

MINUTES

SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Landis called the Susquehanna Township Human Relations Commission Meeting to order at 6:30 PM. This meeting was held in a dual in-person and virtual format.

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND SECRETARY:

Mr. Landis turned the meeting over to Manager Priibulka.

Manager Pribulka asked for nominations for Human Relations Commission Chair.

Ms. Putnam nominated Ray Landis for Chair. Hearing no other nominations and by unanimous vote, Mr. Landis was approved as Chair.

Manager Pribulka then turned the meeting back over to Chair Landis to resume the nominations. Chair Landis thanked the Commission for their confidence in him. He then confirmed with Manager Pribulka that there is currently a vacancy on the Commission.

Chair Landis asked for nominations for Vice Chair of the Human Relations Commission.

Mr. Champagne nominated Mary Nancarrow as Vice Chair of the Human Relations Commission. Hearing no other nominations, and by unanimous vote, Ms. Nancarrow was approved as Vice Chair.

Chair Landis asked for nominations for Secretary of the Human Relations Commission.

Mr. Champagne nominated Ms. Putnam as Secretary of the Human Relations Commission. Hearing no other nominations, and by unanimous vote, Ms. Putnam was approved as Secretary.

ROLL CALL:

Jeff Champagne - Present

Raymond Landis - Present

Stanley Lawson - Excused

Amy Putnam - Present

Mary Nancarrow - Present

Dr. Judith Samkoff – Excused

Daniesha Dunbar-Yancey - Present

Kristen Herman - Present

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL:

David Pribulka, Township Manager

Kathy Fry, Executive Assistant

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Damian DeStefano, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission – attended virtually.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Vice Chairperson Nancarrow made a motion to approve the June 15, 2022, Human Relations Commission Meeting Minutes; seconded by Kristen Herman and then unanimously approved.

REVIEW OF COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES & PRESENTATION FROM PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Manager Pribulka reviewed the provisions of the Susquehanna Township Discrimination Ordinance with the HRC members.

He then introduced Damian DeStefano, Commission Counsel for the Pennsylvania Human Relation Commission.

Mr. DeStefano informed the HRC that the updated Pennsylvania Human Relations Act has been updated to include the ability to file claims of sexual or gender identification. It is now before the General Assembly who have asked for time to review.

The HRC and Mr. DeStefano discussed how the new regulations, if passed, would affect who would handle claims. It was also noted that complainants would need to exhaust all administrative remedies at local and/or state level prior to moving onto court.

Mr. DeStefano will be providing the HRC with a copy of the recent legislation for them to review.

Manager Pribulka noted that as the PHRC expands its jurisdiction, it will limit the local HRC. The timelines for filing locally and the cost of filing may be lower when handled locally. It was also discussed if the Township Ordinance should be updated and if this should be taken to the Board of Commissioners for discussion.

There was a general consensus from the HRC that they will again take up this discussion after the State Legislature acts.

DISCUSSION OF NEPALESE/BHUTANESE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Manager Pribulka and Chair Landis met with Tilak Niroula, Bhutan Board member and were surprised to learn of the number of Nepalese/Bhutanese people who now reside in the Township. At this meeting they explored ways to interact with this part of the community. It was noted that a request has been made for Cricket fields, as this is a prominent sport within this community. The Township is also exploring ways to bring more youth oriented activities to help prevent addiction problems and to teach English to the older generation.

It was noted that we need to be more productive in educating this part of our community with property maintenance. They also discussed ways to make them feel more comfortable and how to help them assimilate into the Township more smoothly.

2023 PRIDE FESTIVAL OF CENTRAL PA:

Manager Pribulka informed the Commission that the 2023 Pride Festival will occur on July 29, 2023, from 11 AM to 6 PM at Soldier's Grove. The Township has been approved as a vendor. After some discussion, there was a consensus that the HRC should be involved.

The March meeting was cancelled and the HRC will meet on June 21, 2023.

CITIZEN AND COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

There was no additional comment from the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

Secretary Putnam moved to adjourn the Human Relations Committee meeting at 8:01 P.M.; seconded by Vice Chair Nancarrow.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Putnam
Secretary to the Commission