



Somerville Human Rights Commission  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
September 21, 2009

Introductions

**1. Next MLK Day Speaker/Theme**

- Brainstorming themes –
  - Justice
  - Lift up your voice
  - Togetherness
  - Working together to support everyone's human rights
    - Highlighting the work that has been done to advance human rights
    - Highlighting the work that still needs to be done
      - Local, state & national level
  
- Talk about human rights issues that have come up in Somerville.
  - Have different groups prepare 5 min presentations
  - Topics can be - poverty, disabilities, etc.
  - Have table outside event with more information from groups presenting so people can take part.

- Speakers – speakers should be contacted in the next 2 months
  - o We will talk further about speakers in the next meeting, bring ideas.

## **2. Recent incidents in Somerville**

- Barry gave a summary of the incidents of ICE raids. ICE apparently did not come into Somerville, but surrounding cities where targeted.
- MBTA officer reported an incident to the county Sheriff's office who then reported the person to ICE.
- Landlord complaint –
  - o Barry spoke to the residents that are affected.
  - o A complaint was filed with the Somerville Police Department
  - o This is a civil dispute and not necessarily a HRC complaint.
  - o Barry will follow up with the effected party to see how things are going.
  - o Barry will refer the tenant to the Department of Fair Housing as this issue may be in their jurisdiction.

## **3. Immigrant Support Network**

- There are planned events for the Hispanic community as well as for the Brazilian community. Dates are not set as of yet.
- Populations that are underrepresented still need to be reached (Asian, Muslim, etc)

## **4. HRC events**

- Foss Park event – July 27<sup>th</sup>
  - o Yvette and Ify attended the event.

- HRC invited to table at the Mystic View Project, but no one was able to attend, this was a missed opportunity.
- Art Beat – Table with the Women's Commission.
- The City is trying to organize a cultural fair sometime in September, more to come.

## **5. Membership**

- The Mayor's office has not acted on the letter from the HRC asking to vacate the inactive seats. IFy and Barry have been looking at the term of commissioners to see if terms are expired.
- Currently – 8 commissions
  - 5 active (1 expired)
  - 1 Inactive has expired seat
  - 1 will step down
  - 1 seat not expired (will be removed)
- César will need to be reappointed. He will contact the city to get his done.
- Mark will approach the High School's National Honors Society to see if we can have a youth liaison.

## **6. Hiring Process**

- Job descriptions are posted on the city's website

- Sonja Darai will be the acting director and will be applying for the Director position.
- The Mayor's office will hire the director since the Director of the Health Department position is vacant.
- The HRC should be involved with the hiring process.

Submitted by:  
Cesar