

## AMBLER BOROUGH HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC) MINUTES

**Wednesday, July 5, 2023**

The third 2023 quarterly meeting of the HRC was held Wednesday, July 5, 2023, at 6:30pm at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue, Ambler, PA, 19002. This was a regularly scheduled, routine, quarterly meeting.

Denise Valerio, HRC chairperson, called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call – Present:** Ms. Denise Valerio, Ms. Marilyn Frazier, Ms. Katie Kirszenblat, Ms. Trelana Adams.

First order of business: review and approval of last meeting's minutes - Ms. Kirszenblat motioned to approve; Ms. Frazier seconded, motion carried.

### **The following was reviewed:**

#### 1. Past Engagement Events:

- HRC Earth Fest participation: The members that were scheduled to volunteer decided it was in the groups best interest not to participate due to the weather but will plan to next year.
- Tri-State Human Relations Coalition's meeting 4/9/23: Unfortunately, none of our members were able to participate in this meeting but will plan to do so on-going as schedules permit; next meeting is scheduled for 7/12/23 at 5:30pm
- Members of the HRC participated in Ambler's Pride Flag raising on 6/1/23, as well as the Juneteenth Flag raising on 6/19/23. We were proud to be present and wear our new shirts (which were a big hit!)
  - At the Juneteenth event, we had the opportunity to meet and have great discussion with members of the Whipain HRC, Faith Williams-Hightower (Chair) and Larry Martin (member). Those present, discussed scheduling a meeting to look at the barriers the groups may be experiencing in their respective communities and potential ways to collaborate in the future.

2. Ms. Valerio was going to meet with Karen, a community member who works at Wissahickon Middle School and provides support to the LGBTQIA+ community there. The school experienced significant bullying around their Pride event and wants to discuss how we may be able to support them - this meeting will be rescheduled due to an emergency that came up

- This commission discussed our ordinance and that it does not specifically include how we can be involved in schools. Through the meeting with a teacher in the Wissahickon school district and other conversations, we will learn their needs and hardships and then determine if / how we can support them and consider presenting an addendum to our ordinance. We will also explore ways to just be present and visible - not to develop programs

3. Ambler Hometown News Inclusion: Ms. Valerio was able to connect with the borough on this item, and the HRC not being included was an oversight, not intentional. Ambler HRC will be included in the Hometown News on-going.

4. This commission discussed the member vacancy and strategies to identify potential future member(s): there were two potential members who were interested in learning more about the HRC. Neither were present at today's meeting.

5. A meeting with the borough manager has not yet been scheduled. The purpose of this meeting will be to learn about what the borough understands about the role of the commission, potential collaboration opportunities as well as potential budget opportunities. Ms. Kirszenblat will plan to participate with Ms. Valerio in this meeting.

6. A new, potential member, Kate Cassidy, has decided not to explore participation in the HRC at this time.

7. Budget draft: Ms. Frazier put together a draft budget of items that can be used for marketing / participation in community events. The commission reviewed and had additional questions. Ms. Adams may be able to make some of the needed items with the skills and tools she has. This draft budget will be utilized when Ms. Valerio and Ms. Kirszenblat meet with the borough and discuss potential funds allocation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the commission will follow up with the community members who are interested in learning more about the commission and invite them to the next meeting. Ms. Valerio will coordinate a meeting with the borough manager and include Ms. Kirszenblat. Ms. Valerio will re-schedule the meeting with Karen from Wissahickon Middle School to discuss what the barriers are within their programs supporting the LGBTQIA+ youth. Members of the commission will review the current ordinance on involvement in schools, as well as looking at other local ordinances and the state group's guidance on school involvement and consider what steps this group should take.

Future meetings will be held the first Wednesday at 6:30PM in 2023, in the following months:

October 4, 2023

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this meeting or other business. Ms. Adams moved the meeting to be adjourned; Ms. Frazier seconded, motion carried.

Katie Kirszenblat  
HRC Panel Member / Secretary