

Abington HRC: Meeting Minutes for December 4, 2024

Present: Members, Michele Cooper, Rosemary Jenkins, Joanne Kleiner, Shelley Rosenberg, Cheryl Rusten, Justin Williams, and Ambassador Bonnie Dalzell

The minutes from November 2024 were approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

➤ *Social Media Update*

- Our Facebook presence continues to grow, and viewers are engaging more with our material. Lately we have had about 3000 page views of our material.
- We ran 8 posts in November. The most viewed was our post seeking Human Books followed by posts on racist texts and voter intimidation.

The Commission members praised and thanked Justin for his efforts to make us more visible.

➤ *Human Library Event*

- Time is growing short to secure our human books. As of this meeting date, there were 8 confirmed people representing religious, differently-abled, transgender and substance abuse communities. Several other people were approached but declined for various reasons ranging from discomfort to being out of town.
- We need more books! Ideas to get more included borrowing from the Moorestown, NJ event; listing on our social media notice specific categories we would like represented; and seriously racking our brains and contact lists for people who would make good books. If we do not get 20 books, one option is to have each book talk to more than one person at a time.
- We reviewed and edited the library's proposed publicity piece for the event. We will use similar language in our own publicity materials.
- AHRC members are encouraged to attend the event to help with the logistics of placing readers and books together throughout the library.

➤ *Chief's Advisory Council Meeting*

- AHRC was invited to this meeting to express our concerns about some of the language used in recent police posting about area robberies. We were informed that the police department is sensitive to how language is used but used exact language provided by the FBI.
- We were invited to become regular participants at these meetings, which are held several times a year to liaise with the Abington community. Attendees include representatives from the NAACP and other community groups. We are unsure whether the public can attend. Going forward, a member of the AHRC will attend these meetings.
- During a phone call with the Tri-States group that represents multiple HRCs in our area, it was learned that we are the only HRC that has a liaison with our local Police Department. Other HRCs may seek our input on how to do this in the future.

➤ *Anti-Asian Hate Speech*

- On Election Day, an Asian woman in our community was called a communist. While she does not want to press charges, she did ask if the HRC could do anything to address anti-Asian sentiment.

- This led to a discussion about planning for 2025 programs and initiatives. It was suggested that the group meet in person in early 2025 for a brainstorming session. We will find out if this must be a public meeting or not. Additionally, it was suggested that we put out an open call on social media to see what topics our community is concerned about, and that we invite the new Township Manager to a meeting once that person has gotten their feet wet.
- *New Member recruitment*
 - The members thanked Cheryl Rusten for her service and Cheryl thanked the group for the opportunity to serve and noted she was available to help in the future as needed.
 - Commissioner Lori Schreiber is thinking about possible replacement members. We will discuss recruitment after the Human Library event on January 12th.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Justin proposed that we step up our social media presence by doing more short videos instead of just posting written material. The committee agreed and this will be discussed in future meetings.

Next meeting: January 8, 2025

Respectfully submitted for the final time: Cheryl Rusten, Secretary