

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Monday, October 3, 2022 at 5:00 PM
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

This meeting will be conducted in person and via Zoom online platform. The public may view the meeting online at www.zoom.com and click on “Join” then enter the meeting ID when prompted. Meeting ID 867 3299 3658

Members:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos
Dr. Dottie Morris
Janis Manwaring
Dr. Mohammed Saleh
Dr. Shaun Filiault
Marti Fiske
Hunter Kirschner
Rabbi Daniel Aronson
Councilor Catherine Workman

Staff:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director
Alyssa Bender, Youth Services Manager

Alternates:

Ritu Budakoti
Heidi Schwieger

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of September 12, 2022 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Budget Development
5. Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Coalition Updates
6. Acceptance of Committee Event Reports
7. Community Outreach
 - a. Outside Agency Networking
 - i. Kristallnacht
8. New Business
9. Adjourn – Next Meeting Monday, November 7, 2022 at 5:00 PM

“In our efforts to create a more equal and just society, we move forward with the firm intention to value the voices, opinions, and experiences of all people. We choose to proceed with the awareness and humility that the statements and decisions we make will have a different impact for those with different life experiences.”

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
4
5 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Monday, September 12, 2022

5:00 PM

Recreation Center

Members Present:

Jan Manwaring
Dr. Mohammed Saleh (arrived at 5:09 PM)
Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos, Chair
Marti Fiske, Ex-Officio
Daniel Aronson
Hunter Kirschner

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation &
Facilities Director
Amanda Palmeira, Assistant City Attorney
Alyssa Bender, Youth Services Manager

Members Not Present:

Heidi Schwieger, Alternate
Ritu Budakoti, Alternate
Dr. Shaun Filiault
Dr. Dottie Morris
Councilor Catherine Workman

8
9
10 **1) Welcome and Call to Order**

11
12 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos called the meeting to order at 5:06 PM. She read the HRC's statement
13 aloud:

14
15 *"In our efforts to create a more equal and just society, we move forward with the firm intention*
16 *to value the voices, opinions, and experiences of all people. We choose to proceed with the*
17 *awareness and humility that the statements and decisions we make will have a different impact*
18 *for those with different life experiences."*
19

20 Mr. Bohannon stated that present tonight is Alyssa Bender, Youth Services Manager. He
21 continued that he will not be present next month, and Ms. Bender will be the staff liaison.
22 Amanda Palmeira, Assistant City Attorney is also present, just to get to know the HRC. She has
23 been attending various City meetings.
24

25 **2) Approval of July 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes**
26

27 Ms. Fiske made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 11, 2022. Ms. Manwaring
28 seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

29

30 Dr. Saleh arrived at 5:09 PM.

31

32 **3) Finance Report**

33

34 Mr. Bohannon stated that he will update the Keene International Festival (KIF) side at the next
35 HRC meeting. He continued that the KIF has received some donations and has multiple
36 expenses coming up in two weeks. The HRC's budget has not changed. The current (balance) is
37 \$4,391.88. He owes some folks related to Juneteenth.

38

39 **4) Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Coalition (MDEIB) Updates**

40

41 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that neither HRC member who would be reporting on the
42 MDEIB is present.

43

44 Ms. Fiske stated that she can give a small update. She continued that she had been asked to
45 contact the MDEIB's education group about joining forces and searching for training for
46 diversity, equity, and inclusion.

47

48 **5) Acceptance of Committee Event Reports**

49

50 Ms. Fiske stated that she had asked Mr. Bohannon to send everyone an update on the challenges
51 of finding an Indigenous People's Day event, because she was afraid they were not going to be
52 able to pull it together. However, through the dogged persistence of their Engagement and
53 Youth Services Director, Gail Zachariah, they have an event confirmed. It is called Woven
54 Through the Sweetgrass: Memories of a New England Abenaki Family. A rather contentious
55 argument is occurring with the Abenaki tribe in Quebec not recognizing the tribes that have been
56 recognized by the states in VT and NH, and she and Ms. Zachariah felt it was a bad idea to get
57 involved in that. They did not contact any local members, and are trying to contact someone
58 from the tribe in Quebec, because they are federally recognized and they felt it was safer.
59 [Suzie] O'Bamsawin is a member of the Odanak tribe in Quebec, as is Joyce Heywood. They
60 will give a historic perspective on the Abenaki experience in the greater Quebec/New England
61 area. The event will not be on Indigenous People's Day, because Ms. O'Bamsawin and Ms.
62 Heywood did not feel comfortable with that. It is a day of mourning for many tribes. The event
63 will be Wednesday, October 12, not the day before as originally planned, so that it does not
64 conflict with the Keene Pride event at the library on October 11.

