

Meeting Place: Remote

Meeting Called To Order: 6:04, Monday, April 12, 2021

Chair read the Chairperson Statement.

Roll Call: Loreen Flockerzie, Daniel Yalowitz, , Carolyn McDaniel, Peter Michael Smith, Wendy Goodman, Wid Perry

Regrets: Maureen Lyons Tracey Burley,

Others Present: Keith Barnicle, Communications Director, Town of Greenfield; Bob Williford (Community observer)

A **motion** was to approve the March Minutes, motion seconded and approved.

Chair Comments. Using the term “Less Fortunate” in describing individuals within the community could be considered demeaning and we should not use that phrase in our discussions (not that Commissioners have in this forum). It’s important that we see all people as just people.

Public Open Forum: Nothing to discuss. Bob Williford is observing.

Human Rights Incident/Complaint Form Subcommittee Report. Daniel, Pete and Wid met three times to review, edit, streamline and revise Keith’s draft. Goals:

- Remove barriers – make form more open and accessible
- Simplify Language and format
- Eliminate redundancy
- Divide process into two separate procedures (submission and then investigation process)

The subcommittee removed the word “discrimination” in order to broaden the scope of the form. Added “designated other” in case somebody else assists the originator or serves as point of contact for those without a permanent address/phone/e-mail.

Streamlined the investigation process (which is what happens after the form is submitted – envisioned that the originator would receive an electronic auto notification once form is submitted.

The submitted form should immediately be accessible for the HRC Chair and Vice-Chair to ensure timely response.

Chair appoints a three person Ad-Hoc rotating subcommittee to investigate the complaint/incident.

Concerns regarding privacy issues, anonymity, legalities, and public records. Will need City Counsel to review form.

Process envisioned as empowerment of choice, giving complainant options keeping in mind the Restorative Justice model often used.

Formal Recommendations to the HRC From Subcommittee:

- Establish direct access to web interface where forms are received and/or create an HRC email address.
- Have city's legal counsel review documents for issue, with primary focus on complainant privacy, anonymity, and public record.
- Pending approval from city's legal counsel, adopt intake form as presented, with investigation procedures provided to complainants immediately following submission of intake form.
- Pending approval from the city's legal counsel, adopt investigation procedures as process for all future HRC complaints.

Feedback. Important to believe in the integrity of the process. A HRC E-mail account has been established – all communication goes to Mayor, HRC Chair, and Co-Chair. Humanrights@greenfield-ma.gov

Really trying to promote digital use – although understand lack of accessibility for some.

City is working on Standard Operating Procedures for Commissions and Boards.

Legal review is important.

Some concern about “Complaint” Form and “Complainant” Would “Concern” and “Petitioner” be better? Another suggestion was “Reporting Party”.

We want the entire process to be kind, gentle and welcoming.

Would adding HRC’s Mission Statement to the top of the Complaint Form help define the intent of the form?

There needs to be a resolution for the Complainant. We could either create a new document that identifies outcomes or add a new billet stating that at the conclusion of the subcommittee investigation, a recommendation will be presented to the larger HRC for final resolution.

We should ask the complainant how they would like to see the issue resolved as part of the investigative process (without committing to any particular suggestion).

We should draft standard interview questions for the Ad Hoc investigative process.

Pete made a **Motion:** Commissioners mark up the draft proposal and send edits/suggestions to Pete No later than April 17th to be compiled for subcommittee’s review and edit.

Motion seconded by Daniel and passed all in favor.

Old Business: Will the HRC be able to have a List Serve e-mail communication system open to public access which might help alleviate open meeting law violation concerns?

Missed special March meeting on the topic of Mission/Vision Statement will now be part of the special April 26th HRC Meeting regarding Calendar.

New Business.

Would like to add Nature Gap (Human Rights to Nature (i.e. water, etc) as a future agenda item.

Do we want to make a global human rights discussion (or at least check in) part of the standard agenda? Concern that it could become a sinkhole that takes up too much meeting time. Human Rights is embedded in everything we do.

Alternative: each month one member presents a global Human Rights issue and focus it on the Greenfield Community (what are the local implications?).

Maybe not now but later once we get some of our other work done.

HRC more involved in making public statements regarding global human rights issues.

Commissioners should feel free to share announcement and information regarding local human rights events/meetings/seminars, etc.

The Chair did contact Officer Gordon regarding the HRC Police Liaison – but hasn't heard back yet.

Motion made at 7:36 to adjourn meeting (Wendy). Motion Seconded (Daniel). Meeting adjourned.

Next (Regular) Meeting: Monday, May 10th 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Submit agenda items to Loreen no later than noon, Monday, May 3rd, 2021.

Special Meeting – Monday, April 26nd at 6:00 p.m. to discuss Mission/Vision statement and Calendar as well as update from the Complaint Form subcommittee.