

Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2024 at 6PM Zoom

Present:

Commissioners: Chair Reyes Coll-Tellechea and Commissioners Anne Rousseau, Elijah Evans, Tre'Andre Valentine, Robert MacEachern

Chief of Equity and Inclusion Mariangely Solis Cervera (ex-officio)

Meghan Crowley and Emily Nasiff, Equity and Inclusion Fellows

Others: 8 members of the public were present at this meeting

A. Introductions and Approval of Minutes

1. Chair Coll-Tellechea called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.
2. December 1st meeting minutes: unanimously approved

B. Report from Reyes Coll-Tellechea, BHRC Chair

- Overview of the role of UMass Boston PhD research fellows for BHRC and their first assignment was on January 25th to attend Massachusetts Targeted Violence Prevention Summit.
- Had a meeting with the Massachusetts Human Rights Coalition (MAHRC) coordinator and attended their January monthly meeting. The next MAHRC is February 9th, which Chair Coll-Tellechea will attend and report back.
- Concern for the migrants arriving in Boston and Massachusetts. Plans to bring this issue to the Commission's attention in the following months.

C. Chief Solis Cervera's Report

- The E&I Cabinet sent the BHRC Commissioners a plan to have a consultant help think about the structure of BHRC moving forward.
- The Consultant will facilitate the conversations between the E&I Cabinet, the BHRC Commissioners, the community, other parts of the administration, and City Councilors in order to have a shared alignment about what this office and ordinance can continue to do moving forward.

- For your awareness, Councilor Louijeune will be doing a hearing on the increase of racist incidents and hate in our city.

D. Commissioner Rousseau and Guest David Detmold, coordinator of ChangeTheMassFlag.com, on the Massachusetts Flag

- Chair Coll-Tellechea: Governor Baker initiated a State Task Force charged with reviewing the Massachusetts seal and flag. The Task Force issued a detailed report recommending that the flag and seal of the State be changed. At the Massachusetts Human Rights Coalition (MAHRC) meeting the issue was presented several of the coalitions have already expressed support for the change.
- Commissioner Rousseau and Chair Coll-Tellechea presented the contents of the report.
- Commissioner MacEachern made a motion that the Boston Human Rights Commission drafts a resolution on the matter. The motion to prepare a resolution and to vote on it at the Commission's next meeting was seconded and approved unanimously. The Chair will draft a resolution and circulate among commissioners; it will be put to a vote at the next meeting
- The guest, David Detmold, was not able to attend the meeting last minute, so the agenda moves to public comments.

E. Public Comments

Members of the public posed several questions

- Regarding the flag, what parts of the current flag would be removed and what would they be replaced with?
 - The matter rests with the State and the Legislature
- Is this (BHRC) a non-governmental organization?
 - No
- Why aren't you worried about violence in the street?
- Why don't you start the meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance?
- Why do you want to eradicate history?

F. Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.