

Abington Human Relations Commission

Meeting: June 2, 2021

Members present: Joanne Kleiner, Shelley Rosenberg, Jeffrey Brown, Kristin Chapin, Rosemary Jenkins

Guests: Michele Cooper; Tom Hasani, Denise Hellenbrand, James Lee (all from Montgomery County AAPI), Cakky Evans (Abington Township), Commissioners Mike Thompson and Peggy Myers

Last month's minutes were approved.

Old Business:

This was the third visit from Michele Cooper (an Abington resident). We asked her to invite members of the Montgomery County AAPI to discuss how we can support the AAPI community. Tom, Denise, and James attended as representatives of the Montco AAPI. Denise and James reside in Lower Moreland and asked for advice on getting an HRC started in their Township. We started by telling them about starting an HRC and giving suggestions about where and how to get more information (Tri State HRC). We also clarified exactly how we can help them in supporting the AAPI community. After discussion, we decided that Tom will provide segments of a PBS program on American Asian history for us to screen and then a community dialogue. Tom will make the film available to our members through Google Drive and also at our next meeting. We'll watch it first, discuss it with them at our next meeting, and set a date for a program in September.

We had been discussing a second community dialogue on the movie *Walking While Black* and the Community Love Garden. Shelley is going to check in with Deputy Chief Kelley Warner to see where the APD is with the idea of a second dialogue program and the garden. We're also waiting to hear from AJ Ali who might be able to provide some assistance and ideas on the garden. We know this is too much for us to take on ourselves and we're looking for other organizations to help.

New Business:

Commissioner Thompson spoke about a draft of a rental ordinance that he and the other Abington Commissioners would like us to review because they are concerned that a specific section could open the door to discrimination against certain people who want to rent in the Township. The goals are to have the fire department inspect apartment units and make sure they are safe in order to protect renters and to take aim at nuisance properties and hold landlords accountable while making sure the landlords aren't profiling certain tenants. Jeffrey will send copies of the proposed Ordinance so that we can be prepared to discuss it at our July meeting.

Cakky Evans of the Abington Environmental Action Committee discussed the Climate Action Plan for the Township. She would like us to review proposed actions to make sure that the Plan is inclusive and appropriate under our guiding ordinance. Cakky will send copies of the material so that we can be prepared to discuss it at our July meeting.

Rosemary and Joanne did a presentation for the newly formed Whitpain HRC. They shared a lot of information with them and the Whitpain folks have already started participating in Tri-State.

Joanne shared information about Mediation.com, which has continuing education programs about basic mediation and implicit bias. Shelley also pointed out that Tri-State's new program on implicit bias will be ready for distribution very soon.

There will be an Abington-Upper Moreland event for Juneteenth and we'll put it on our Facebook page.

Our next meeting – July 7 – will begin at 6:00 for those who would like to watch the film about AAPI issues together and at (our regular time of) 7:00 for those who want to watch it themselves and then join the discussion about our programming.