

Brookline Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations Meeting

April 26, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Town Hall – Room 111

Commissioners Present: Alex Coleman, Malcolm Cawthorne, Ernest Frey, Brian Myles, Tony Naro, Kelly Race, Dwain Tyndal, Kea van der Ziel

Liaisons and Staff Present: Lloyd Gellineau - Director of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations

Commissioners Absent: Sandy Batchelder, Wesley Chin, Enid Shapiro, Ginny Vaz

Liaisons Absent: Ben Chang – School Committee, Bernard Greene – BOS, Michael Gropman - Police Department

Reporter: Kelly Race

Minutes

Meeting called to order by Alex Coleman, Chair at 6:35 p.m.

Motion to appoint Kelly Race to take the minutes for tonight's meeting. Approved by unanimous vote.

Policy Against Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Retaliation

Alex explained that this policy has existed for some time. The Human Resources (HR) Office and the Human Resources Board made some edits. Before the BOS votes on the revised policy, Neil Wishinsky has given the CDICR the opportunity to provide input on the policy. We agreed to the following edits:

- On page 7 all additions of “*or other electronic means*” and “*or through other electronic means*”.
- On page 7 the second bullet: “*Preference to employees because they are involved in a consensual sexual or romantic relationship or less favorable treatment of same because they are not involved in a consensual sexual or romantic relationship; and*”
- On page 9 “*Supervisors found to have tolerated, condoned or failed to promptly report discrimination, sexual harassment and/or retaliation, as defined by this Policy, will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.*”

In the last paragraph of section IV Prohibited Sexual Harassment, we do not agree that relationships between co-workers need to be reported. This is an invasion of privacy without any positive benefit to the Town. We suggest removing “dating” as “romantic or sexual” sufficiently describe the nature of the types of relationships. We also suggest not limiting prohibition on romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and employees to direct reports. Supervisors should be prohibited from having a relationship with any subordinate at any level. We recommend changing the full added paragraph (page 7) to:

“Supervisors are prohibited from engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with any employee who reports to them.”

The last two added paragraphs of section VIII Requirements for Supervisors should be deleted and replaced with: “*No supervisors shall engage in a romantic or sexual relationship with an employee who reports to the supervisor.*”

Due to time constraints, we agree to table the discussion until we have covered the other agenda items.

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes for 12/16/15, 1/4/16, 1/27/16 were already approved with no edits. Lloyd will post.
- Minutes for 3/16/16. Tony moved to accept the minutes as written, Malcolm seconded. AC, EF, DT, BM, MC, AN voted in favor. KR abstained. Minutes approved.
- Minutes for 4/5/16. Brian voiced his concern in summarizing the discussion by individual as it cannot fully capture all the points. The group agreed to table the approval of the minutes.

Proposals from Complaint Process Working Group

We first discussed the Proposal to Form a Complaint Screening Committee. There was concern that complainants would be better served by going through the CDO's office rather than meeting with a subset of the commission. The working group believes that the majority of complainants would be best served by going through the CDO but there may be cases where people aren't comfortable doing that. Complainants would find it less intimidating to talk with a small group rather than the full commission. We agree to the idea of forming a committee for this purpose.

We discussed having goals and objectives for the CDICR that the Complaint Committee would also apply when hearing complaints.

We reviewed the Proposed Procedure for Complain Screening Committee for Other Complaints. There was discussion about having timeframes for the steps in the procedure. The working group has proposed that there not be fixed timeframes but that timeframes be set by the committee based on each individual case.

Brian moved that we agree to a 6 and 12 month review of the Complaint Process to see if it is meeting our expectations. All voted in favor: MC, AN, AC, EF, DT, BM, KZ, KR. Motion approved unanimously

We agreed to delay the vote on the Proposal to Form a Complaint Screening Committee, the Proposed Procedure for Complain Screening Committee for Complaints Against the Town or School Department, and the Proposed Procedure for Complain Screening Committee for Other Complaints until the May meeting. By then Tony will add our agreed edits, fix all typos, and add page numbers. We should also have more commission members who were not on the working group present for the vote.

Annual Report

The annual report is in process and should be completed by the beginning of the week of May 9. Alex will distribute to the full commission.

Next Meeting

Our May meeting will be on Wednesday, May 18.

CDO Update

Lloyd informed us that the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event was this past Sunday. The number of participants was down but it was a successful event that reached out to the public.

The CDICR is the sponsor of "The Big Idea" World Café on May 4. The event is open to everyone.

Lloyd attended the NAACP Northeast dinner.

Lloyd suggested that Brookline should consider joining the Government Alliance for Racial Equity. Lloyd will be looking at whether we should join the Boston chapter as an affiliate or form our own chapter.

Information will be sent out on the Roland Hayes memorial marker that will be placed outside his former home in Brookline.

Lloyd has been receiving feedback on issues regarding the website. The challenge is keeping information up to date. Lloyd will make this a priority and assign a dedicated resource.

New Business

Malcolm reminded the group that the Day of Dialog at the high school is this Thursday. It is an all day event and the public is welcome.

Public Comment

Patricia Connors congratulated the commission on completing the complaint process and our productive conversation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. by Alex Coleman, Chair.