

ONEONTA, NEW YORK – FEBRUARY 28, 2013 – 7:00 P.M.

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY
RELATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

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PRESENT: Chair Joyce Miller
Commissioner Fida Mohammad
Commissioner Teressa Sivers
Commissioner Tom Kelly
Commissioner Cecilia Zapata
Commissioner Muga Katoke
Council Member Russ Southard

ABSENT: None

Chair Miller called the regular meeting to order and called the roll.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

To make it easier for everyone, Chair Miller asked that the commissioners indicate whether they would like her to continue serving as Chair. By consensus of the commission, Joyce Miller was reelected as Chair.

Chair Miller stated that there were two (2) new commissioners; Cecilia Zapata and Muga Katoke. She asked that everyone introduce themselves and tell a little about themselves.

PETITIONERS - There were no petitioners.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Miller reported there was no correspondence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Miller reported that she did not have any announcements to make.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Miller briefed the new members of what was discussed at the last meeting held, November 29, 2012. She informed the new members that the minutes of all the meetings are put online and City Clerk sends an email notifying the commissioners when the minutes are available.

MOTION, made by Commissioner Kelly and seconded by Commissioner Mohammad that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 29, 2012 be approved.

Voting Ayes: Chair Miller
Commissioner Mohammad
Commissioner Sivers
Commissioner Kelly
Commissioner Zapata
Commissioner Katoke

Voting Noes: None

Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS

Trailblazer Award – Chair Miller explained that the Trailblazer Award was established seven (7) years ago and since March is Women’s History Month, the award was established as a March event. She stated the application is online and will be advertised in the media. She informed the commission that she is aware of one person who will be nominated. By consensus of the commission, Chair Miller stated that she would contact individuals who submitted nominations in the past who were not selected to inquire whether they would like to have those names put forward again.

Chair Miller reported that the commission will review all the nominations submitted at the Tuesday, March 26th commission meeting and select a person or persons. She stressed that it was very important that all the commissioners are present to review the nominations.

Martin Luther King Event

Chair Miller reported that the Martin Luther King event was very well attended at the Elm Park Methodist Church.

Commissioner Kelly stated that Council Member Lynch spoke very highly at the event and did a good job representing the Mayor.

Chair Miller reported that the Martin Luther King Event is now a joint effort with the NAACP.

Educational Opportunities

Chair Miller stated that the commission briefly discussed the possible topics for educational opportunities. She said part of the commission’s responsibility is education of the community.

Commissioner Kelly discussed the safe space training that is conducted at Hartwick College by a group from Binghamton.

Melissa Fallon in the Health Center at SUNY conducts a 1 ½ - 2 hour training on safe space training in a lecture style for large audiences and a group workshop for small audiences.

The commission discussed contacting PFLAG and opening this up to the public.

The commission discussed reaching out to high school students and their parents and considered providing training to the high school.

The commission discussed bullying and the need to target groups to have more than one bullying workshop.

The commission discussed ageism and seeing different ages in a different light. There is a large number of young men searching for employment.

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The commission discussed economics and poverty. It was felt that the commission should reach out for input from food pantries, the Family Service Association, social agencies, Opportunities for Otsego and Catholic Charities.

Commissioner Siverson stated that she would be happy to have conversations with the lead persons of the organizations mentioned.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Miller stated that the commission is short one commissioner. She stated that Jeremy Redlien, who was on the commission, was a voice from the gay and lesbian community and she believed the Mayor is actively looking for a member from the gay and lesbian community to serve on the commission again. She asked that if anyone has any suggestions that they pass them on to Mayor Miller.

Commissioner Mohammad discussed concerns with regard to the closing of Center Street School. He felt that people should be heard.

The commission discussed the possibility of another elementary school closing.

There being no further business to come before the commission, Chair Miller duly adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:00 p.m.

JAMES R. KOURY, City Clerk

JRK/bsm