



**BARNSTABLE COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
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[www.barnstablecountyhrac.org](http://www.barnstablecountyhrac.org)

**Minutes of Monday, May 5, 2021 Meeting**  
**Remote participation.**

**Advisory Commission Members Present:** Kate Epperly (Chair), Wendy Bierwirth, Jeanne Morrison, Patricia Oshman (Vice-chair), Mwalim Peters, Paul Thompson, Lynn Levine, Leo Blandford, and Isaac Lopez.

**Also Present:** Susan Quinones (HRAC Coordinator), Brian O'Malley (AoD Liaison)

**Absent:** Sheila Lyons (CC Liaison)

- 1. Call to Order:** Kate Epperly called the meeting to order, and Susan conducted a roll call @ 5:00 pm. Susan announced that a quorum was present. Kate asked for a volunteer to take minutes, which Isaac agreed to do; and a timekeeper, which Susan agree to do. Kate also introduced Amanda Hainesworth, who was the guest speaker for this meeting with a presentation on "What a Hate Crime is."
- 2. Reminder of OML:** Susan reviewed the Open Meeting Law and that the meeting was being recorded. She also announced that there was a quorum. A question was submitted to the coordinator, asking how these meetings could be make more inclusive for the public. A suggestion had been made that the HRAC set aside some time during the meeting to allow the public to comments on agenda items. The Coordinator said that the Board would discuss how to create more public interaction, engagement, and participation, as part of their Strategic Planning discussions.
- 3. Attorney General's Civil Rights Division, Amanda Hainsworth, Ass't AG Presentation: "Know your Civil Rights and overview of Hate crimes"**  
**Time is reserved for Q & A.**

[Disclaimer: This presentation is designed to provide general information about civil rights and hate crimes and will NOT provide personal advice on specific incidents.]

- Brief on AG Office-Maura Healy, Chief Lawyer and Law Enforcer.

Fair Labor, environmental and healthcare; representing State agencies and prosecutions.

Major methods used by AGO:

1. Investigation
  2. Enforcement; consumer protection
  3. Prevention
  4. Policymaking; legislation
- Ms. Hainsworth started with an overview of the Civil Rights Division, which deals primarily with Fair Housing and Fair Lending practices. They enforce provisions of the Federal and State Housing Acts. This includes ensuring that no one is discriminated against because of race/color, national origin, sexual identity or gender identity, disabilities or because of a criminal record. Other state issues they have dealt with include apartments with lead paint, refusal to rent to individuals on various forms of public assistance and those with disabilities. They have also started dealing with tenant-on-tenant harassment cases.
  - In discussing bias-related hate crimes, Ms. Hainsworth noted that there are civil and criminal laws to address these crimes. Elements of a violation include:
    1. Underlying offense (assault, etc.)
    2. Intent
    3. Targeting of a protected group
    4. Hate speech
  - Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Act 2009 and hate crime statistics indicate that as hate crimes reported:
    1. 57.6% because of Race
    2. 20.1% because of Religion
    3. 16.7% because of gender/sexual orientation
  - It is also commonly believed that hate crimes are notoriously underreported.

For more information go to: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-the-attorney-generals-civil-rights-division>

#### **4. BCHRAC updates**

##### **Human Rights Academy**

- Spring HRA event held May 5th, 2021.
- 8 schools and approximately 40 students attended.
- Keynote Speaker: Andrew Juan a senior at Sturgis Charter High School East, encouraged students to “follow their passions”
- Schools either provided videos about their activities this year or gave live presentations.

- BCHRAC hopes to resume HRA in-person in the Fall.
- Please consult BCHRAC website, under Human Rights Academy to view presentations.

**For additional information about the Complaint/Referral/Incident Report form:**

People with complaints, inquiries and concerns are asked to refer to their resources as well as the new complaint intake form on our website.

1. List of “What are human rights?”
2. Terms and definitions
3. Comprehensive guidelines
4. How to file a complaint
5. Access to associated agencies
6. Legal Investigation resources
7. Procedures for filing a complaint
8. Frequently asked questions
9. Consent to investigate complaint
10. Contact BCHRAC Coordinator, Susan Quinones (508) 375-6611 or at [susan.quinones@barnstablecounty.org](mailto:susan.quinones@barnstablecounty.org)

**5. Coordinator’s Report**

In addition to the coordinator’s written report, she wanted to highlight the successful outreach to underserved communities between the members of the Vaccine Equity Taskforce working with local churches. The Taskforce was an effort by the Health Department, members from HRAC (Kate Epperly, Leo Blandford, and Susan Quinones), and local clergy. A special thanks to Kate Epperly for making contact w/ church pastors.

**6. Approval of minutes of meeting held on April 12, 2021**

- Motion and a second to approve minutes. No discussion.
- Minutes unanimous approved.

**7. Executive Session pursuant to MGL c.30A, sec. 21 (a)(1), (a) (7), and (a) (9)**

There were no items for executive session.

**8. Adjournment**

A Motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

The motion was passed unanimously @ 6:40 pm.

**Next meeting: Monday, June 14, 2021, 5:00 – 6:30 pm, location TBA.**