



Cambridge Peace Commission

A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Minutes of the Peace Commission Meeting • February 20, 2019

Commission Members Present: Co-Chairs Larry Kim and Elka Kuhlman, Georges Atallah, April Crehan, Kaza Fraley, Amelia Joselow, David Seeman, and John Ratcliff

City Staff Present: Executive Director Brian Corr; Deputy Superintendent Robert Lowe, Cambridge Police Dept.; Rachel Tanenhaus, Executive Director of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Dept. of Human Service Programs

Call to Order

Co-chair Kuhlman called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Nick Bondorenko, Marina Cardina, Dylan Hearn, all journalism students at Emerson College, stated that they were recording the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Kuhlman moved to approve the January minutes and Commission Member Crehan seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Presentation: Commission for Persons with Disabilities – Executive Director Rachel Tanenhaus

The charge of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) is to work to make Cambridge as assessable as possible for all persons. They meet the second Thursday of the month in open meeting.

Currently, CCPD is working on making sure the City's communications are accessible to everybody. ED Tanenhaus explained that people with disabilities are disproportionately affected by violence of all kinds. Data collection on this matter is low, and the people who are left out are those most vulnerable. CCPD also works closely with the Cambridge Department of Veterans Services.

CCPD attends community meetings and other events to make themselves visible. Director Tanenhaus explained that structural ableism is always present, but one important step in combating that is for people to make the presumption of competence about all people. Director Tanenhaus stated that 90% of her disability problem is other people – she does not know what she is missing but it is other people, or her environment that are her obstacles. Director Tanenhaus recommended the following books, authors, movies, etc.: *No Pity* (a history of the Disabilities Rights Movement), *Make Them Go Away*, and *Neuro-Tribes* (about autism).

Executive Director's Report

- ED Corr is continuing his work with the Mending Cambridge group that works on issues of domestic and gender-based violence, which is expanding. The group was recently trained to be trainers for bystander intervention and will be doing a training with Cambridge Police Department in March.
- He provided an update about Les Cayes, Cambridge's sister city in Haiti. The relationship has now been active for more than seven years. There has been civil unrest/uprising in Haiti

over the last few weeks, and the U.S. government is telling people “do not travel to Haiti” and the U.S. State Department has evacuated all non-essential personnel. This may have an impact on travel to and from Haiti for the foreseeable future. Commission Member Crehan noted that this kind situation might have traumatic impacts for the Haitian community and that the Commission might be able to respond to.

Commemoration of the Holocaust

The Holocaust Commemoration is scheduled for Thursday, May 2nd at 7pm at the Tremont St Shul (Temple Beth Shalom) at 8 Tremont St., Cambridge. ED Corr will be organizing the event, including gathering readers and volunteers. This year’s speaker will be Frieda Grayzel, a Cambridge resident and a survivor of Auschwitz.

Brainstorming Session

Commission members and City staff brainstormed ways that the commission members could support and enhance outreach for events and activities that the Peace Commission is sponsoring or organizing. Commission Member Kuhlman agreed to compile the ideas and give them to ED Corr, who would then categorize them by who could best carry them out.

Unfinished and New Business

- There was a discussion about future presentation to the Commission from City departments and community organizations. Commission Member Atallah agreed to invite Ronnie Miller of the Irish International Immigration Center to present at a future meeting. Another idea was learning more about the Cambridge Police Department at a future meeting
- Commission Member Ratliff asked the Commission to help publicize an event on April 10th from 6:30-8:30 pm with the producer of the film *Madam Secretary*, who will be presenting on nuclear weapons at the Cambridge Public Library.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m., by unanimous vote on a motion by Commission Member Crehan, seconded by Commission Member Atallah

The next meeting of the Peace Commission is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 20, 2019, at 51 Inman St. in the Second Floor Conference Room.