

**Civil Rights Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**February 25, 2020**

**Attendees**

**Present:**

Thomas (Tommy) Parker, Chair of the Commission; Anastasia (Stacy) Mann, Vice Chair of the Commission; Kim Dorman, Recording Secretary; Leticia Fraga, Council Liaison

**Commissioners:** Fern Spruill, Lew Maltby, Nick DiDomizio, Surinder Sharma

**Excused:** Jean Durbin, Karen Hernandez-Granzen

**Members of the Public:** Joanne Parker

The meeting was called to order 6:05

**Agenda:**

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Approval of January Minutes**

Commissioner Mann moved to approve the January minutes

Commissioner Maltby seconded

All approved.

**III. Chair's Report (10 minutes)**

(The chair offered his report after the presentation with Municipal Administrator Dashield and Commissioner Mann's report.)

Chairman Parker:

- Asked Commissioners to review the committee assignments sheet and make requests indicating on which committees they would like to serve.
- Chairs of each committee should start setting up meetings.
- Chair Parker met with Commissioner DiDomizio and others to consider the best next steps for the LGBTQ Liaison and potential subcommittee.

**IV. Liaison Report (5 minutes each unless otherwise noted)**

**Ban The Box:** Commissioner Maltby

A presentation was made by Marc Dashield, Municipal Administrator on current practices.

**(15 minutes)**

Commissioner Maltby introduced this session with his background with the 'Ban the Box' work and why the CRC is considering the issue.

Municipal Administrator Dashield noted:

- Princeton has had 'the box' removed from our application for several years.
- Everyone who is hired undergoes a background check run through the State Police and then returned to Human Resources
- Princeton has a 6-month probation period for everyone and the background check is a condition of the offer.
- If someone has a conviction that is old and minor, this information is simply flagged by human resources and passed onto the manager.
- If the conviction is above a level that Human Resources can authorize (ie recent or severe), the information is passed to Municipal Administrator Dashield and he calls the candidate in for a conversation.
- As outlined above, there is a process, but it is not formalized.

Council Liaison Fraga noted that on the application it says that there will be a background check and asked if that might be a deterrent to some applicants. Commissioner Maltby agreed that it could be a deterrent.

Chair Parker suggested, with agreement from others, that at some future time, the CRC will further explore expungements, particularly the pre-trial intervention (PTI) expungement process.

**Action:** It was agreed that the municipality is being thoughtful in its consideration and treatment of applicants and that Commissioner Maltby would work on language regarding the background checks and other recommendations that he would submit to the CRC and Municipal Administrator Dashield.

**Conflict Resolution Mediation:** Commissioner Maltby

Commissioners Maltby and Durbin submitted a proposed internal document to offer guidelines to commissioners about what steps they should take in the event that a community member comes to them with a Civil Rights concern. .

After discussion confirming that these guidelines were not adding or altering anything within the ordinance, it was agreed that the document could be accepted as good guidelines for Commissioners.

**Action:** Commissioner Dorman will create a shared google drive where this document, the flow chart, and other important documents for commissioners can be easily accessed.

**Domestic Workers Bill of Rights:** Commissioner Mann

Commissioner Mann met with New Labor (HQ New Brunswick) and Maya Aronoff (a PU student) to find out more information about a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

- New Labor advised that they have had the greatest success with a dual approach 1) Top Down: Either a resolution or an ordinance. (They were able to provide drafts of each.) 2) Organizing and Education.
- Commissioner Sharma suggested that we also reach out to Eastern Service Workers Association (ESWA) in Trenton.

**Action:** Commissioner Mann will continue to work with Human Services and the Board of Health to explore next steps, to include some form of outreach (a public workshop or panel) and consideration of an ordinance or resolution.

**Reparations:** Commissioner Sharma

Commissioner Sharma and Chair Parker are forming an ad-hoc committee to explore and put forward public education and potentially hold discussions about reparations, initiatives put forth by other organizations or municipalities, and explore what the municipality might be able to do.

- Commissioner Spruill noted that there is an organization in town where some efforts may have been made in this direction, this will require further exploration

**Action:** Please contact Commissioner Sharma or Chairperson Parker with your interest or suggestions of possible ad-hoc committee members to explore next steps and recommendations.

**Action:** Chair Parker agreed that the CRC Would request liaison to this group.

### **Ongoing Business:**

**LGBTQIA:** Commissioner DiDomizio

Commissioner DiDomizio spoke with Municipal Administrator Dashield regarding:

- Training for municipal employees regarding LGBT+ issues. Municipal Administrator Dashield noted that municipal employees were offered LGBT+ training but he wasn't sure about EMS and Fire employees and he would investigate and get back in touch with him.
- The binary m/f question on the application form. It was agreed that Commissioner DiDomizio and the CRC could submit recommended language.

### **Updates from Council Liaison**

Budget - A process is being developed for BCC's to be able to use municipal funds for business, at the moment, commissioners are asked to submit request to the council liaison which submits them to the municipal administrator.

Council Liaison will alert commissioners regarding upcoming council agenda so that Commissioners can consider which issues may have civil rights implications and prepare accordingly.

## **V. New Business**

### **State and Local Consents Under Executive Order 13888:** Council Liaison Fraga

- New Jersey is currently on the federal list of municipalities that have 'opted in' to settle refugees. Princeton also opted in, however since there is currently an injunction against implementation of this Executive Order, no more applications to opt in are being processed.

**Action:** It was agreed that when the injunction is lifted, we will follow up to confirm that Princeton is on the list.

## **VI. Public Comment**

Ms. Parker noted that it is not clear in the newspaper or elsewhere that the CRC meeting is public and that community members are welcome to attend and speak.

**Action:** It was agreed that the Communications Chair should ensure that language is in the newspaper to make it clear that meetings of the Commission are open to the public.