

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Monday, March 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

Members:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos
Dr. Dottie Morris
Janis Manwaring
Dr. Mohammad 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
Tedd Benson

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of February 6, 2023 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Coalition Updates
5. Todd Horner – Multimodal Transportation
6. Acceptance of Committee Event Reports
 - a. Black History Month – Movie “Till”
 - b. Juneteenth
7. Racial Justice Community Safety Report
8. Community Survey <https://tinyurl.com/DiscrimSurvey>
9. New Business
10. Adjourn – Next Meeting Monday, April 3, 2023 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

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5 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Monday, February 6, 2023

5:00 PM

Room 22,
Recreation Center

Members Present:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos, Chair
Hunter Kirschner, Vice Chair
Jan Manwaring
Dr. Dottie Morris (left at 5:50 PM)
Dr. Mohammed Saleh
Marti Fiske
Councilor Catherine Workman (arrived at 5:05 PM)
Rabbi Daniel Aronson

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation & Facilities
Director

Members Not Present:

Ritu Budakoti, Alternate
Heidi Schwieger, Alternate
Dr. Shaun Filiault

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

11
12 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos read the HRC's statement: *"In our efforts to create a more equal and*
13 *just society, we move forward with the firm intention to value the voices, opinions, and*
14 *experiences of all people. We choose to proceed with the awareness and humility that the*
15 *statements and decisions we make will have a different impact for those with different life*
16 *experiences."* She called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

17
18 **2) Approval of January 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

19
20 Dr. Morris made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 9, 2023. Ms. Manwaring
21 seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 6-0. Dr. Saleh abstained.

22
23 **3) Finance Report**
24

25 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that it seems like the Finance Report is the same as last month.
26 Mr. Bohannon replied that the only change is that he/the HRC bought coffee for the Martin
27 Luther King, Jr. Day event. He continued that it was \$45.55.

28
29 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she noticed the Finance Report does not have each event's
30 budget listed. Mr. Bohannon replied that he can put the number in if the committee wants him
31 to. Discussion ensued and Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked him to put the numbers in
32 parentheses in the titles, so people know what the events' budgets are.

33

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

35

36 Dr. Morris reported that she and others from the MDEIB will meet with the Keene High School
37 principal on February 14 to discuss matters related to the high school.

38

39 Councilor Workman arrived at 5:05 PM.

40

41 Mr. Bohannon stated that the next MDEIB meeting is Monday, January 20. He continued that
42 their request to the City for additional funding was granted. Momentum is beginning to build.

43

44 Mr. Aronson stated that Dan Smith from the YMCA/MDEIB called him today, to go over Jewish
45 holidays for scheduling purposes. He continued that regarding the upcoming meeting with the
46 principal that Dr. Morris mentioned, a parallel process is happening with anti-Semitism work,
47 with one of the parents who has been convening many meetings. Good work is being done there.

48

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

50

51 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the HRC probably needs some structure for this agenda
52 item. She continued that perhaps it would be helpful for the chairs of event
53 subcommittees/working groups, which includes herself, to have a deadline each month for when
54 to submit reports to be included (in the agenda packet). Discussion ensued. Chair Cunha-
55 Vasconcelos suggested the deadline be the 15th of the month. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated
56 that the HRC also needs to identify a chair for each of the working groups, although she does not
57 know what the process for that looks like. Discussion ensued.

58

59 Ms. Fiske stated that the chair of an event's working group might not have anything to report
60 sometimes, such as two months after an event happens (which is 10 months before it will be
61 happening again). Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that is fine; they can set an expectation that
62 in the, say, three to six months leading up to the event, the HRC will be given information as
63 appropriate. She continued that there is no expectation that every chair will rigorously submit
64 updates every month. However, having a structure is a good place to start, such as a monthly
65 deadline for needed updates to be submitted, and identifying a person from each group to be the
66 one giving the updates.

67

68 Discussion ensued about working group chairs and members. The following were identified:

69

70 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event: chaired by Mr. Aronson

71 Pride Month: chaired by Mr. Kirschner

72 Juneteenth: chaired by Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos

73 Indigenous People's Day: chaired by Ms. Fiske

74

75 Mr. Kirschner asked about the structure of the updates. What specifically should be included?

76 Discussion ensued, and the HRC members suggested the following information be included in
77 the reports, when known and when applicable:

78

79 - Event date, time, location, and what it will be.

80 - Financial implications, such as the event's budget, what the working group plans to
81 spend, and their plan for how to make up the difference (if needed).

