



RUTHERFORD CIVIAL RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES January 19, 2022

Meeting via ZOOM

Topic: Rutherford Civil Rights Commission’s ZOOM Meeting

Time: January 19, 2022, 6:30pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join ZOOM Meeting

Meeting ID:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995990237?pwd=b0lramZxVDV5YmV1bjRFbHdGdmVqQT09>

Beverly Khan Pal	Matt Cokeley (Council Liaison) –
Steve Way	Gretchen Corsillo (Library Liaison)
Renjith Pillai	Jessica Warren Frazier – 127 Wheaton Place
Alcides Aguasvivas	
Shefali Pilar	
Ginny Perrin	
Christie Del Rey-Cone	
Mark Tenn	
Lori Rosario-Griffin	
Jessica Lezcano	
Paul Frazier	
Sami Abuauad	
Esther Gatria	

*Present – highlighted

6:38pm – Steve called meeting to order

- Roll call completed
- Library
 - Gretchen spoke about development of a 5-year plan for which they have established a questionnaire to get feedback as to what people want from the library. This questionnaire is open through Jan 31st.
 - In-person events on hold right now due to high COVID cases. They are hoping to bring them back in February.
- Steve called meeting to order at 6:40pm and read the Sunshine Law

- Esther motioned to approve the minutes from November 2021 and Alcides seconded
- Meeting open to the public
 - Jessica Warren Frazier indicated that she is just here to observe
- Steve reviewed some positive points
 - Bylaws were accepted by Mayor and Council
 - Multicultural Festival was a great success
 - Expects 2022 to be even better
 - This is Steve's 8th and last year
- Calendar and Duties Spreadsheet – reviewed by Beverly
 - Each of the below mentioned tabs have tasks that members would sign up for
 - The chairperson of each event will change the tasks as necessary
 - MKL Day – Jan 2022
 - Poetic Celebration of Black History Poetry - Feb 2022
 - Women's History
 - Pride Festival
 - Juneteenth
 - Movie Night
 - Rutherford Day
 - Festival
 - Ginny requested that we look at our mission rather than specific events
 - Mark – Events would be much smoother if we could have committees or teams of people who would sign up and take charge of specific events.
 - Ginny – The committees created last year were much broader than the ones implied in the Duties Spreadsheet
 - Mark – There is no explanation for why those committees did not move forward the way planned so he is thinking of streamlining it into 3 major committees (communication, liaison with businesses/schools, finance/fundraising).
 - Ginny – Recommends that we have a committee that should look at the big picture rather than have committees that are event driven.
 - Jessica – The events have given us a presence in the community and makes the RCRC more approachable
 - Christie – Agrees that we are talking about two separate things: our events need to be better equipped and tasked and also, we need to still get our mission and goal out there so the community understands what we are doing
 - What do we want the community to think we are here for?
 - We want them to know we are here for more than just cool events.
 - What should we be doing as a group?
 - We should be trained, and field equipped to hash out the issues that we are supposed to handle – an example of what we should do internally.
 - More information is necessary with regards to human connection because we are not just about civil rights
 - Because these events are time consuming, are we going to lose some of what we are meant to be here to do if we focus only on events.
 - Ginny – We are a commission and part of the government and should look at how we can advise the Mayor and Council. If we focus on the mission, the events will fall in place.

- Beverly – the calendar that was presented was not an indication of what we must do this year but rather a place to start putting ideas down.
 - Councilman Cokeley – he remembers that the topics we are discussing right now were similar to what were discussed a couple of years ago.
 - The RCRC was rebranded successfully and what we need to do now is to focus on tangible tasks.
 - Perhaps consider putting a white paper on critical race theory
 - If he could bring issues/questions to the committee, it would be helpful to get input from us.
 - Alcides - We have the framework and template of last years events so that should be easy enough to take care
 - The real question is what we are now going to do with regards to what the purpose of RCRC was
 - The past founder would write suggestions to the state that would change laws regarding civil rights
 - Ginny – the committees that we came up with were from a past/old vision
 - It is time to look at the mission and really think about who we want to effect change in Rutherford, county, state.
 - Mark - mentioned that even he had a loss as to what our role is and what we should be doing.
 - The committees that were mentioned are not event based but skills based.
 - Sami – suggests that we need to get to know each other and talk about our ideas as well
 - Christie – recommended a retreat (2-3 hours together)
- Skill sets of the commissioners
 - Christie – employment lawyer; deals with civil rights issue; mediator. She had a pod cast for 18 months and they spoke of various generational issues. Her skill set here has been helping with drafting the bylaws and any other
 - Shefali – was asked to join the RCRC. Owns a dental practice and has the skill set of being able to communicate and interact with a variety of people from various backgrounds and execute tasks in an organized and timely manner.
 - Paul – works in the music world. He is good with dealing with people and working with people in all different situations. He wants to be a part of helping with what Rutherford can be. It is very important to be able to talk together and sit. We are not here only for our skill sets; we are here to help people.
 - Ginny – she is a leader and started a school. She has run the US Federation for Dragon Boating. Part of what she was is a mediator – bringing groups in conflict and helping them bring. She is organized and a listener. She tries to provide things in writing. Her passion is missions – and being a mission driven organization. She came here because she comes from work trying to be an anti-racism group. She wants to create a work where we can accept one another.
 - Alcides – he has always been a person who has been big about helping people. His family has always been in politics, and he knew that he never wanted to be a part of it. However, he felt this was the perfect organization that will help him achieve helping people without being a politician. He owns a branding and marketing company (almost

18 years) and has a background in website/digital marketing. In November, he launched an NFT space.

- Steve Way – he was asked to join the RCRC in 2015 after he was discriminated against in a restaurant in Rutherford. He is a great speaker and speaks about a variety of topics (disability issues, healthcare issues). He knows how to fight for people. He wants to have people feel comfortable coming to him and trust him with civil rights issues. He is writing books and will soon film a show about his life.
- Renjith – professionally he is an IT manager. He joined RCRC because whenever he wants to help someone in whatever way he can. He has some financial management experience.
- Esther – she volunteered to join the RCRC. She feels that she is living in this great town and wants to be able to help people. She works in HR at the Housing Authority – she developed the HR department on her own. She is a history major. She is a people person.
- Lori – she was asked to join the RCRC. She is a good multi-tasker. She is an attorney and prides herself with having a good attention to detail. She knows a lot of people in town.
- Mark – he comes from a culturally mixed background. He taught English in Japan for 3 years as a cross cultural exchange. He works in film and a writer for an agency. He believes in finding common ground with people and likes to help people.
- Jessica – She is a legacy member for the RCRC (her mom was a member). She works for the Borough. Her chosen career path is helping people.
- Sami – He was asked to join the RCRC and wants to be able to help people. He apologized for not being as involved last year and is ready to take on any tasks needed this year.
- Beverly – has been in Rutherford since she was 9 years old. She has always been interested in what this commission does. Professionally she is an adult educator, leadership training, coaching, organizing large groups. She has fun networking and thinks she can help bridge the gap between the old Rutherfordian and the newer people moving into our town.
- The Historic Preservation Committee was able to get the Hauge House plaque completed
- Grant updates
 - Jessica – Bergen County Arts granted \$5193 for us to use for the Multicultural Festival
- Christie
 - Beverly asked Christie to get in touch with Claudia Suraya (she is active with the Red Wheel Barrel).
 - Claudia’s comfort lever is still ZOOM for the event
 - Possible dates: Feb 23th or Feb 24th – Christie will let Claudia select the date based on which will have more poets available.
 - This event is low pressure; it just requires advertising.

Meeting called to close by Beverly at 8:01pm