Human Rights Commission Meeting

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Agenda

ACCESS INFORMATION:

A. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 2nd at 5:30 PM. Location: ZOOM ONLY

B. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/89174426116

C. Public may comment through email: dnewton@watertown-ma.gov

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1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Acceptance of Minutes
   A. Minutes for previous meeting
4. Discussion
   A. Draft statement on potential incidents in the community
   B. Draft statement on anti-Hatian rhetoric
   C. Resources for the community
   D. Local and national updates
   E. Working with action-plan subcommitee
   F. Additional manners by which the Human Rights Commission can promote and protect the rights of immigrants
5. Public Comment
6. Adjournment

Human Rights Commission Immigrant Rights Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2025

1. Call to Order

   The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM.

2. Roll Call

   Present were Corey Barr (by zoom), Gabriel Camacho (by zoom), and Xin Peng (by zoom). Elizabeth Brusie joined the meeting after the roll call took place. Also present were Doug Newton as staff, Captain Dan Unsworth of the police department, and Human Rights Commission co-chair Mel Poindexter.

3. Acceptance of Minutes
   a. Minutes for Previous Meeting

      Corey Barr made a motion, seconded by Gabriel Camacho, to approve the minutes. The subcommittee voted three to zero to approve the minutes.

4. Discussion
   a. HRC Support for Immigrant Community

      The pamphlets created by the Watertown Police Department in collaboration with the subcommittee and other community members were discussed. Upwards of 1,000 pamphlets have now been distributed throughout the community. The subcommittee discussed other opportunities to distribute the pamphlets where they can be helpful. It was also discussed that the statement on immigrant rights which was crafted by the subcommittee is now available on the Human Rights Commission's website. There was also discussion of having a generic statement for the HRC to have available in anticipation of events that may take place in the future.

5. Adjournment

   Gabriel Camacho made a motion, seconded by Elizabeth Brusie, to adjourn the meeting. The subcommittee voted four to zero to approve the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM.

The Watertown Human Rights Commission is deeply concerned about recent developments in our community that may impact the well-being and rights of its members. We are committed to monitoring the situation closely and working collaboratively with local stakeholders, community leaders, and residents to ensure that the rights and dignity of all individuals are respected and protected.

We believe in fostering an inclusive and equitable environment where everyone can thrive, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. It is our mission to promote understanding, tolerance, and respect among all members of the community, and to address any issues that may undermine these values.

We will continue to advocate for policies and practices that uphold human rights and promote social justice. This includes supporting initiatives that enhance access to education, healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities for all. We also recognize the importance of addressing systemic inequalities and ensuring that everyone has a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.
We encourage all members of the community to join us in this effort. Together, we can build a stronger, more compassionate society where everyone feels valued and supported. We invite individuals and organizations to share their concerns and ideas with us, and we look forward to working together to create positive change.

As we move forward, we will remain vigilant in our commitment to protecting human rights and promoting social justice. We are dedicated to providing a platform for marginalized voices and to advocating for the rights of those who may be most vulnerable. We believe that by working together, we can create a brighter future for everyone in our community.

NEW BEDFORD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
PRESS RELEASE

The NB HRC Respects the Integrity and Dignity of the Haitian People in America

The New Bedford Human Rights Commission expresses its dismay at the hateful statements and innuendo recently disseminated too widely against people of Haitian origin residing legally in the United States.

The New Bedford Human Rights Commission condemns all hateful rhetoric with racial undertones against any minority group. Immigrants from every corner of the world have contributed to the strength of the City of New Bedford through their hard work and assimilation on the homeland of its original inhabitants, the Wampanoag Nation.

The New Bedford Human Rights Commission stands today in solidarity with our Haitian brothers and sisters, who have been horribly maligned. Like all people who come to America seeking to improve their lives, the Haitian people have contributed to the prosperity of this country.

We applaud the multiple cultures within our city. We are uplifted when we learn from each other about the different ways we celebrate our lives. Statements that divide us diminish our greatness as a city and as a country.

We call on all the people of New Bedford to always respect the dignity and special contributions of the multifaceted members of our community.

If any person, regardless of legal status, feels that they have been mistreated, maligned, harassed, abused, or discriminated based on their national origin, ethnic background, religion or personal background, please contact the New Bedford Human Rights Commission at the Department of Community Services office at 508 979 1464.