

Human Rights Commission Immigrant Rights Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2024

1. Call to Order

Municipal Policy Analyst Doug Newton called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present were Subcommittee members Corey Barr, Elizabeth Brusie, Xin Peng, and Gabriel Camacho.

3. Discussion

A. Statement on Immigrant Rights

Xin Peng suggested that the subcommittee could consider signing on to the police department's policy on immigrant rights. The subcommittee then began discussing the police department's policy and agreed to give it further consideration at future meetings. Other opportunities for protecting Watertown's immigrant community were discussed, including sharing contact information for legal aid organizations, collaborating with organizations such as MIRA (Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition), referring individuals who contact the Committee to World in Watertown, and hosting a "Know Your Rights" training for immigrants and those interested in assisting.

The subcommittee also discussed raising awareness of the Work and Family Mobility Act which was passed by the legislature and allows undocumented immigrants to apply for driver's licenses. The topic of "sanctuary cities" was discussed and it was noted that Watertown is not a sanctuary city. Gabriel Camacho noted that this term has no legal meaning and can encompass a variety of policies. It could take the form of an executive order, a resolution, an ordinance, a directive, and more. The Committee agreed to meet again on January 7th at 6:30 PM.

4. Public Comment

No member of the public offered comment.

5. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.