

Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

August 18th, 2022 at 5PM via Zoom due to COVID-19

Present: **Commissioners:** Chairwoman Reyes Coll-Tellechea and Commissioners Anne Rousseau, and Robert MacEachern (Commissioner Leonard Lee was absent)

A. Introductions

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea called the Meeting to order at 5PM.

B. Chairwoman and Interim Director's Report with Administrative Updates

1. Interim Director Helmy stated that the job opening for the Education and Outreach Position role is up on the City's Career Website. She asked all Commissioners to share with their networks.
2. HRC's pilot partnership with the Boston Police Civil Rights Unit ended at the end of August. Director Helmy informed the Commission that they have extended the partnership until 08/2023, extending it on an annual basis with the option to review terms.
3. After working with the City Analytics team, there is now a dashboard on HRC's website to display a breakdown of the intakes the Commission has received thus far. This breakdown includes the race and gender of the complainant, protected class associated with the complaint and much more.
4. The Equity and Inclusion Cabinet is hosting a series of Resources Fairs. The goal of these fairs is to lower barriers to resources and better paying jobs with benefits for historically marginalized communities. At these fairs, Departments promote their resources and encourage residents to apply to any job openings they might have. The next Resource Fair is Tuesday, August 23rd at the Mildred Avenue Community Center at 4pm.
5. HRC is currently onboarding 3 new Commissioners who will join us during our Next Commission Meeting on September 15th, 2022.
6. HRC will also be hosting a Town Hall in partnership with the Mayor's Office of LGBTQ+ Advancement and City Councilor Kendra Lara's Office. The purpose of this Town Hall is to provide an open and safe space for all that identify as LGBTQ+ to speak to their experiences with hate incidents in Boston. HRC is encouraging individuals that identify as LGBTQ+ to sign up via the google form for a speaking slot, otherwise individuals can submit a written statement or an anonymous statement.
7. Director Helmy is working on an Anti-Hate Campaign. This will feature two parts, one of which will be a coalition and the second will be of

outreach/education. This will include educating residents and visitors on what a hate crime and hate incident is, how that differs from discrimination and the resources that are available.

8. Last but not least, Director Helmy informed the Commission that she will be on vacation from August 24th to September 9th.
9. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea informed the Commission that on July 28th, she met with a representative from the Loring Greenough House. This conversation revolved around a hate incident that took place early July.
 - a. The Chairwoman shared her findings with Director Helmy and Chief Solis Cervera. HRC was looking to host a hearing on general hate crimes in Boston but unfortunately was unable to do so due to not having a quorum.
10. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea ended her report by stating that our previous graduate interns, Thalia Viveros Uehara and Lilo Atali will be returning for the 2022-2023 Academic year. Each graduate intern will present both in December and May and provide reports for the Commission.
 - a. Lilo will be carrying out a critical analysis of the most successful actions taken by Human Rights Commissions in the U.S. to respond to hate and bias incidents and crimes. He will be paying special attention to reporting channels.
 - b. Thalia will carry out a critical analysis of hate and bias incidents reporting in the state of Massachusetts in the past 3-5 years with a special attention to the City of Boston

C. Preliminary Discussions on 2022-2023 Objectives

1. This is a preliminary discussion as 3 new Commissioners will be joining us next month.
2. Commissioner MacEachern is interested in handling more complaints and reports coming in. In national databases, there seems to be more complaints and reports than what our numbers are showing. With conducting more outreach, this will help move the needle forward and align us with what is happening in our City and Country. Commissioner Rousseau also stressed the importance of outreach so residents can know that we serve as a resource to them.
 - a. Commissioner MacEachern also flagged the importance of making note of structural discrimination or racism when we conduct our outreach and look into complaints.
3. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea suggested that HRC might look into inviting a series of guest speakers that represent communities to come and speak to their experiences with reporting, choosing not to report and the aftermath of hate and bias complaints.

D. Public Comments

1. There were no public comments made during the meeting.

E. Votes

1. Unanimous vote to adjourn at 5:44 pm.