82 - Request for volunteers/more working group members

83 - Any other asks for the HRC

84

85 **A) Black History Month – Movie “Till” February 15 and 16, 7:00 PM Colonial**
86 **Showroom**

87

88 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the agenda packet includes the flyer for this event, which
89 came together very quickly and very nicely. She continued that her one question is whether
90 people wanting to attend the movie need to register. Mr. Bohannon replied no, they can just
91 show up.

92

93 Dr. Morris stated that she contacted Harvey Keye, a former legislator who pushed the State of
94 New Hampshire to recognize Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a holiday. She continued that he is
95 now in his 80s and has many stories to tell. He will most likely lead a post-film discussion on
96 one or both nights. Discussion continued about Mr. Keye's work. Dr. Morris shared more
97 information about him.

98

99 Ms. Fiske stated that she was not aware of this at the time when the HRC was planning its
100 showing of Till, but the Library will also be showing it the following week, February 22 at 6:00
101 PM. She continued that it is part of their “Movies You Might Have Missed” series. Discussion
102 continued.

103

104 Dr. Saleh asked about the publicity for the film. Mr. Bohannon shared information about
105 locations of the flyer/event listing. He continued that the Monadnock Food Co-op has a sign,
106 and the option for customers to “round up” their purchase total to the nearest dollar, with the
107 difference going to a local organization/cause, and this month that “round up” money is going to
108 this. It will cover the expense of the movie license. Savings Bank of Walpole is covering one
109 night and Bensonwood is covering the second night.

110

111 Mr. Bohannon continued that as a result of his conversations with Ted Benson, the owner of
112 Bensonwood, he will now be joining the HRC as an alternate member. HRC members replied
113 that that is great news. Mr. Bohannon continued that that is in process with the City Council and
114 he should be confirmed by the next HRC meeting. Mr. Benson will not be able to attend all of
115 the meetings, but he is very interested in the work the committee is doing and is pleased to join.

116

117 **B) Juneteenth**

118

119 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the event will be June 17, because Juneteenth is a Monday.
120 She continued that it will be 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

121

122 Councilor Workman stated that her friend from Badger Balm attended the last two Juneteenth
123 events the HRC has held, and last year, her friend approached her to say that Badger Balm would
124 like to help. She continued that the Juneteenth working group welcomes them; they had some
125 good ideas. They likely will be able to bring in a podcaster from the Black Cowboys podcast
126 who does a performance similar to a TED Talk. The Gaslight Tinkers will likely also join the
127 event, which they look forward to. They do Afro funk and reggae music. Mr. Bohannon spoke
128 positively about Black Cowboys and the Gaslight Tinkers. Discussion continued.

129

130 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the Juneteenth working group is meeting again tomorrow at
131 6:00 PM, if anyone wants to come.

132

133 **6) Racial Justice and Community Safety Report**

134

135 Mr. Bohannon stated that prior to the HRC meeting, he sent around the executive summary that
136 Dr. Filiault wrote about the RJCS Report, so everyone could prepare thoughts for it for this
137 meeting. He continued that Ms. Fiske sent some input around for the committee to consider. It
138 is open to discussion.

139

140 Ms. Fiske stated that her feedback is regarding the last page of the document. [In response to "*It*
141 *is recommended that the City review Cheshire TV programming and encourage additions and*
142 *changes that promote diversity and inclusion,*" Dr. Filiault wrote on the HRC's behalf, "*Since*
143 *the time of the report, Cheshire TV went off the air.*"] She continued that when the HRC was
144 discussing the RJCS Report, no one was doing the public access station, so the HRC did not have
145 any recommendations. Now the City does have a public access station again. Does the HRC
146 want to make a recommendation before they send out this executive summary? Others replied
147 yes. Ms. Fiske replied that she proposes the executive summary say: "*The HRC recommends*
148 *that the City consider making minimum requirements for inclusive and diverse programming a*
149 *condition of future contracts with public access television providers.*" Others agreed.

150

151 Mr. Aronson made a motion to include Ms. Fiske's recommendation in the final executive
152 summary. Ms. Manwaring seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

153

154 Mr. Bohannon stated that the next step is for him to contact Dr. Filiault to ask for the executive
155 summary in Word Doc format instead of PDF, and to incorporate Ms. Fiske's addition.

