

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 29, 2020 | 6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions – Anna Payne, Middletown Township Board of Supervisors

Ms. Payne welcomed members of the newly-formed Human Relations Commission (HRC) and thanked them for their willingness to serve.

The following members of the commission were present, each providing a brief introduction of themselves: Donna Fann-Boyle, Kathleen Chalmers, David Devore, Craig Meyers, Bernadette Hannah-Barone, Kate Simpson and Andrew Laureti.

Also in attendance were Township Manager Stephanie Teoli Kuhls and Supervisor Tom Tosti.

2. Presentation by Carl Summerson, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

3. Review of Commission Responsibilities and Tasks

Ms. Teoli Kuhls provided a general overview of the responsibilities of the commission, explaining that the group will accept complaints, investigate and mediate matters brought before them. She highlighted that, because most local HRCs rarely deal with complaints, the focus is often on providing information and education to residents as well as scheduling public events and talks.

Ms. Teoli Kuhls then introduced Carl Summerson of the PHRC. Mr. Summerson noted that the commission's responsibilities included both raising awareness about the rights of those protected by the ordinance as well as mediating and holding fact-finding hearings when a complaint is made. He then provided an explanation of Middletown Ordinance 20-06, focusing specifically on Sections 15-500 through 15-504.

4. Examples of other Municipal HRC activities

Ms. Teoli Kuhls displayed examples of the work of other municipal HRCs including informational brochures and flyers. She highlighted examples of events including Pride Month, lectures on African American history, book events with the Peace Center.

Discussion then ensued among members of the commission. Ms. Fann-Boyle noted the importance of truthful education efforts regarding Native Americans. Ms. Hannah expressed interest in pride and LGBTQ events, emphasizing importance of children being heard. Ms. Simpson mentioned the importance of targeting different age groups. Ms. Fann-Boyle referenced the resources of the Kids Bridge Tolerance Center in Ewing, NJ. Ms. Payne suggested using video in public information efforts.

5. Discussion of Proposed 2021 Quarterly Meeting Schedule:

Ms. Teoli Kuhls explained that the group might consider meeting monthly during the first four to six months of 2021 as the commission gets organized, and consider a shift to quarterly later in the year. There was common consensus that monthly meetings seemed to make sense. Ms. Teoli Kuhls reported that she would send out a poll to commission members to schedule the January 2021 meeting. She also explained that the group should be prepared to elect officers at that meeting.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.