

MINUTES

In accordance with PA 22-3, this meeting will be hybrid. 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

Jeannine Kanadia called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Hasana Davis, Jane Fried, Jeannine Kanadia

Excused: Debra Pallatto-Fontaine, Grace Pereira Lopes

Guests: Johan Armstrong – Associate Dean of Students, Maureen Armstrong – Associate Dean of Students, Mayor Antonia Moran, Liz Vitullo, Richard Fall

Staff: Jessica St. Lewis, Monica Ferrara

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 4, 2026

There was not a quorum so minutes will be voted on in the April meeting.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Charge Revision Discussion

Mayor Moran suggested the Human Rights Commission rewrite the charge based on what the members believe it should encompass, and that it would be up to Town Management and Council to agree or disagree.

B. Friday Meet and Greets on Betsy Patterson Square

Jeannine Kanadia reported that Steven Ferigno is still interested in having the Human Rights Commission set up on Betsy Patterson Square to talk/connect with the public. These had been tabled due to the cold months, but they are now looking to start up again. Mayor Moran suggested that they use the library branch in the parking garage area to have a warm area to host the conversations in the winter.

C. Community Conversations

Jeannine Kanadia will reach out to the Community Center to see if the HRC can host Community Conversations there this spring. Jane Fried is interested in hosting these conversations.

D. Pride 2026 Follow-Up and Discussion

Jeannine Kanadia reported that she talked with Amy Nocton, head of Deliberation and Discourse at E.O. Smith, and there are a few students interested in participating in the Mansfield Pride Event this year. Jessica St. Louis, Director of Human Services, reported that at Pride they decided to have a story wall for people to share their stories. Members briefly discussed additional ideas.

E. Debrief of Living Black History February 14, 2026, Event

Jeannine Kanadia reported on the Living Black History Event, which was successful with over 60 people in attendance. At the event about 20 people signed up to help with the Stomping Stones initiative.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Brainstorm for Supporting UCONN

John Armstrong and Maureen Armstrong introduced themselves to the Commission, both are Associate Dean of Students at UConn. Both John and Maureen discussed different ways they help students especially in regard to immigration issues, what happens if ICE comes to campus, the war, and more.

Both Deans and the Commission are very interested in collaboration, as students are also Mansfield residents when they are going to school here. John Armstrong shared resources and contacts with members for stronger collaboration.

B. Brainstorm for Senior Center

Jane came up with a theme to discuss with seniors at the Senior Center, including how to talk with youth/grandchildren. She believes that this will spark greater participation. Jessica St. Louis suggested some additional ways to gather greater participation.

C. Next Town Newsletter

It was decided that Jeannine Kanadia will write something for the next Mansfield Town Newsletter.

D. Supplies for HRC

Members briefly discussed ordering pens, notepads, and human rights booklets.

6. MEMBER REPORTS

Jane reported that she has many ideas, but she is discouraged by the state of the world. She would really like to host an event on racism and get people talking about race. Hasana Davis said she would like to work with Jane on this initiative.

Hasana Davis reported that at EO Smith they are hosting an interfaith panel in the spring that includes people from various faith organizations, and two student representatives. The Equity Council in April will be attending an all staff meeting at EO Smith with the subject on educational opportunities at E.O. Smith. There is also a NEASC conference coming up at Clark University and they are presenting on racism in education and how to create more student leaders in schools.

Jeannine Kanadia reported that she followed up with Town Manager, Ryan Aylesworth, about the letter in support of the Equity Handbook, and should hear back shortly.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

8. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Liz Vitullo said that she was going to send some information to other community members who might like to join the Human Rights Commission. She also suggested advertising events in the Daily Digest.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Monica Ferrara
Assistant Town Clerk