

Pittsfield Human Rights Commission
Minutes – September 23, 2019
6:00 PM, Frioio Senior Center
330 North Street, Pittsfield, MA

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

Members Absent: Jessica Christensen

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Drew Herzig called the meeting to order at 6 PM.
2. **Roll Call of HRC Members** – Drew Herzig announced the roll call of members present.
3. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Peter Marchetti to approve the August 19th 2019 meeting minutes. Seconded by Jay Lopez, approved unanimously.
4. **Public Comment** – None
5. **Unfinished Business** – After a short discussion, a motion was made by Jay Lopez to approve an additional paragraph to the HRC web page concerning the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights which would include a link to the Declaration. Seconded by Robert Sykes, approved unanimously. A motion was made by Peter Marchetti to empower Drew Herzig to make the decision as to where the additional paragraph and link should be added. Seconded by Jay Lopez. Approved unanimously.

There was a discussion and review of a draft letter to be sent to Mr. Alexander Blumin. Drew Herzig suggested minor changes to the last paragraph. Peter Marchetti offered to sign and send the letter to Mr. Blumin. This letter will be used as a template for any further complaints filed. A motion was made to send this letter to Mr. Alexander Blumin regarding his complaints, as written, by Marietta Rapetti Cawse, seconded by Jay Lopez. Approved unanimously.

There was a discussion about the complaint process concerning privacy issues and what the HRC's responsibility should be.

There was continued discussion on the mission and function of the HRC, as well as procedures of other Human Rights Commissions. Drew Herzig suggested having a special listening session for the general public. Peter Marchetti suggested reaching out to the West Side Initiative and the Christian Center to partner up with them for this listening session. Drew Herzig will contact Linda Morris Kelly to see what she thinks about this idea. In addition, Peter Marchetti noted that the Christian Center meets the 2nd Monday of the month and the West Side Initiative meets the 4th Monday.

Peter Marchetti discussed the concept of renewing the pledge that Pittsfield is a community of “No Place for Hate.” He noted that missing from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a statement that people have the right to live without fear. There was discussion about how the HRC be pro-active on these issues.

6. The HRC election of officers has been postponed until our next meeting. All members agreed.

7. **New Business – None**

The HRC is invited to co-sponsor the Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) in November. Motion was made by Peter Marchetti to participate, seconded by Jay Lopez. Approved unanimously.

8. **Reports of Commissions** – It was noted that Third Thursday “Walk a Mile” is September 19th.

The October meeting date has not been set. Berkshire County DA, Andrea Harrington, may be available to make a presentation at that meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made by Peter Marchetti, seconded by Jay Lopez. Approved unanimously.