156
157 Ms. Manwaring stated that she has an addition as well. She continued that she is not sure where
158 to put it, but she thinks there should be a comment about the HRC. She would like the City to
159 support the HRC more. She drafted: *"to support the Human Rights Committee and its efforts to*
160 *educate the community with events focused on these issues: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day,*
161 *Juneteenth, Indigenous People's Day, LGBTQ and Pride, and the Keene International Festival."*
162 She does not see many City officials at the HRC's events. The HRC's new webpage looks nice
163 but does not talk about what the committee is doing, other than MLK Day. It should include
164 information about Juneteenth, Indigenous People's Day, and so on and so forth. She thinks the
165 HRC needs to promote itself more and be included somewhere in the recommendations in the
166 "Community" section, such as 1.B. [*"It is recommended that the City work with community*
167 *stakeholders to establish clear community racial equity and inclusivity goals and that the goals*
168 *be widely adopted by the City and Keene agencies and businesses."*]

169
170 Discussion ensued. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that listing the specific events might not
171 work, because the HRC might do more events in the future. She continued that in addition, there
172 is opportunity for the City to support the HRC more broadly, beyond attendance at events.

173
174 Mr. Kirschner asked if they want to amplify the work of the MDEIB, the work the Chamber is
175 doing, or the work of other groups. Ms. Fiske replied that they might want to make a separate
176 statement about the HRC, because they are asking for financial support, support in advertising,
177 and so on and so forth. Then they could make another statement about amplifying the missions
178 and work of other community organizations, and list them.

179
180 Dr. Morris replied that Ms. Manwaring is making a point that is critical to not lose: are they
181 supporting the already-existing City committee? She continued that they could have a statement
182 about increased financial support for the HRC to do some of the items in the report. The HRC
183 does educational events, thus, they are providing some of the educational foundation that people
184 would need. Yes, recommendation 1.B is about "stakeholders," but as Ms. Manwaring says,
185 there needs to be a specific statement about the existing City committee.

186
187 Ms. Manwaring stated that a different issue is that it is difficult for people to find the HRC's
188 agendas and meeting minutes on the City's website, due to the layout and the way the boards and
189 commissions are listed. Discussion ensued. Mr. Bohannon showed the different paths on the
190 website that lead to the boards and commissions, noting that the most direct route would be the
191 "Residents" tab at the top, and then choosing the "Boards & Commissions" link under the "My
192 City Government" category.

193
194 Discussion continued about editing the executive summary of the RJCS Report. Mr. Bohannon
195 stated that Dr. Filiault wanted it to be no longer than three pages, but given tonight's feedback,
196 he thinks they should go on to four pages. He continued that they can include a statement about

197 the HRC’s purpose, its events, and so on and so forth. He will send this revised draft back out to
198 the HRC members for review and they can adopt it at the next meeting.

199
200 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she noticed a couple typos and missing words. She asked if
201 there is a method for collectively working on this, without accidentally creating a quorum. Mr.
202 Bohannon replied that he just needs the Word Doc from Dr. Filiault. Mr. Aronson asked if HRC
203 members should email Mr. Bohannon if they see edits to be made. Mr. Bohannon replied yes.
204 Discussion continued about technology/software available to allow collaboration. Chair Cunha-
205 Vasconcelos stated that for now, people can send their edits to Mr. Bohannon for him to
206 incorporate, and if he has to create a bunch of duplicate drafts, that is the price they have to pay
207 to ensure they are not accidentally creating a quorum. She continued that Mr. Bohannon can
208 consolidate the changes into a revised draft and bring it to the next meeting. Mr. Bohannon
209 replied yes.

210
211 Mr. Kirschner stated that 1.C in the RJCS Report says, *“It is recommended that the City continue*
212 *its commitment and efforts toward racial justice and community safety whether via an existing*
213 *committee such as the Human Rights Committee, a new equity and inclusion task force, or a joint*
214 *effort of multiple community organizations and agencies.”* He continued that 1.C is not in the
215 executive summary, but this could be an appropriate place to include the statement about the
216 support for the HRC.

217
218 Mr. Kirschner stated that the executive summary entirely removes the RJCS Report’s Education
219 section, which is strange. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she thinks that is because the
220 HRC concluded that they did not have the [authority to do anything about Education]. Mr.
221 Kirschner replied that that may be true, but the way the executive summary is written, one would
222 not even know that Education was part of the RJCS’s report. He continued that the HRC is also
223 not making comments about Public Safety, but it at least is listed as part of the report.

224
225 Dr. Morris left at 5:50 PM.

226
227 Mr. Kirschner stated that he thinks the executive summary should at least include Education as a
228 category. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos agreed.

229
230 7) **Community Survey – <https://tinyurl.com/DiscrimSurvey>**

231
232 Mr. Bohannon stated that he has been trying to connect with the two folks from the group in
233 Lebanon, NH that is the equivalency of the HRC. He continued that they are still trying to find a
234 time to meet, so he can give the HRC a report of what Lebanon has done. What he has learned
235 so far is that the Lebanon group has surveyed people who come into Lebanon about their
236 experiences there. The link gives people a place to report their experiences, both positive and
237 negative. When he is able to schedule a meeting with these folks, if anyone from the HRC is
238 interested in joining, they are welcome to do so. He will keep them informed about the date and
239 time.

