

Human Rights Commission Action Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2025

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 AM.

2. Roll Call

Present (all via zoom) were Sarah Zoen, Liz Aeschlimann, and Susan Musinsky. Also present was Doug Newton as staff.

3. Interview for Needs Assessment Consultant Applicants

The Action Plan Committee interviewed two candidates to conduct a needs assessment on behalf of the Human Rights Commission.

The first candidate was Francesca Korte. Ms. Korte shared that her background is in academic research. She is affiliated with the Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research at Northeastern University. In that capacity, she has worked on formal and informal interdisciplinary community-based research. This included analyzing data on mental health challenges at Northeastern such as how services are or are not being utilized. She also described her work with the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Project in Sacramento, California to help get a sense of people's experiences with childhood trauma as well as a reaction to ACE's recent media campaign. She has also been involved in educating the judiciary on social determinants of health and how these determinants shape individuals' interactions with our legal system. Ms. Korte went into further detail on her proposal to the Commission including her plan to use a survey and focus groups.

The second candidate interviewed was Noel Martin Rubio. Mr. Rubio's organization, Future Tense Strategies, is based in Boston. He was joined by Dr. King Fok who is a key team member on their proposal. Mr. Rubio shared that the needs assessments he has created recently have focused on understanding the community in question and helping them to map out a programming strategy and apply for funding. This includes coming up with power maps and stakeholder maps that help to understand the landscape of a given issue area. He also described that when he was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago he had a summer research experience in the Philippines working with a coffee farming community in the highlands of Luzon. This focused on helping the community to connect their services and products to broader markets and earn a more sustainable income. A needs assessment was conducted to understand what this community wanted for themselves including a mapping of their value chain to understand their opportunities, barriers, and challenges. He said that he was fascinated to learn more about Watertown's immigrant history and unique demographics including one of the heaviest Armenian populations in the United States. Mr. Rubio further described how his organization does not seek to "save the day" but to work with communities to help them better themselves.

4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 PM.