

A meeting of the **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMITTEE** for November 2020 was held tonight via web conference. Members in attendance were: Irv Brockington, Will Pillsbury, Liza Meiris and Wendy Blutstein. Staff present: Charlyn Battle, Director of Human Resources and David Sparango, Cheltenham Township Police Officer. Guests present: Ann Rappoport, Sam Seplow and JJ.

1. Mr. Brockington called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. The Meeting Minutes for October 1, 2020 were accepted.
3. Update on the Cheltenham Township Police Department HUB Program

Officer David Sparango, who attends these meetings and connects community members in crisis to social services, went on to explain some of the cases he handles, such as mental health, substance abuse and seniors that have falling victim to fraud.

Ms. Blutstein asked Officer Sparango if he was familiar with the Elder Abuse Office through the Attorney General's Office. Ms. Meiris commented that this is a great program and asked what he would like to see with the HUB program. Officer Sparango said overall he would like to see more investment into mental health services. He also said the HUB addresses a multitude of issues and they do follow up on the progress of cases. The Police Officers in Cheltenham are very aware of mental health issues.

Mr. Brockington asked Officer Sparango how a family member of someone with mental health issues would reach out and asked if the school district is aware of the HUB Program. He also suggested reaching out to Arcadia to let them know about the program. Officer Sparango provided his contact information and said residents can reach out to him directly and he will reach out to the School District and Arcadia.

4. Historical Black Cemetery in our Township and our relationship with the Township Historical Commission.

Ms. Meiris stated that there was nothing bad associated with the names on our buildings and parks and noted that through research, she found that there were a lot of prominent African Americans that lived in the Township. We had one of the oldest African American cemeteries in the country; however it was paved over by Limekiln Pike.

5. How to increase Human Relations Committee membership.

Mr. Brockington asked if there was a need to increase membership and if so, did anyone have suggestions on how to accomplish this. Ms. Meiris and Ms. Blutstein both agreed that membership needed to increase with more diversity and suggested word of mouth and asking friends in the Township.

6. Human Relations Committee vs. Human Relations Commission.

Mr. Brockington said the Commission has all of the complaint forms, email addresses, phone number and the process for complaints on the Township website. Ms. Meiris said she was informed that the emails are not being answered. Ms. Blutstein commented that someone from the Township should be monitoring these emails. Mr. Brockington said he will look into this.

Mr. Pillsbury commented that the names create a lot of confusion because they are almost the same and suggested possibly changing the name. Mr. Brockington said this could be homework for the Committee to come up with a new name.

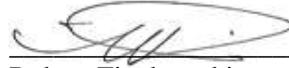
7. Complaint process- No discussion took place.

8. Open Discussion

A. Mr. Brockington said he received a phone call from a resident concerned about a Facebook page for Elkins Park Happening Uncensored, which had a lot of racist and homophobic posts on there. Mr. Pillsbury commented that it is not great and not sure if anything can be done about it. We need to make it clear that Cheltenham does not endorse the page.

Ms. Rappoport asked Officer Sparango if the Police Department monitors sites like this one. Officer Sparango said he was familiar with most community sites and they do monitor them periodically to stay informed about what is going on in the community.

9. Mr. Brockington adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.



Robert Zienkowski
Township Manager

Per Charlyn J. Battle

