

Abington Human Relations Commission

November 8 2017

Present: Amy, Meredith, Joanne, Dave, John, Shelley

- Joanne had a phone meeting with Richard Manfredi, the new Township manager. They talked about the HRC and what we have been doing. He told her that, when the new budget is approved in 2018, the Township will hire someone to do PR, which will include covering the HRC. **Joanne will speak with him again and ask what we can do to help with this.**
- Joanne fielded an informal complaint from one of the co-owner's of Dino's Backstage, a restaurant in Keswick Village. Basically, he was very angry and upset about the AA affiliate that meets across the street from the theater where, at a recent meeting, the leader made homophobic remarks. Dino also complained that people drive by the restaurant and yell homophobic taunts and that racist comments have been made. Joanne explained to him about what the HRC does and about mediation and community dialogue. He wanted to think about it and gather additional information and would speak with Joanne again. She hasn't heard from him a second time.

The result of the group's discussion was to encourage **Joanne to call him once more and to offer an opportunity to meet in person with several members of the HRC.** At the same time, **Dave will check to see if any reports have been made to the police.**

- The movie "I'm Not a Racist, Am I?" was screened at the Highway to a full house, sponsored by Abington Friends School. Joanne and Amy attended and said that it was a powerful movie and that the audience was very responsive. There was focused discussion after the movie, led by the movie's creator. Follow-up discussions will be held at AFS on Dec. 7 at 7:00 p.m. (AFS asked people to use the following web address to tell about themselves: www.tinyurl.com/follow-up-conversations). That is the program that Mary Lynn Ellis, of AFS, wanted the HRC members to attend to help lead the discussion. **Shelley will be in contact with her to ascertain if she still wants the group to do that.**
- Shelley has been speaking with Lt. Kelley Warner (who will be named Deputy Chief on Thursday night) about two programs that the HRC will conduct for the Department. One will be in March and will inform the members of the Department what the HRC does and provide them with an opportunity to tell the HRC about an issues they recognize in the Township. The other will be part of the intensive training the Department does in the spring. As part of the second program, there will be discussion about implicit bias. Material that was part of a Tri-State HRC program on implicit bias was forwarded to

everyone, along with a movie. Everyone should look at this material and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting. **Shelley will get dates from Kelley for both programs.**

- Given the above programs that the group has promised to facilitate and the preparation needed for them, the decision was made to postpone for the time being the initiative of inviting other groups to our meetings to learn about the HRC and to share their views on issues in the Township.
- **Next meetings:** Regular monthly meeting is Dec. 6 from 7:00 to 9:00 for work on the programs for the Police Department.
The HRC will attend the Dec. 7 follow-up meeting at Abington Friends School at 7:00 pm. **Shelley will get information about expectations.**