

Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

October 20th, 2022 at 5PM via Zoom due to COVID-19

Present: **Commissioners:** Chairwoman Reyes Coll-Tellechea and Commissioners Anne Rousseau, Robert MacEachern, Mario Paredes, Elijah Evans and Carmel Valentine (Commissioner Leonard Lee was absent)
Others: Approximately 5 individuals from the public attended this meeting.

A. Introductions

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea called the Meeting to order at 5PM.

B. Interim Director's Report

1. In regards to staff trainings, staff completed the Addressing Sexual Harassment and Public Accommodations training offered by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). Additionally, the mediation training that was offered and sponsored by the Human Rights Commission (hereinafter "BHRC") to other Equity and Inclusion Cabinet staff has kicked off. A total of 12 individuals have signed up for it.
2. On the Administrative side:
 - a. The Commission's website has been updated to reflect all new Commissioners that have joined our board. Profiles of the Graduate interns will also be going up on the website. Interim Director Helmy is looking to also post a Resource Guide on the website. This Resource guide will contain a list of Resources separated by topic area. This guide will help serve individuals that might be hesitant to fill out an Intake Form.
 - b. The Equity and Inclusion Cabinet has concluded their Job and Resource Fair that BHRC took part in. This Fair will pick up again in the Spring.
 - c. Additionally, an offer was made to the Education and Outreach Manager candidate. She has accepted and will be starting November 14th. Her name is Denise DosSantos. She is a current employee for the City of Boston working as the Mid-Dorchester and Cape Verdean liaison.
3. In regards to the Coalition created by the Office of Police Accountability and Transparency (OPAT), Director Helmy reviewed the Request for Proposal (RFP) and provided her feedback. This RFP will focus on the creation of equity assessment tools to evaluate BPD policies and procedures and a semi-annual report on BIPOC, hiring, promotion and retention. She will be meeting with the other Coalition Members to select the consultant in the coming weeks.
4. In regards to the Anti-Hate Campaign, it is still being developed and will continue to be developed with the onboarding of the new hire. However, BHRC and U.S

Attorney Rachael Rollins' office has secured an educational partnership for this campaign.

5. Interim Director Helmy concluded her report by stating that the City is looking to start an IT Ethics Commission. This is still in its preliminary stages but as BHRC has done a lot of work on this area, BHRC will have a seat at the table or potentially chair it.

C. Chair's Report

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea stated that she has been meeting with the interns and that they are making great progress on their work and will be ready to give a presentation on their findings in December.
2. Additionally, Chairwoman Reyes alerted the Commissioners to two reports:
 - a. *The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's review of Boston Public Schools*: The report presents that the district is failing to meet acceptable minimum standards for essential district functions. The report describes a chaotic situation, a school system struggling to operate at a basic level, a school system showing important inequities among schools. That being noted, DESE and BPS have agreed to a new model for improvement in the district.
 - b. *CTC Technology & Energy Consulting "Digital Equity Assessment"*: Significant progress has been made, and yet this report states that there are digital inequities in Boston and significant gaps remain. The report attributes those gaps to affordability, lack of devices, and/or lack of digital skills. The report recommends that the City accelerates enrollment efforts in the Affordable Connectivity Program

D. Continued Discussion on Preliminary Discussion of 2022-2023 Objectives

1. The below objectives are both combined from the previous meetings and the current meeting:
 - a. **Collaborate with City Hall's anti-hate campaign:** BHRC's interns, supervised by Commissioner Coll-Tellechea, will provide research. Upon notification by the Executive Director, individual commissioners will attend and contribute to events and/or public meetings related to the campaign (such as "Know Your rights" events, etc)
 - b. **Continue monitoring progress of Boston Police reform:** BPD's score card/report by BHRC as well as the application the Boston's new ordinance on surveillance oversight and information sharing in immigration matters
 - c. **Explore the possibility of collaboration with agencies to provide a certification for immigrants seeking to obtain a "U" visa 2.**

E. Public Comments

1. There were no public comments made during this meeting.

F. Votes

1. Two votes were taken during this meeting.
 - a. Majority vote to approve 9.15.22 Meeting Minutes.
 - b. Unanimous vote to adjourn at 6:03pm.