65

66 Mr. Bohannon asked if this information is on the website. Ms. Fiske replied yes, and it will go
67 out through all of the normal channels, such as the Shopper News, communication to all library
68 cardholders who subscribe to the email list, and so on and so forth.

69

70 Ms. Fiske added that the Library is paying for this event, so the HRC does not need to. Mr.
71 Aronson asked if the event will be recorded so that people who are unable to attend can see it.
72 Ms. Fiske replied that she does not know if they have permission to do that. She continued that
73 the Library has the ability to put events on Facebook Live but she would have to get permission
74 first. She will ask.

75
76 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos thanked Ms. Fiske. She reminded subcommittee chairs to submit their
77 updates, if they have any, in writing each month.

78

79 **6) Community Outreach**

80

81 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that Ms. Fiske drafted a request for community input, and her
82 understanding is that what Ms. Fiske wrote is exactly what the HRC wanted, and it just has not
83 been released yet. Mr. Bohannon replied that is correct.

84

85 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that James Rinker (digital community engagement specialist
86 with the Keene Sentinel) has offered to be a point of contact and a resource for the HRC. She
87 continued that the HRC is looking to work on this, and they hope to have community members
88 attending the HRC meetings. That is what they are trying to achieve, with the request that Ms.
89 Fiske put together. Advertising HRC events is something else for the HRC to improve on.

90

91 Ms. Manwaring stated that she has not seen what Ms. Fiske wrote, but she thought there was
92 concern about what kind of input the HRC is looking for. She asked if the HRC resolved that.
93 Ms. Fiske replied yes, they are asking the community what they would like more education about
94 and what the HRC can develop more programming around.

95

96 Mr. Bohannon distributed copies of what Ms. Fiske drafted, and HRC members read it. Dr.
97 Saleh asked where this statement is intended to go. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that they
98 intend to put it in the Keene Sentinel. Ms. Fiske replied that she also recommends the
99 Monadnock Shopper, and putting it on the website would be great, too. Mr. Bohannon agreed.

100

101 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked for committee members' thoughts on the draft. Discussion
102 ensued, regarding wordsmithing grammar and spelling. Mr. Aronson offered to do some editing.
103 Ms. Fiske replied that she can do editing and/or rewriting as necessary. Mr. Bohannon replied
104 that he and Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos had intended to give Ms. Fiske feedback on the document
105 but that feedback did not occur. Discussion continued. Mr. Bohannon stated that he will send it
106 to Mr. Aronson as an attachment.

107

108 **7) Racial Justice and Community Safety Report**

109

110 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that Dr. Filiault was tasked with drafting the executive
111 summary to submit to the City Council. She continued that he is not here tonight and thus
112 cannot give an update. Ms. Manwaring replied that she thinks Dr. Filiault has a scheduling

113 conflict this semester with the HRC meetings. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she can
114 check in with him. Mr. Kirschner replied that he can check in with him about that, as he was
115 going to talk with him about something else anyway.

116

117 **8) New Business**

118

119 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she was approached by the Cohen Center. She continued
120 that the Cohen Center would like the HRC to participate in their Kristallnacht Commemoration
121 in November, talking about what their goals are for Keene and what has been accomplished
122 already. The program is in flux and the HRC might have the opportunity to do more, or if they
123 are not comfortable with that, that is okay. She asked committee members if they want the HRC
124 to participate in this. Discussion ensued about the event. Mr. Bohannon stated that the event is
125 well done and quite moving, and it would be a great honor for the HRC to be part of it.

126

127 Mr. Aronson stated that he is always a part of the ceremony. He continued that he thinks the
128 HRC should accept, but they should be sure they understand what the HRC's role is, in terms of
129 education and programming. He wonders if the Cohen Center will also extend an invitation to
130 the MDEIBC, whose mission is complementary but also very different from the HRC's in many
131 ways. The issues the Holocaust Center deals with in their Kristallnacht Commemoration lend
132 themselves more to the activism of the MDEIBC than the education and programming that the
133 HRC does. The Cohen Center needs to know that the HRC is not a commission that is
134 authorized to act.

135

136 Ms. Fiske asked if the Cohen Center had a specific ask of the HRC. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos
137 replied that it is a fairly broad ask, but the intent would be for the HRC to share its mission and
138 what has been accomplished in Keene already. She continued that they could talk about the
139 RJCS Report and the existence of the HRC and its work. Ms. Fiske asked if the HRC would be
140 part of a panel presentation or something similar. Discussion ensued about the format of the
141 Kristallnacht Commemoration.

142

143 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if they should take a vote on whether or not to participate. Ms.
144 Fiske replied that she does not feel like she has enough information yet in order to vote. For
145 example, would it be one HRC member speaking, or a group of them? Discussion continued.
146 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she can follow up with the Cohen Center and try to get
147 more information. Mr. Kirschner stated that he agrees with Ms. Fiske that they need more
148 information before saying yes or no. He continued that they could say yes, conditionally, the
149 HRC is interested in having more conversations with the Cohen Center about how they could
150 work with them and support the event. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she agrees that is
151 an appropriate next step. Mr. Bohannon replied that this can be on the HRC's agenda at their
152 next meeting in three weeks.

