Through this event Chairperson Elizabeth Swanson-Goldberg facilitated a discussion on the HRC continuing to support all towns in Barnstable County in becoming a No Place for Hate® communities, but wanted all present to consider controversies involving that program; the ADL did not take the position of acknowledging the Armenian genocide and this has reflected on the overall work of the ADL in the past.

Coordinator's Report

Human Rights Academy

HRA preparation continues. I would like to thank everyone that has helped in visiting and supporting the Human Rights Academy advisors and if there are any willing participants, the following schools still need to be followed up with:

Cape Cod Regional High School (Annie Dolan-Niles)

Falmouth Academy (Elenita Muniz)

Sandwich High School (Tara Cardoza)

The Multicultural Festival

The HRC will be participating in The 10th Annual Multicultural Event on March 6th from 10-4 at Cape Cod Community College. Please let Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) know if you can participate in the function. According to the website the festival "officially begins on Thursday March 4th with an Interfaith Service of Worship, this year held at the Federated Church, Main Street in Hyannis, MA at 7 p.m. The event is a multicultural expression of praise, prayer and contemplation embracing many spiritual traditions from around the world. Be sure to be at the Tilden Arts Center by 10 a.m. Saturday morning March 6th to view the vibrant opening, as Wampanoag Tribal elders lead the Parade of Flags into the Tilden Arts Center. Tribal songs, stories, and dances will be performed throughout the day, along a wide variety of entertainment. A model Wampanoag village again will be featured in the cultural showcase on the ground floor of the Grossman Commons building

Human Rights Celebration sponsored by Church Women United

On February 12 Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) attended a very joyful celebration of Human Rights sponsored by Church Women United. The Hall at Our Lady of Victory in Centerville was packed with women from Churches all over Cape Cod. The basis of Living the Challenge Differently Enabled, Uniquely Called, was to "honor the lives of people with disabilities, their family members and other who have helped in improving their lives" The event included a worship program that urged tolerance and acceptance, and the presentation of four Human Rights Awards to four community members:

Tracey Newhart, who manufactures and sells her own baked goods at her store in Falmouth. Tracey has downs-syndrome, Grave's disease and is deaf, but NONE of this has slowed her down. She shared her motto with the room: *Never* give up, no matter what.

Josephine Fletcher has overcome many difficulties least of all that she has been blind since she was six months old. She has raised three children by herself, and has worked tirelessly in her community and church, and founded the Audible Ledger, which is a radio broadcast of localized programming specifically designed for visually impaired individuals.

Kristen Broadley and Laurie Bowen own the Centerville Pie Company. This company has routinely employed individuals with disabilities, but the "Oprah Story" truly demonstrates how a small company can be a big advocate to promote fair employment: Oprah Winfrey came to the Cape and Kristen Broadley and Laurie Bowen sent some pies to her hotel room. Oprah and her staff *loved* the pies and talked them up, which caused sales to explode! The Company was unable to keep up with the demand, so partnered with Cape Abilities. Because of the increased production Cape Abilities was able to receive a \$19,00 grant from the Stafford Foundation.

Ernie and Jane Charette help manage the local Special Olympics, and have been doing so for more than 20 years. The two spoke of their work as a deeply rewarding experience and seemed sincerely puzzled that anyone was honoring them for that. They seemed to feel that they should be thanking the kids that participate in the Special Olympics, because it makes *them* so happy.

FY 2011 Budget Forum Friday February 12, 2010

"This year is going to be another difficult year," announced Senate President Therese Murray, though she also went on to say that the economic "free fall" has seemed to have ended.

There were a few positive things that might indicate that the recession is withdrawing, like state revenue being (generally) on the rise. Massachusetts is in better shape than many other states; we are not facing bankruptcy, and haven't had to borrow yet. Our bonds are good. However, the overall tone was largely gloomy.

There was little review on the budget process, but plenty of malcontented comments and questions regarding budget cuts and lost funding. There was no indication of what the cold hard numbers might look like, or what the impact may be on the BCHHS budget.

WILPF Peace Train Meeting WILPF

On February 17th Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) attended a planning meeting for the WILF Peace Train, a project sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (one of the founding organizations of the HRC). According to the WILPF chair, Mary Zepernick the goal of the Peace Train is to "create a closer connection among human services and peace and justice organizations on the Cape, to showcase our projects and issues, and to have a good time seeing parts of Cape Cod only visible from the train." Inspired by the WILPF Peace Train that traveled from Helsinki across Russia to the 1995 UN Women's Conference in Beijing. Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) attended the third planning session for the train in hopes of gathering information, and learned that the planning has all but stalled. After several hours it became evident that no clear plan was coming to fruition and the meeting was suspended with the promise of all parties gathering more information and presenting the idea again to respective organizations.

