



ATTLEBORO COUNCIL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

MEETING MINUTES

MEETING INFORMATION

Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Location: Zoom virtual meeting

Time: 6:30-8pm

Meeting Type: Council on Human Rights Monthly Meeting

Attendees: ACHR members: Mac Borgellas, Mary Flaherty, Stephanie Gray, Barbara Clark, Ashley Stewart, Ellen Parker, and Steve Berdos. Chairperson: Laurie Sawyer. Guests: John Berkowitz and Jessica Reagan Salzman.

1. Chairperson Laurie Sawyer opened the meeting
2. **VOTE:** Approve minutes from 11/8 and 12/10 monthly meetings
 - A. **YAY:** Laurie Sawyer, Stephanie Gray, Barbara Clark, Ashley Stewart, Mary Flaherty, Ellen Parker
 - B. **NAY:** None
3. Guest speaker: John Berkowitz
 - A. Western MA Death with Dignity re: the End of Life Options Act H4782
 - B. <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2745/>
 - C. <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/massachusetts-s-compassionate-care-the-terminally-ill-act.html>
 - D. If passed, this bill would allow for MA residents to opt to fill a prescription which if administered would end their life. A terminal diagnosis is required with a 6 month or less prognosis. Patients would need the physical ability to administer the medication themselves without assistance.
 - E. What safeguards are in place to ensure this is reserved for terminally ill patients?
 - i. Patients certified terminally ill by 2 physicians at least 2 weeks apart
 - ii. 3rd apt with mental health professional
 - F. Unclear if there is a standardized cognitive evaluation.
 - G. Chronic depression is a disqualifying diagnosis.
 - H. No health care proxy, guardianship, or advanced directive.
4. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Housing concerns update

- i. In December, the city removed the belongings of a homeless man. Ashley Stewart along with Support the Soupman and other homeless advocates were able to arrange for his belongings to be replaced.
 - ii. Cold weather/COVID crisis – the Attleboro Interfaith Collaborative funded hotels for the homeless until the state released funding at the request of the Greater Bristol County Attleboro/Taunton Coalition to end Homelessness (GBCATCH). There are available hotels for Attleboro’s homeless throughout the winter.
 - B. Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day – Steve
 - i. Plan a zoom public forum on April 24th
 - ii. Current events re: Armenia
 - iii. Write article in newspaper
 - iv. Highlight humanitarian aide efforts
 - v. Invite guest speakers from the National Armenian Advocacy group
 - vi. Link to existing charity in chat/article
 - vii. Biden has pledged to push to recognize Armenian genocide
 - viii. **VOTE:** To hold community event recognizing Armenian genocide
 - 1. **YAY:** Laurie Sawyer, Stephanie Gray, Barbara Clark, Ashley Stewart, Mary Flaherty, Mac Borgellas, Steve Berdos
 - 2. **NAY:** None
 - C. QR card final update– finalized, donation passed by the city council, ready to go out to local establishments/organizations
 - D. Letter of support for Elizabeth Warren’s anti-racism bill final update – finalized, co-signed by Mayor Heroux, sent to Senator Warren’s office.
 - E. Human Rights Day event debrief – successful, well attended.
 - F. Black History Month observation
 - i. The historical focus of BHM has been to highlight and celebrate the achievements of Black Americans. Drawing also from the last Neighbors in Dialogue topic of positive representation of Black people on social media, we:
 - ii. **VOTE:** to run a series of posts highlighting historic Black figures and current Black human rights activists.
 - 1. **YAY:** Laurie Sawyer, Stephanie Gray, Barbara Clark, Ashley Stewart, Mac Borgellas, Mary Flaherty, Ellen Parker
 - 2. **NAY:** None
5. New Business
- A. Juneteenth: Discussion of ACHR involvement in Ashley’s annual Juneteenth celebration
 - B. Roe Act: Discussion of bill’s journey through the legislature and governor’s office
6. Vote to end meeting: Unanimous

Action Items:

- Work on Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day
- Members send content to Mary for BHM posts by Jan 30th, she will create posts

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 from 6:30-8pm