

Rutherford Civil Rights Commission  
June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order on Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, at 6:36 p.m.

Roll Call:

1. Steve Way, Shefali Pilar, Michael Szarek, Rob Lyons, Beverly Khan, Al Aguavivas, Sophia Masullo, Renjith Pillai, Matthew Cokelely, Jessica Lezcano. Sami Abuquad, and Robert Kenney in attendance

Sunshine Law Read

Meeting Opened to the Public: Eddy Rolon, Scott Fontana, Abbey novia, Eli Cap

2. Abbey: on anti-racist Facebook page, she is an educator, wants to be involved in how anti-racist education will be implemented in schools
3. Eddy: hopes the Commission will host, sponsor, or moderate a debate between candidates for council

Approval of 6/8/20 meeting minutes

1. A new slack channel has been created to upload minutes
2. Bev motioned to accept, Steve seconded, all were found in favor

Juneteenth

1. Rob and Bev: at 5:00 at the Baptist church, Rob will have a zoom in the background and Bev will be at the front
2. We have confirmed a total of 15 children to read everything from the pledge of allegiance to Beyoncé lyrics which concern Juneteenth
3. Public is invited to the zoom
4. Steve will do closing remarks either from zoom or in the church parking lot
5. Notice of the event is posted on Facebook

Website Updates

1. Al: we don't have an estimate for the cost of the domain name
2. Renjith: website is estimated at \$120 per year
3. Al: hosting company will allow us a rate of \$10 a month instead of \$20
4. Matthew: that is a standard rate in the business, so if the town has no conflict it should be ok

5. Matthew and Al are going to be actually designing the website
6. Al: motion to get the hosting account at \$120 a year and domain name for \$92.95 a year and get reimbursed by Commission; Matt seconded, all were found in favor
7. Al: we have a resources part of website to have books and podcasts; we need to start building the data that will get implemented on the website
8. Bev: would be happy to take on writing bios of commission members
9. Shefali: can take care of the mission and what our goals are; Steve would love to have a 1-on-1 with her to talk about our history
10. Al: we could have a map of the town where certain things related to civil rights have happened
11. Shefali: it will be helpful to look at other towns' websites to see what they are talking about in terms of civil rights

#### Headshots

1. Need 3 more people, tomorrow Sami is meeting with two people in Lincoln park at 5:30 on the 18th

#### Survey

1. Bev has been in contact with members of the anti-racist initiative
2. They gave us the top bullet points they want the commission to address; we would like to have a zoom with leaders of initiative
3. Bev: We will review the questions outside of this meeting
4. Al: for some of the questions we have to reach out to the police department or education department

#### Mike: Poster and Essay Update

1. Mike and Steve will meet, Mike has essays and Steve has the posters, they will pick up on where they left up three months ago
2. Steve reached out to Abbey, "are you aware that this school year will be the first that civil rights education is required for all grades and LGBT education will be added to curriculum?"
3. Rob: we will need to check with the department of education as to what their plan of implementation is
4. Abbey: asked how the plan will move forward with the survey, she was not aware of the new initiatives and is curious as to what is in the new curriculum

#### Scholarship Award

1. Robert: there is a good chance we will need to get funding, would like to reach out to education committee about how we draw in scholarship applicants, possibly allow applicants to submit something creative other than a written application
2. Steve: this year we allowed people can submit a song or poetry, that worked well
3. Robert: the person who donates will likely have a little bit of a say in what they are looking for in scholarship applications

#### Archives

1. Al: last week he picked up archives from the 1960's and 1970's to digitize and set them up correctly
2. we would like an intern to help with the archives, scanning pages and looking at what we can implement on the website so people can search a database and look through the civil rights archives
3. Jessica: the town has a grant writer we can reach out to

#### Plaque for Barbara Bennett

1. Tentative dedication date is Saturday July 25<sup>th</sup>, Barbara's birthday
2. We are looking to place it at Memorial Field

#### NJ Division of Civil Rights

1. Steve asked about our bylaws, the state will not have them, the state was surprised that we were asking about protocol for what we do when someone comes to us and feels their rights have been violated
  - a. The state said to "read and be familiar with resources on the website"
  - b. We don't have the most well-oiled machine
2. Steve might reach out to the county to see if they will have them
3. Rob: will look at the NJ department of civil rights' processes to look for protocols to put on the website

#### Future Events and Fundraisers

1. Bev: hasn't followed up about the interfaith vigil, Mike has updated the list of places of worship
2. After the Juneteenth event we will switch gears and focus on the interfaith vigil
3. Steve: the Commission is due for a fundraiser soon, we should brainstorm ideas for how we can fundraise in the COVID-19 world, we are just looking to raise money generally for the commission

4. Robert: everyone is going outside, riding bikes, walking, maybe we could have a ride-down-Orient way where everyone contributes \$5 to go on a walk/ride
5. Rob suggested a moving multicultural festival, Jessica suggested hosting a scavenger hunt and putting QR codes around town, Steve proposed something as simple as selling lawn signs, Abbey suggested a decorate-your-bike contest, and Bev proposed putting your nationality flag on your bike and then have a parade
6. Al: we'll set something up on the website that allows people to donate directly to us
7. Regarding bylaws, Bev asked if we had them published, Steve responded that we do not and that he would reach out to the county

Next Meeting is Wednesday, July 15th

Meeting Adjourned at 7:52 p.m.