

MINUTES

In accordance with PA 21-2 §149 and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, this meeting will be held virtually. A video recording of the meeting will be available on YouTube at "MANSFIELD CONNECTICUT STREAMING CHANNEL" (<https://mansfieldct.gov/video>) within seven (7) days after the meeting.

Public Comment will be accepted by email at FerraraMT@mansfieldct.org or by USPS mail at Town of Mansfield, Attention: Monica Ferrara, 4 South Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting). Please email Ferraramt@mansfieldct.org or call 860.429.3304 by 4:00 PM on the day of the meeting to receive instructions for how to view, listen, or comment live.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mitoma called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Allopenna, Evans (arrival noted below), Farrow, Fried, Lorenz, Mitoma

Excused: Nocton, Vaughan

Presenters: Julie Hodgson, Melissa Szych, Heather Elliot-Famularo, Candace Morell, Mia Chen, Kaela Jia, Bella Famularo, Claire Tulman, Zia Kashwan

Student Volunteers: Derek Cameron, Felicia Famularo

Staff: Katherine Bell, Monica Ferrara

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 13, 2022

Minutes were approved by consensus.

4. WELCOME OF QUINCY FARROW

Ms. Farrow, newest member of the HRC, introduced herself. Mr. Mitoma and other Commission members provided a brief welcome from the HRC.

5. PRESENTATION OF WITNESS STONES PROJECT

Mansfield Middle School students presented on the Witness Stones Project. Members were very impressed by the work of the students and asked questions about the project. Ms. Hodgson invited members of the HRC to the unveiling of the Stone at the Library on June 13, 2022.

Mr. Mitoma asked the student presenters if there was anything that they felt was important to add to the Juneteenth Proclamation to mention something about enslaved people in Mansfield. It was agreed that the presenters would take some time to think about it, and get back to Mr. Mitoma.

Ms. Evans arrived at 7:42 pm.

6. MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Fried reported that she wrote a grant proposal and sent it to the CT foundation to fund a dialogue on racism next year.

Ms. Evans reported that two weeks ago she helped to run a seminar on transgender healthcare and things healthcare providers should know. The seminar went well.

Ms. Bell reported that the proclamation for Pride Month passed unanimously. She delivered Pride flags to be distributed to Town Council. She also reported on the Pride event for this year.

Student Volunteer, Derek Cameron, reported Deliberation and Discourse consolidated a conversation about food insecurity with a particular focus on food insecurity in their own community. They had students propose solutions to help mitigate food insecurity in this community and they will be consolidated into a report for the Regional Board of Education. Deliberation and Discourse held a public forum on mental health. There was a good participation rate and there were a lot of interesting and important points brought up regarding the issue. Overall panelists were great and the event went very well .

Ms. Allopenna reported that the mental health forum went really well, and that there will be notes from the event that Ms. Nocton can share with the group. She also reported that Ms. Nocton was absent because she was at the Empty Bowls event (event about food insecurity in our community). When she left the event earlier this evening it was going really well.

Mr. Mitoma attended a Zoom webinar by the by Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut on the topic of putting together a regional affordable housing commission resource center in Eastern Connecticut. They are hopeful that Mansfield will play a large role in the effort.

Mr. Mitoma also moved to add two items to new business. New business item B. Next Meeting Date and new business item C. Membership. It was agreed by consensus to add both business items to the agenda.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Juneteenth Proclamation

Mr. Mitoma discussed the Juneteenth Proclamation. Two members should try to work on the project to have it ready for the Town Council meeting on May 23, 2022. It was agreed by consensus that Ms. Allopenna and Ms. Fried will work on the Proclamation.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Public Transportation and Sidewalks

Ms. Evans wanted to open a conversation about sidewalks and public transportation and to see if it was something that people were interested in talking about in the HRC meetings. She believes that the infrastructure is not set up for those who are differently abled and that this could be a safety issue.

Members briefly discussed the issue, and seemed interested in further researching this topic. Ms. Bell suggested that they start with Patricia Schneider, Human Services Director, for more information.

B. Next Meeting Date

It was agreed by consensus that the next full Commission meeting date will be combined with the Communications and Outreach Subcommittee, and will be June 15, 2022 at 7 pm.

C. Membership

Mr. Mitoma stated that we currently have one open seat and that we should actively recruit for that position. Mr. Mitoma also reported that he accepted a job in California and will be leaving after the July meeting of the HRC.

It was agreed by consensus that Quincy Farrow will be joining the Communications and Outreach subcommittee.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

10. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Town Charge

Subcommittee reports were mentioned in earlier agenda items.

B. Communications and Outreach

Subcommittee reports were mentioned in earlier agenda items.

11. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:26 pm.