240
241 Councilor Workman stated that she looked at the link Mr. Bohannon sent to the survey Lebanon
242 has, and she really likes the concept. She continued that the RJCS Committee had talked about
243 how it would be possible to collect data from folks living in Keene who may have unsavory
244 experiences, and how to document those. The big question, though, was what to do with the data
245 if they collect it. She likes seeing that another municipality was looking at the same thing and
246 taking it on.

247
248 Ms. Fiske stated that she appreciated that the Lebanon group talks about their community's
249 demographics. She continued that it would be interesting to have a drill down on the
250 demographics for Keene residents. It would be helpful for residents to be aware of what their
251 community demographics are, as education for the people who say, "*We don't even have [XYZ]*
252 *people here, what's the problem?*"

253
254 **8) New Business**

255
256 Mr. Aronson stated that they did not have a debrief about the MLK Day event. He continued
257 that he thought there was great attendance, and the event was incredibly well presented. Mr.
258 Bohannon replied that there were 74 people there. Discussion ensued and HRC members spoke
259 positively about the event. Mr. Bohannon complimented the work of Jennifer Carroll, former
260 HRC member, and thanked Ms. Manwaring for bringing this to the HRC's attention. He
261 continued that Ms. Carroll will be presenting to Dr. Morris's class (at KSC) this month.

262
263 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she attended a meeting at the Cohen Center and heard a
264 presentation from the New Hampshire Center for Justice and Equity (NHCJE), a new
265 organization in the same line of work as the HRC. She continued that they appear to be a
266 resource the HRC may be able to engage with and tap into. Their website is nhcje.org. They
267 offer trainings, and have done many already with police departments. Councilor Workman
268 replied that she is in conversation with someone from the NHCJE to come present to the MDEIB
269 Coalition. She continued that maybe when that is scheduled, they could do a joint meeting with
270 the HRC and the MDEIB. Discussion continued.

271
272 **9) Adjournment – Next Meeting Monday, March 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM**

273
274 There being no further business, Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 5:58 PM.

275
276 Respectfully submitted by,
277 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

278
279 Reviewed and edited by,
280 Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director

7/1/22- 6/30/23	HRC	KIF	7/1/23- 6/30/24	HRC	KIF	7/1/24- 6/30/25	HRC	KIF
Balance 7/1/22	\$ 2,991.88	\$ 3,985.44	Balance 7/1/23	\$ 3,946.33	\$ 5,651.74	Balance 7/1/24	\$ 3,946.33	\$ 3,985.44
Income			Income			Income		
City of Keene	\$ 1,000.00		City of Keene	\$ -		City of Keene	\$ -	
Donations KIF		\$ 8,012.00	Donations KIF		\$ -	Donations KIF		\$ -
subtotal	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 8,012.00	subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	subtotal	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 8,012.00	Total Income	\$ -	\$ -	Total Income	\$ -	\$ -
Expenses			Expenses			Expenses		
Martin Luther King Day	\$ 45.55		Martin Luther King Day	\$ -		Martin Luther King Day	\$ -	
Pride Month	\$ -		Pride Month	\$ -		Pride Month	\$ -	
Juneteenth	\$ -		Juneteenth	\$ -		Juneteenth	\$ -	
International Festival		\$ 6,345.70	International Festival		\$ -	International Festival		\$ -
Indigenous Peoples Day	\$ -		Indigenous Peoples Day	\$ -		Indigenous Peoples Day	\$ -	
Total Expenses	\$ 45.55	\$ 6,345.70	Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
Net 22-23	\$ 954.45	\$ 1,666.30	Net 23-24	\$ -	\$ -	Net 24-25	\$ -	\$ -
Balance on hand	\$ 3,946.33	\$ 5,651.74	Balance on hand	\$ 3,946.33	\$ 5,651.74	Balance on hand	\$ 3,946.33	\$ 3,985.44

Juneteenth Subcommittee Report
2/15/2023

Meetings

- Currently held First Tuesday of every month at 6 pm via Zoom
- Frequency will increase as date approaches

Budget

- Current concrete funds are \$500
- Overall budget estimated to be approximately \$2000
 - \$750 – sound system
 - \$1250- stipends for musicians and presenters
- Sponsorships yet to be addressed.

Event Program

- First pass program identified
- In the process of contacting participants to determine interest and ability to participate.