Forum on Legislation relating to senior drivers

State Representative Cleon Turner facilitated a discussion on February 18, 2010 at the Yarmouth senior Center about legislation concerning senior drivers. Representative Turner presented comprehensive information regarding safe driver bill/s that has been filed, passed and moved on to the Senate. This bill features many safe driving regulations (which also include texting while driving), but underlines changes in senior driving regulations, most notably that senior drivers would have to take a vision and hearing test every five years to renew licences (instead of every five) and also endorses seemingly unrestricted power of law enforcement and the DMV to revoke seniors licenses. A fervent discussion followed in which the group discussed how a bill like this might destroy people's freedom, and create even more isolation in the senior population. This issue will be monitored by the Human Rights Commission as it poses a serious discrimination threat to the senior population.

Health & Human Services Advisory Council Meeting

Several presentations were made at this month's HHSAC meeting by the Regional Network to End Homelessness and the Volunteer Initiative program.

The Regional Network to End Homelessness is a system that has been established on Cape Cod to provide housing services, implementing innovative practices to rapidly re-house those who are homeless, and to address homelessness in the unique conditions of this region. The Regional network specifically presented it's newest service, the Telephone Triage Hotline, which "will provide 24/7 access to local emergency housing, food, and transportation".

The Cape Cod Foundation Volunteer Initiative's goal is to "link people with meaningful opportunities for community engagement on Cape Cod". The Initiative will be launching a website to better coordinate volunteers with providers that need volunteers in mid April.

The most notable news that was presented at the meeting was that Beth Albert, director of BCHHS has announced her resignation. All present were shocked and saddened by this turn of events. Beth will be the proud owner and proprietor of a local bed and breakfast, and will be missed!

The Zion Heritage Museum

Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) received a tour of the Zion Heritage Museum by the HRC's own Commissioner, John Reed; last week Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) reported it as a wonderful and refreshing collection of history. This museum is home to art, historical objects and documents and more, all honoring and remembering the African-American and Cape Verdian culture on Cape Cod, as well as national Civil Rights Movement Leaders and history. Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) commented that the museum is rich, vivid and *moving*- and would recommend it to anyone.

HRC Activity

Elisabeth Dolby (Coordinator) reported the following operational trends for February 2010

Intakes	0
Phone/email contact	25/162 (187)
Meetings	6
Fundraising	0
Media contact	2

Commissioner Reports:

Andy Murray (Commissioner) reported that he had received an invitation from Bourne Community Public Access TV to broadcast a presentation by the Human Rights Commission. The group went on to discuss media potential and marketing options for the HRC

Bob Freedman (Commissioner) discussed his progress in creating a large scale event at Willowbend Country Club in Mashpee to possibly be a fundraising event, but also urges the group to consider an event that would increase the exposure of the Commission.

Town Representative Council Reports:

Marie Stone (Town Representation Council, Wampanoag Tribe) presented a case for the HRC that the tribal council has been working on for some time. A young man from the Mashpee area that is a known drug dealer has been alleging discrimination for attention by local law enforcement (ie.stopping him in his car in the evening). Ms. Stone has spoken with law enforcement that acknowledges that they stop many people during the evening hours to keep the peace; she is concerned that these allegations may corrode the

peaceful relationships that many in the Wampanoag Community extend to local law enforcement. John Reed (Commissioner) and Scoba F. Rhodes (Town Representation Council, Falmouth) cited local studies/statistics on "driving while black" and urged Marie to research these resources. Stephen F. Whitmore (Commissioner) also suggested that Marie research police department statistics, as there would be patterns if discrimination was present.

Anne Manton (Town Representation Council, Bourne) presented additional input and information on the senior driver legislation. At the time of the meeting the bill was to be put to vote the very next day. Anne had reviewed the Bill # 2290 (Section 4), and found the language to be alarming as well as the vague definitions and protocols defining criteria in revoking a person's license. Anne urges the HRC to give this legislation close consideration as the human rights implications are significant.

Announcements:

The next meeting of the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission will be on **April 12, 2010 at 5:30**. The date has been pushed back one week in deference to the holiday. The group felt that it may benefit the Human Rights Commission if members of the Town Representation Council are able to attend every meeting instead of meetings every other month. The TRC is welcome to attend the April meeting!

Executive Session:

Motion was made and seconded at 7:45 PM to call executive session. **Motion carried.**

Motion was made and seconded at 8:00 PM to conclude executive session. **Motion carried.**

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

Elisabeth Dolby, Coordinator
Barnstable Human Right Commission

Date of approval