

# Boston Human Rights Commission Public Meeting Minutes

November 17th, 2022 at 5PM via Zoom

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**Present:**      **Commissioners:** Chairwoman Reyes Coll-Tellechea and Commissioners Anne Rousseau, Robert MacEachern, Mario Paredes, Elijah Evans and Tre' Andre Carmel Valentine (Commissioner Leonard Lee was absent)  
**Others:** Approximately 5 individuals from the public attended this meeting.

## A. Introductions

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea called the Meeting to order at 5PM.

## B. Interim Director's Report

1. In regards to staff trainings, staff completed the Public Accommodations training offered by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). Additionally, the mediation training that was offered and sponsored by the Boston Human Rights Commission (hereinafter "BHRC") to other Equity and Inclusion Cabinet staff has concluded. There are no upcoming training sessions scheduled.
2. There are no new updates for the IT Ethics Coalition that the City of Boston is looking to put together. It is still in its preliminary stages but Director Helmy has met with the IT department to offer her advice and feedback.
3. In regards to the Anti-Hate Campaign, it is still being developed and will continue to be developed with the onboarding of the new hire. The focus of this Campaign will be education and outreach. It will include the current research conducted by the Ph.D candidate interns, resource guides, how-to guides and educational workshops conducted in different spaces such as faith centers and BPS high schools.
4. To end her report, Interim Director Helmy introduced Denise DosSantos as the new Education and Outreach Manager.

## C. Chair's Report

1. Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea spoke to several of the Commissioners including herself that attended a civil rights forum hosted by Councilor Louijeune on November 14th. It was also there that the Councilor informed the Chairwoman that she had filed an order for a hearing to review BHRC's Ordinance.
2. Lastly, the Ph.D candidate interns that Chairwoman Coll-Tellechea supervises will each be ready to provide a presentation of their research findings during the next Commission meeting. These presentations will include both data findings and recommendations.

#### **D. Commissioner Rousseau's Remarks**

1. Commissioner Rousseau informed the Commissioners of several grants that were awarded to Tech Goes Home. This is an organization that BHRC had invited to a Commission Meeting last year while studying the Digital Divide in Boston.
  - a. These funds will be used to create Digital navigators that will train individuals on access to the internet. Additionally, it will help more participants obtain a computer.
  - b. In a survey it stated that better access to the internet led to 1 in 3 individuals finding a new or higher paying job.
2. Commissioner Rousseau also informed the Commission that November is Trans Awareness month. BHRC should develop a robust response to incidents of hate.
  - a. This year in the United States, 32 transgender individuals have been fatally shot.
  - b. The Commissioners unanimously voted to draft a statement on transgender violence and hate crimes.
    - a. Commissioner Paredes added that the statement should invite individuals to connect with BHRC.

#### **E. Continued Discussion on Preliminary Discussion of 2022-2023 Objectives**

1. The below objectives are both combined from the previous meetings and the current meeting:
  - a. **Recommendations on hate crimes/bias incidents in Boston.** Supervised by Commissioner Coll-Tellechea, Boston Human Rights graduates interns will provide research on 1) hate/bias incidents reporting in Massachusetts and Boston and 2) Human Rights campaigns sponsored/monitored/ led by the Human Rights Commission in the US.The goal is to set up discussions that lead to concrete policy recommendations on hate reporting and anti-hate campaigns for the City of Boston.
  - b. **Increase commissioner's active presence in the local community.** Independently or upon notification by the Executive Director, individual commissioners will attend and contribute to events and/or public meetings related to Human Rights in Boston and will report to the Commission on a monthly basis. The goal is established direct contact with as many local community groups as possible and to open direct and independent channels of communication, especially in the local communities most affected by hate and discrimination in Boston.
  - c. **Monitor Boston Police Reform.** Commissioners will continue monitoring progress of Boston Police reform. This will require reviewing latest reports, open meetings with BPD representatives, and with OPAT's representatives to update BHRC's score-card and 2021 report. It will include reviewing the application of Boston's new ordinance on

