



## Minutes for the Human Relations Commission

### Combined October and November Meeting held on 11-02-2020

1. Meeting called to order
2. Roll Call
3. Attendees: Ritu Goel, Karell Rose, Beena Pandit, Anitha Elango, Charlie Margolis, Mary Etter, Linda Jeski, Carolyn Carey, Town Council Liaison: MJ Hockenberry, Sandy Westbrook from the South Windsor Public Library, Erica Evans from the Town Council. Absent: James O'Brien, Christy Shaher
4. Approval of Minutes from the September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 meeting.
5. Chair's Report: Ritu Goel commended Bina Pandit on organizing a very successful online international peace day celebration at very short notice. Discussion on HRC meeting days for 2021, given the constraints of the town finding WEBEX time for HRC meetings. MJ will check with the town IT department about scheduling HRC on either the first second or third Thursday of the month.
6. The meeting moves to item no 9 (proposed by Linda Jeski, seconded by M.J. Hockenberry) on the agenda to voting on new elected members for HRC Chairperson etc. Charlie Margolis nominated Ritu Goel for Chairperson, and Ritu was unanimously approved. Karell Rose nominated Bina Pandit as Vice Chair, seconded by Carolyn Carey and Bina was unanimously approved. Anitha Elango was nominated as secretary by Ritu Goel, seconded by Linda Jeski and unanimously approved.
7. Discussion on HRC and its role in addressing racism in South Windsor. Ritu reported that all 50 fifty signs that were ordered previously have all been distributed and suggested ordering more signs and masks. Carolyn asked about the available budget. Ritu assured the commission that there was enough funding for the rest of the year and to order signs and masks. A motion was made to order more 50 signs and seconded by Charlie Margolis. The motion was approved. Masks with anti-racism messages were discussed. Charlie suggested the message for the mask "*behind the mask we are all the same*" Once the mask design was approved by the commission, the final cost etc. will be approved in the December meeting. Mary Etter will help out by getting comparison quotes for the masks from the vendors that the library uses.
8. Discussion and updates on the HRC and the library joining hands with the BLM Committee from the town council. Sandy Westbrook from the library talked about the programming that the SWPL has in mind for raising awareness on racism in town with a focus on implicit bias. The library would recommend podcasts, maybe make handouts of lists of terms used in implicit bias and also with the help of the HRC buy the research papers of Peggy McIntosh and make them available to the public. Make documentaries or movies on race available.

Karell suggested the film series "*Race- the power of illusion*" as being very relevant.

Input from Erica Evans from the Town Council on the BLM committee. As per the resolution the committee is working on a statement of support about BLM. The committee is fostering community conversations on race which they had already kickstarted with the recently held event and are working with the library to foster community conversations. They are trying to arrange training on racial bias which is still in progress and they do not have specific dates due to the difficulty faced in getting time allocated on WEBEX. A book club starting from Jan 2021 was suggested. HRC will work with the library. Linda Jeski and Anitha Elango from the HRC will coordinate the proposed book club's first January 2021 meeting and will coordinate with the library on conducting the book club.

9. Agenda item was moved and addressed earlier in the meeting.

10. Meeting was adjourned.