

VIRTUAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026

ZOOM ONLY – 5 P.M.

Present: Danielle Cooke, Judy Gooch Dobosh, Gena Lomelin, Dick Matteson, Aisha McClure, Lori Souder, Renee Sweeney (chair) and guest, Alex Wirth-Cauchon

1. CALL TO ORDER at 5:02
2. No one present for PUBLIC COMMENT
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - unanimously
4. UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Select Bd report: Renee reports a 3.5 hr mtg with 4 Boards/Task force to discuss the budget deficit. There will be a special Town Meeting on 2/25 to hear the report regarding a ballot question for an override.

Judy asked to be put on the MPIC Community Needs Assessment

Tanya Wallace needs to resign from the HRC since she no longer lives in SH. Lori will ask her to write to the Clerk.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Special Town Meeting 2/25 (discussion)
- b. MPIC guest: Alex Wirth-Cauchon

Alex just joined the MPIC Committee. In the past the MPIC have been focused on action items. Things have changed within the larger strategic planning process. Asking for updates before May 1. Is there a more narrative update that speaks to the 4 goals of the Master Plan that HRC wishes to be involved.? We all need to become better acquainted with the spreadsheet. Renee asked for next steps forward. Does the HRC wish to contribute to the Town Mtg discussion such as the welcoming ordinance? Question regarding the override. Can lower income people afford the budget proposal. Will there be an alternative to folks who cannot afford the increase in taxes? MHC is exempt from paying taxes. (However, they do pay some taxes and have given

funds to Fire District 2 for a fire truck). Gena was on the task force that discussed options. SH is in a tight spot. Any cuts would be significant. What does it look like for people who have a hardship? HRC could be an information resource sharing. Aisha asked, Is there somewhere to read what are the details of where things going to be cut, a chart? There will be a meeting with more details on March 4(?). What will happen if the school is underfunded? Many things will be cut if we do not have an override. What are our priorities in the community? Goals 1)SH where we all can thrive 2) preserve natural resources-3)promotes sustainability 4 Improve communications between Town Boards and people. How can we strengthen bringing new businesses in where they will add to our tax base. What kind of businesses does HRC wish to foster?

c. Resources compilation - [Google Doc here](#)-

What kind of resources do we wish to include for website? More graphic and numeric data will be helpful? Gena will forward the 8 short videos that explain the budget recommendations.

d. Judy List 1

Judy identified other HRC's. Amherst and Northampton have detailed lists-Is this (not sure what link)link appropriate or necessary? Should this link be included on our page or just refer people to the town. Other there any issues to these links? Does it imply liability if the HRC has a bad answer?

Renee suggests putting up link that is not time bound (not exact schedule). Danielle willing to be a part of this new web along with Judy. Renee is willing to assist. Judy asked Renee to check with Lisa

2. Judy List 2-tabled

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Awareness program

Black History Month in Feb, March Women's History-post resources. Is anyone willing to be an administrator for FaceBook.

Any burning thoughts? We need to compile a 500 word summary of what we have accomplished in the last year? Renee began the report. Read it and approved. Will place in our Google Drive.

Next Mtg-March 25 adjourn 5:55