153

154 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if everyone is comfortable with the HRC's interest being
155 expressed, and getting more information about it. Others replied yes.

HRC Meeting Minutes
Month Date, Year

156

157 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that something the HRC was going to put on the agenda but did
158 not is their budget. She continued that they need to discuss it. For example, for Indigenous
159 People's Day they are lucky to have the budget covered, but they need to figure out a system for
160 how to use their funds. Maybe she and Mr. Bohannon should discuss it first and come up with a
161 proposal to bring to the HRC, or if people have strong opinions and want to propose something,
162 that is fine, too. [Hearing no objections], she continued that she will come up with a proposal
163 and email it to Mr. Bohannon by Thursday morning for his feedback. Mr. Bohannon agreed.
164 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that for the record, the HRC is receiving \$1,000 from the City
165 each year.

166

167 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if there was any other new business.

168

169 Mr. Aronson stated that Keene is in the middle of its first ever Pride festival. He continued that
170 the extent of his involvement is that his kid is at the open mic tonight. He does not know what
171 else is going on, or whether there is some official acknowledgment from the City or the Mayor, a
172 thank you to Keene Pride, or something like that. He continued that maybe the HRC could send
173 a letter or ask the Mayor to say something. He asked if anyone else has information about
174 whether/how the City has officially acknowledged Keene Pride.

175

176 Mr. Bohannon replied that outside of accepting Keene Pride's protocol and being in front of the
177 City Council, and the City Council wishing them luck with their event, he does not know of
178 anything formal beyond that. He continued that it would be up to [Keene Pride] to request a
179 proclamation from the Mayor; he does not know if they did that.

180

181 Ms. Fiske stated that Keene Pride is booking events in September and October, and the library
182 will be the location for several. She continued that Keene Pride might become a very active
183 group, which is great.

184

185 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that for the record, the HRC has a Pride event subcommittee
186 that is pursuing its own programming at this point. She continued that she thinks the last
187 conversation the HRC had about this was about pursuing programming for next year, to give
188 room to Keene Pride this year to do their events.

189

190 Ms. Manwaring stated that something for them to think about, regarding the HRC supporting a
191 group/event like Keene Pride, is that it would be easy to write a letter to the editor. She
192 continued that it might be too late now, but an HRC member could write one, sign their name,
193 and add "Member of the Human Rights Committee." The HRC should support this whether the
194 Mayor does or not. She thinks the Mayor would support it, but Keene Pride probably did not
195 know to ask for a proclamation.

196

HRC Meeting Minutes
Month Date, Year

197 Discussion ensued about the letter to the editor idea, and how the HRC would have had to
198 draft/approve/edit such a letter during a regular meeting, since City committees are not allowed
199 to conduct such business over email.

200

201 Ms. Manwaring stated that the HRC could write a letter in support of the KIF, which is in two
202 weeks. Ms. Fiske replied that if Keene Pride will be doing events into October, the HRC would
203 even have time to write a letter in support of that, too. She gave examples/ideas of what to
204 include in the letter. Mr. Bohannon suggested just having one letter, which could include a
205 congratulatory message to Keene Pride. Discussion continued about the idea, and about the
206 question of who/what else the HRC should potentially be writing letters in support of, and what
207 the process and protocol could be. Dr. Saleh suggested having organizations that are supporting
208 causes to set up a meeting with the HRC to discuss what they are doing and how the HRC could
209 help.

210

211 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that an agenda item for the next HRC meeting can be a
212 discussion of how to recognize and support other organizations. Others agreed. Mr. Bohannon
213 stated that "Community Outreach" is an agenda item. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked for
214 something like "Recognizing and Supporting Other Organizations" to be a sub-bullet, so the
215 HRC can be sure to address the topic. Ms. Fiske suggested that "Kristallnacht" be A) under
216 "Community Outreach," and "Recognizing and Supporting Other Organizations" be B).

