

Pittsfield Human Rights Commission
April 8, 2019
7:00 PM, Room 203
Pittsfield City Hall, 70 Allen St., Pittsfield, MA

Members Present: Drew Herzig, Chair
Peter Marchetti
Jessica Christensen
Marietta Rapetti Cawse
Jay Lopez
Christine Codella, Clerk

Members Absent: Robert Sykes, Sopheap Nhim

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Drew Herzig called the meeting to order and notified all those in attendance that pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30A, Section 20, all attendees are hereby informed that a video and audio recording is being made of this meeting.
2. **Roll Call of HRC Members** – Drew Herzig introduced the new HRC Clerk: Christine Codella. Antonia Buckley and Caterina Penna have resigned from the commission.
3. **Approval of Minutes** – Drew Herzig suggested that the second to last sentence of the March 11, 2019 minutes, item #6 “Unfinished Business” be amended to read that any revisions to rule #7 be discussed at the April meeting so the May meeting can be devoted to the mission and function of the HRC. A motion was made by Peter Marchetti to approve the amended March 11, 2019 minutes. Seconded by Jessica Christensen. Approved unanimously.
4. **Public Comment** – There were no members of the public present.
5. **Presentation to the Commission** – A 45-minute presentation on Human Trafficking was given by Jeanet Ingalls of **Shout Out Loud Productions, Inc.**, a not-for-profit organization focused on raising global awareness of sex trafficking, socially sanctioned abuse and poverty in the lives of women, men and children through artistic expression, education, advocacy and collaboration with like-minded individuals and organizations. Human Trafficking described as “the illegal movement of people, typically for the purposes of forced labor or commercial sexual exploitation through force, fraud or coercion”. Ms. Ingalls reported numerous and alarming facts and statistics. She outlined acceptable and unacceptable terms for Journalists and the general public to use when referring to victims. In conclusion, what is needed is additional training and education.
6. **Unfinished Business** – Drew Herzig discussed a suggested addition from Peter Marchetti to Rule #7 “Public comment speakers must avoid personal attacks. Commission members **should** not respond to speakers other than to notify speaker that they will forward relevant information requested or as may be deemed appropriate.” Drew suggested this addition be added to Rule 2.6.6. All members approved. Drew Herzig suggested the following addition to Rule 7.4: “The HRC will vote to accept or reject applications for presentations as promptly as possible, within the constraints of Massachusetts Open

Meeting Law. A majority vote will be sufficient to accept or reject such applications.” All members approved this addition.

Drew Herzig discussed a possible request to Mayor Tyer to not make public HRC member’s personal information at the time of application for HRC membership (home address, phone number, etc.) Peter Marchetti said it may not be legal to NOT make this information public. He will send an email to the City Solicitor to clarify.

Drew Herzig suggested that any brainstorming on presentations to HRC, possible proclamations from mayor, and possible recommendations to the City Council be tabled until the May meeting. Motion to do so made by Peter Marchetti, seconded by Jay Lopez. Approved unanimously.

An amendment to the HRC minutes for January 25, 2018 was requested by Marietta Rapetti Cawse concerning the Pittsfield School Committee’s action to change Columbus Day to Indigenous People’s Day. It should read: “All present supported the motion except Marietta Rapetti Cawse who was absent for the vote. She would have opposed the motion. She would have recommended that Columbus Day include Indigenous People’s Day.” A motion to note the amendment was made by Peter Marchetti and seconded by Jessica Christensen. Approved unanimously.

Peter Marchetti discussed creating language to be sure there is no confusion when any member of the HRC is speaking in public. i.e.: when he is speaking as the President of the City Council, he needs to be sure it is known that he is not speaking as a member of the HRC. This will be discussed further when determining mission and function of the HRC at the May meeting.

HRC election of officers is tabled until all members are present.

7. **New Business** – A motion was made by Peter Marchetti to table until the May meeting any discussion on the HRC’s involvement in hateful ideologies. Seconded by Marietta. Approved unanimously.

Drew Herzig spoke to Kara Henderson with the Department of Justice concerning a possible public forum on free speech/hate speech. A motion was made by Peter Marchetti to move forward, seconded by Marietta. Approved unanimously.

Drew Herzig suggested a June Presentation by Richard Collins, LMHC, Co-Responder of the Pittsfield Police Dept. Motion to approve made by Peter Marchetti, seconded by Jessica Christensen, approved unanimously.

Reports of Commissioners – Marietta Rapetti Cawse suggested a future presentation about the Tyler St. revitalization. She will follow-up. There was a short discussion about Berkshire Pride being held June 15, 2019.

A date was chosen for the June meeting; June 3rd at 6 pm. The May meeting will be held May 15th at 7:15 pm.

A motion to adjourn was made by Peter Marchetti, seconded by Marietta and approved unanimously.

