

Somerville Human Rights Commission
June 16, 2005
6:30-8:30pm

Present: Kevin O'Malley, Herby Duverne, Mike Koehler, Cesar A. Urrunaga, MARY LU MENDONCA (Welcome Aboard!), Aru Manique

- Members of Somerville Divestment Project (SDP) visited the meeting
 - Kevin asked them to come back in September when we were better prepared to discuss the issue
 - We agreed to put the issue on the agenda for the September meeting
 - Kevin alerted representatives of SDP of the issues to be prepared to address at the September meeting:
 - Is divestment a Human Rights issue?
 - What about some of the controversial postings on the SDP website?
 - Commissioner's Homework:
 - Think about whether you think divestment is a human rights issue
 - do homework about the language of the ordinance, materials, etc.
 - find out what other towns have done

- Aru also visited in the spirit of cooperation and introduction

- Kevin spoke with John Long about postings for our meetings for the rest of the year

- Introducing Mary Lu (marylumendoca@yahoo.com)
 - Issue of finding space for the office persists
 - Aru seeks to work together with Mary Lu
 - Numerous contacts were provided to Mary Lu as she gets started
 - Herby asks Mary Lu what she is looking for from the Commissioners:
 - Mary Lu expressed desire to meet with commissioners individually
 - We discussed various issues facing the city:
 - SDP (although some feel that this is actually a distraction from more pressing issues)
 - Diversity in City Hall
 - Language barriers in City Hall
 - The Chinese population is roughly the same size as the Latino population (~6-8%)...how are we supporting this population?
 - Partnering with Somerville United Against Racism
 - Reviving partnerships with the Anti-Defamation League (making Somerville a "No Place for Hate" city again)
 - The "Somerville 5"

- Action Items:
 - Mike will email Mary Lu the program evaluation of the HRC
 - Mike will email Mary Lu Kevin Scott's email address (the city webmaster)
 - Mike will email Mary Lu the commissioner's contact list
 - Mike (and others) will get Mary Lu the MLK planning notes