217

218 **9) Adjournment – Next Meeting Monday, October 3, 2022 at 5:00 PM**

219

220 There being no further business, Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 5:47 PM.

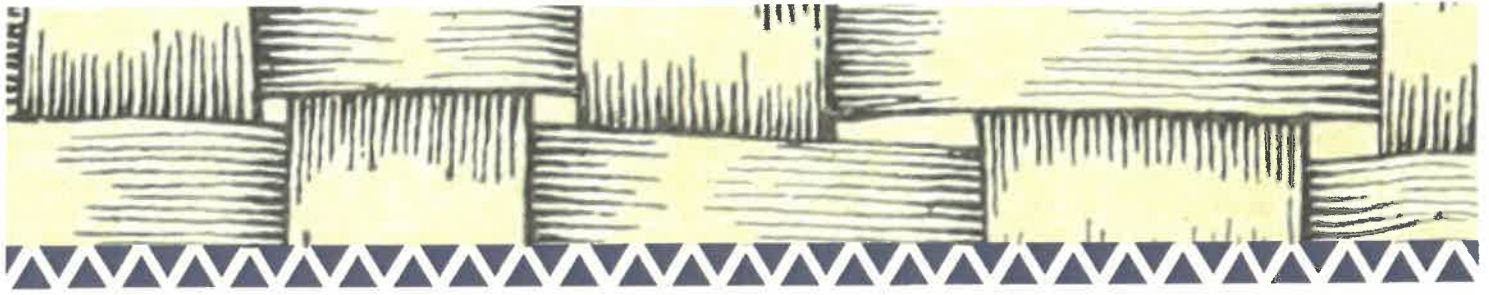
221

222 Respectfully submitted by,
223 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

224

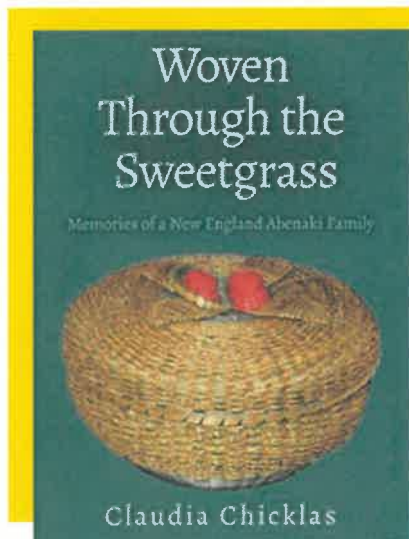
225 Reviewed and edited by,
226 Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director

7/1/19- 6/30/20	HRC	KIF	7/1/20- 6/30/21	HRC	KIF	7/1/21- 6/30/22	HRC	KIF
Balance 7/1/19	\$ 4,574.00	\$ -	Balance 7/1/20	\$ 4,096.73	\$ 3,411.00	Balance 7/1/21	\$ 3,391.88	\$ 2,541.89
Income	This was entered at 4574.70							
City of Keene	\$ 500.00		City of Keene	\$ 500.00		City of Keene	\$ 1,000.00	
Donations KIF		\$ 6,847.83	Donations KIF		\$ -	DONATIONS KIF		\$ 5,000.00
subtotal	\$ 500.00	\$ 6,847.83	subtotal	\$ 500.00	\$ -	subtotal	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Total Income	\$ 500.00	\$ 6,847.83	Total Income	\$ 500.00	\$ -	Total Income	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Expenses								
International Festival		\$ 3,436.83	International Festival		\$ 869.11	International Festival		\$ 5,749.77
			Pride Flags - 15	\$ 104.85		Pride Month	\$ -	
			Juneteenth Presenters \$200	\$ 800.00		Juneteenth	\$ -	
			Steve Schuch					
			Hadi Lanceric					
			Jonah Wheeler					
			Jalissa Rodriguez					
			Amina Jordan-Mendez	\$ 300.00				
Martin Luther King Day			Martin Luther King Day	\$ -		Martin Luther King Day	\$ -	
Peter Blood	\$ 500.00		Dr. Jim Waller					
KSC Dining	\$ 477.27							
Total Expenses	\$ 977.27	\$ 3,436.83	Total Expenses	\$ 1,204.85	\$ 869.11	Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ 5,749.77
Net 19-20	\$ (477.27)	\$ 3,411.00	Net 20-21	\$ (704.85)	\$ (869.11)	Net 21-22	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (749.77)
Balance on hand	\$ 4,096.73	\$ 3,411.00	Balance on hand	\$ 3,391.88	\$ 2,541.89	Balance on hand	\$ 4,391.88	\$ 1,792.12



Woven Through the Sweetgrass: Memories of a New England Abenaki Family

**Wednesday, Oct. 12 at 6 p.m.
Heberton Hall**



This presentation co-sponsored by the City of Keene's Human Rights Committee will start with historical perspective of the traditional use and occupation of the Abenaki on the land that is now Vermont and New Hampshire.

Then Joyce Heywood, the great-granddaughter of Israel, and Mary (Watso) Sadoques of Keene will discuss the history of the Sadoques family and how it intersects with this area and provides insights into the complex story of the Abenaki people.

This is a hybrid event. For a virtual invitation, go to KeenePublicLibrary.evanced.info/signup/calendar.



Keene Public Library

60 Winter St.

Keene, New Hampshire 03431 | 603-352-0157

KeenePublicLibrary.org/

