

MONMOUTH COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION  
MINUTES FROM MEETING ON April 3, 2017

Attendance: MaryLee Gilmore, Rosa Lee, Linda Zucaro, Jeff Schwartz, Chris Decker, Jeff Delaney, John Schwebel, Carolyn Schwebel, Ricky Pierce, Ronald Soponoff, Ronan Neumann, Sondra Cannon, Sherri West, Renee Harris.  
Guests: Nichoele DeJesus (?), Stephanie Ayers, Seham Abdala, Joya Anderson, Birgit Mondesir.

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 pm and followed by the salute to the flag. The minutes of the March 7 meeting were distributed and approved (West, Schwartz).

Prior to the Treasurer's Report, Chris Decker gave a brief and preliminary report on bias statistics from the Prosecutor's Office. So far in 2017, there have been 23 bias incidents reported from 13 municipalities. These were generally in the nature of graffiti, name calling, slurs, social media utterances, etc. Chris also reported that Monmouth Co. has not seen the spike in incidents reported from other areas in the period since last summer thru the present. He reported that the State Attorney General's Office held a workshop on March 29 on how to report bias incidents and several attending today's meeting were in attendance there.

The Treasurer, Sondra Cannon, reported that we currently still have the preliminary allocation of \$600 from the County pending that budget approval. There was a motion that \$400 be earmarked for expenses of the MOSAIC closing ceremony on April 30 and it was approved (Zucaro, West.)

Under Standing Committees Linda Zucaro reported the resignation of Bob Williams, long time member, as he is planning a move out of NJ. She also recommended accepting the membership application of Renee Harris which was approved. Carolyn Schwebel for Communications distributed materials from the aforementioned State Ag's workshop. There were no incidents from I R & R and no report from Resource Development.

Under New Business, members were advised that two nominations for the Teasley award have been received and the selection committee would have an awardee by May 1. The announcement will be made electronically and the award ceremony will be at the Commission meeting in June. Ronan Neumann volunteered to handle the refreshments once again.

Seham Abdala, Director of the New Jersey Islamic Network Group <http://njing.org/>, offered the services of the group to any organization seeking knowledgeable presenters on the subject of Islam

The Commission was asked about participating in the Interfaith Prayer Breakfast at Brookdale Community College on May 17. (We were asked if we wanted to be listed as the Sponsor and agreed to that idea but it was later determined that Pilgrim Baptist would remain the Sponsor and we would be a participant.). Our participation will be coordinated by Ron Soponoff, MaryLee Gilmore and Renee Harris and will consist of a brief presentation and staffing an information table about the Commission. It was agreed to purchase the admission for these three members at \$90.

Under Unfinished Business, discussion continued on restructuring the Commission. It was agreed to use points A thru E in Darryl Hughes' proposal as our mission statement. There was considerable discussion on whether the

Commission should function as a steering committee and exactly what that means, and whether we should retain the offices of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. No decision was reached and we will need to resume at this point when we next convene in May.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 1. This meeting was adjourned at 5 PM

Submitted by Linda Zucaro