

# Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

June 16th, 2022 at 5PM via Zoom due to COVID-19

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**Present:**      **Commissioners:** Chairwoman Reyes Coll-Tellechea, Anne Rousseau and Robert MacEachern ( Commissioner Leonard Lee was absent)  
**Others:** Approximately 10 individuals from the public attended this meeting.

## A. Introductions

1. Interim Director Suzie Helmy called the Meeting to order at 5PM.

## B. Chairperson and Interim Director's Report with Administrative Updates

1. Interim Director Helmy started the meeting by announcing that Mayor Wu has appointed Commissioner Reyes Coll-Tellechea as the new Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission.
2. In administrative updates, the Director of Research and Analysis Roy Wada has resigned and Education and Outreach Manager Quincey J. Roberts Sr. has become the first Executive Director of the LGBTQ+ Advancement Office. This leaves Suzie as Interim Director and Amber Garcia-Gonzalez, Investigator as current staff. Director Helmy has informed the Commission that her priority will be filling the Outreach and Education Manager position.
3. As for staff trainings, Amber and Director Helmy have completed the "Addressing Housing Discrimination" training offered by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). There are 3 upcoming trainings in the next couple months, Addressing Sexual Harassment, Public Accommodation Requests and Employment Discrimination.
  - a. Amber has also conducted research on some free human rights focused training hosted by Amnesty International and the United Nations. Commissioner Rousseau asked that this list is shared with the Commissioners for those that would also like to take it themselves.
4. Director Helmy and Amber also attended a Listening Session hosted by City Council President Ed Flynn. Underreporting and Language access were the biggest concerns in the listening sessions. This listening session was held for individuals that might have encountered any actions that were hurtful because one is of Asian descent. HRC offered our office as a resource. Councilor Flynn has also requested a follow up meeting to further brainstorm on how HRC and his office can collaborate on Anti-Hate crimes.
  - a. Both Director Helmy and Amber will also attend a virtual presentation in the upcoming week hosted by the U.S Attorney General's office on

identifying hate crimes, reporting hate crimes, preventing hate crimes and resources.

- b.** Commissioner MacEachern spoke to the importance of reaching out and creating partnerships with Community Leaders as some individuals might not feel comfortable speaking to City employees. He also sighted prevalent issues such as language access and accessibility.
- 5.** In terms of the Data Collection Project, Round 2 has officially kicked off. In Round 1, HRC reached out to forward facing departments in the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet to identify any similarities, specifically revolving human rights in each department's constituent group. Now HRC has reached out to other departments outside of the cabinet such as the Office of Returning Citizens and Age Strong.
- 6.** Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea, Commissioner Robert MacEachern and Director Helmy have drafted Bylaws for the Commission, the next step is to meet with the City's attorney and then provide it to all Commissioners for voting. Director Helmy is also working with the Boards and Commissions department to fill the 3 vacancies HRC currently has.
- 7.** Last but not least, Director Helmy was part of a Digital Equity Convening meeting for Internal Departments to promote the work HRC has done regarding the Digital Divide.

### **C. Public Comments**

- 1.** There were no public comments made during the meeting.

### **D. Votes**

- 1.** One vote was taken during this meeting.
  - a.** Unanimous vote to adjourn at 5:48pm.