

June 2023 Meeting Minutes
West Hartford Human Rights Commission
Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023
Elmwood Community Center

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Dawn announced Commissioner Kristyn Rosen-Jacobs would be stepping down as secretary but remaining a commissioner. Winnie Tantraporn volunteered to take minutes for this meeting.

Attendance – Cara Paiuk, Treasurer Eric Schoenberg, Mark Linabury, Co-Chair Esam Boraey, Co-Chair Dawn Ennis, Winnie Tantraporn, Facilitator Pramod Pradham

Prior month's minutes discussion for approval

- Minutes amended
- Mark Linabury made motion to approve, Eric seconded, unanimous vote to approve

Subcommittee assignments

- Contact list to be created
- Food pantry event at Gastropark update from Kara
 - o Event is on 6/24
 - o Small State Bakery will help to promote

Youth Subcommittee

- Dawn nominated Leif Ennis
- Winnie nominated Cooper Tantraporn
- Winnie will be supervise and mentor
- Mark suggested reaching out to West Hartford Board of Ed to explore possible initiatives

Pramod provided a list of town events

- Esam and Eric formed subcommittee
- West Hartford Pride event
 - o Esam will send a sign up list
 - o Dawn will provide flyer to Eric to print
- Juneteenth event
 - o Dawn will represent Human Rights Commission

Immigrant teen club will visit Sept meeting

New Business:

Eric raised discussion regarding the suggested definition of antisemitism that was sent to the mayor and Town Council and revised for mayor's proclamation

- Esam said he reached out to town council

- Dawn played video from the February meeting in which the Mayor addressed the Town Council and read the revised definition, briefly mentioning it was revised
- Discussion about what next steps the commission can/should take if any
- Eric made a motion to write a letter to the Town Council to ask for an explanation for the revision and enter that into public record, Dawn Ennis seconded
- Vote was taken regarding the letter that Eric volunteered to write
 - o Yes – Cara, Eric, Dawn, Mark, Pramod, Winnie
 - o No – Esam
 - o Motion approved

Cara raised discussion about possible bias in the Math Quest program at Aiken Elementary. Requirements for acceptance into the program are not clearly communicated.

Winnie requested an addition to the September meeting agenda to review the existing Human Rights Commission mission statement. The reason for revisiting the language is to make an effort to more clearly define the topics and initiatives the commission should discuss and pursue. Additional language to be focused on equitable access to:

- Food
- Education
- Healthcare
- Housing/Shelter
- Employment

Dawn presented an opportunity for commissioners to participate in a Human Rights Focus group which she forwarded via email.

Pramod and Dawn to work on a survey asking people what they would like to have this commission work on.

Esam asked for a vote to suspend regular commission meetings in July and August unless a special meeting is called. Vote was unanimous. Next meeting will be September 6, 2023 at 7 p.m. in Room 24 in the Elmwood Community Center.

Winnie agreed to be the secretary for the September meeting while we seek a permanent replacement for Kristyn Rosen-Jacobs, who will remain as a commissioner.

Mark made a motion to adjourn meeting. Winnie seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.