



RUTHERFORD CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES – NOVEMBER 18, 2020

Meeting via ZOOM

Topic: Rutherford Civil Rights Commission's ZOOM Meeting

Time: November 18, 2020 6:30pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join ZOOM Meeting

Meeting ID: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89137891311>

PRESENT –Beverly Khan Pal, Jessica Lezcano, Shefali Pilar, Steve Way, Renjith Pilai, Beverly Khan, Jessica Lezcano (Matt Cokeley joined later)

NOT PRESENT – Juan Morales, Robbie Kenney, Sami Abuauad, Tarek Salib, Alcides Aguasvivas,

COUNCIL LIAISON – Not Present Eddie Narucki

GUESTS – Robin Reenstra, Christie Del Rey-Cone, Paul Frazier, Mark Tenn

6:39p – Call to order – Reading of Sunshine Law – Steve Way

REVIEW PAST MINUTES – completed

GUESTS

Robin Reenstra – Has been on the Commission since 1964 when it was first created.

Christie Del Rey-Cone – Moved to Rutherford in June 2017 from NYC. Has 2 daughters and a son (Pierrepoint). She is an employment lawyer and owns a practice in NYC. She gives corporate training with regards to discrimination and is a mediator for the courts of NYC. She wants to contribute her expertise the best way she can locally, and she felt that the Commission would be a good start. Her husband is the Chief Public Officer for the Robin Hood Foundation.

Paul Frazier – Grew up in Rutherford since 4th grade. Has been away from Rutherford for almost 20 years and just moved back. He is in the music business and travels around the world and makes people smile. Has two sons in Rutherford (age 8,4), one in DC, and two in Montclair State.

Mark Tenn – Originally from London and his wife is from NY. He works in the film business. Two kids (ages 12,14).

GOALS OF THE COMMISSION

Steve reviewed the goals of the Commission, that there is room for growth for the Commission and hopefully the New Year will be better.

Steve reviewed that we have an annual multicultural festival, movie at the library for black history month, MLK Day Service, Book Club (started this year)

MEDIATION PROCES REVIEWED

Beverly – Mentioned how we cannot act on anything until there is a formal complaint. She reviewed some incidents that had occurred in town.

Robin – In the past, people would file complaints with the Mayor or Police and they would then come to the Commission to help mediate. Now, it seems that the reverse is happening where people are coming directly to the Commission and bypassing the proper authorities which then does not allow us to do much because we cannot proceed with mediation without a formal complaint. She feels that it would be helpful if we took a proactive stance by inviting the proper groups into a discussion.

Steve reviewed the mediation process – Someone will come to us with a complaint and then we will do what we can to mediate the situation and if we cannot, then we will refer the situation to the Newark Division. He wants to try to have a more open dialogue between the police, the Commission and the Rutherford Council. He is aware that people are reactionary, so we want to try to handle the situation before people go to the press or start making posts online and jumping to conclusions before they have all the facts.

Christie – also feels that online social media posts do not help resolve situations

NEWSLETTER

Steve – Any thoughts on what a community newsletter can look like and thoughts about it

Robin – Feels that it would be valuable.

Christie – A newsletter will be helpful to have a non-adversarial way to pass information along that will introduce people to different points of view.

Beverly – We have a new URL that is a great platform that should be up and running by next year.

Newsletters are a great idea but will only be successful if we have people to contribute and people will read it.

Mark Tenn – Inquired if we will have a specific format and what we will include – local information, things happening around the world

Beverly – Mentioned that we have no format set yet and it could be anything really

Robin – Commented that the Borough website did not have any information about this meeting and she had to really look to find when/where the meeting was. So, we need to make sure that all the locations (newsletter, website, borough website) have all the relevant information, dates/times consistently.

Steve – Agrees that we need to be more conscious and aware of what Robin just mentioned.

BOOKCLUB

Beverly - 2nd session for the book “Caste” will be tonight. She picked this book because it gives the pillars and foundations for why we got here and this book teaches a lot about our history. She wants to redo “Caste” in January 2021 for people that missed it this time around. Books for next year “How to be an Anti-Racist” and “Frederick Douglass” – for Feb/March. She wants to put together a flyer or a syllabus for next year. The last book discussion resulted in great stories being shared. It is a very casual chat.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Steve – Initial name of the community service award was Rutherford Civil Rights Commission Community Service Award. Spoke about renaming the award.

Beverly – Gave background of how B. Goldberg was a Commission Chair and had been on the Commission for 25 years.

Vote taken to change name to Rutherford Civil Rights Commission B. Goldberg Community Service Award and approved.

Steve – recommended Jasmine Mena to receive the award. Matt nominated her and Beverly seconded it. Vote passed.

NEX MEETING

Next M and C Meeting – Monday, December 14th

Next Commission meeting – Wednesday, December 16th

7:27pm – Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Shefali Pilar