

**City of Lambertville**  
**Human Rights Council**  
**7:00 PM, Tuesday, January 24, 2017**  
**Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center**  
**25 South Union Street, Lambertville, NJ**

**MINUTES**

**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE.**

Mr. John Woods, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and read a statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act into the record, noting that notice had been provided to the newspapers on January 9, 2017, the meeting agenda was posted on the Bulletin Board at City Hall and on the city's website on January 9, 2017.

**THANK YOU – MAYOR DELVECCHIO**

Mayor DelVecchio was present to thank everyone for serving on the Human Rights Commission. He cited things happening in the Federal Government right now that could impact us. The State of New Jersey currently has operating procedures which govern our Police Department that are ok and would not change the way we operate day to day. Our position with the PennEast Pipeline in the Township of West Amwell is under assault. It's important that people know that they have a voice.

The Human Rights Commission scored the City at 98% in 2016. This is the highest we can get and we are second highest rated in the State of New Jersey behind Jersey City. In Jersey City, they are much larger and provide health clinics to the public. Our budget would not support that. However, the City did adopt ordinances to help us to protect everyone's rights.

Councilwoman Asaro led the charge with the formation of the HRC and her point is valid. The governing body may change throughout the years and it could change the community view on inclusion.

**ROLL CALL.**

The City Clerk called the roll as follows:

Present: John Woods, Helen (Bambi) Kuhl, Beth Caruso, Bruce Cocuzza, Cindy Ege and Dan Seiter (arrived at 7:35 p.m.).

Absent: Elizabeth Asaro, Christine Miller, Steven Stegman, and Kari Osmond.

**NEW BUSINESS.**

**JOHN WOODS – INTRODUCTION OF LOS PUENTES - IMMIGRANT RIGHTS AND INCLUSION IN THE COMMUNITY.**

Mr. Woods asked everyone to introduce themselves. In addition to HRC members, the following people were present: Ronnie Todd Marino of Fisherman's Mark,

Johns Intro: Since our last meeting there has been much concern raised by different people, concerning much fear and lack of knowledge about immigrants' rights. These fears and concerns have been brought to us from a number of places. I took it upon myself to invite these interested community members to our meeting tonight.

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Recently a taskforce Los Puentes has been formed at the invitation of Fisherman's Mark. I have volunteered to be a part of this group. This group arises because of many fears and concerns many clients of Fisherman's Mark's programs and others are bringing to them. A number of Los Puentes members are with us tonight. Also other community members interested in putting together a series of workshops to, among other things, increase inclusion of our immigrants in the life of the larger community.

As I began to research the issues of immigrant rights and how we can protect them a number of issues were raised i.e.: what are immigrants' rights in Lambertville, in the state? what is the role of police and justice system in Lambertville re immigrants? Can we learn from other entities like the City Library or the schools about how they are dealing with inclusion? Should we recommend that we be a Sanctuary City or Welcoming Community? What do these terms mean?? What can we, LHRC, do to

- a) educate ourselves about these issues.
- b) Recommend education opportunities for community members, especially immigrant groups.
- c) Recommend other actions to City Council or other city bodies about these issues.

**POLICE DIRECTOR – BRUCE COCUZZA, IMMIGRANT RIGHTS**

John Woods asked the Police Director to speak about Immigrant Rights. Mr. Cocuzza informed the members of the board and public present that the police are not allowed to inquire about immigration status, unless a person is charged with a serious felony (usually violent in nature). When asked whether Lambertville would detain an immigrant person at ICE's request, Bruce made clear that we would not. Detention is a federal responsibility. The police pass out cards in both English and Spanish detailing their Miranda rights just like anyone else.

Joseph Falcone, an attorney involved with Los Puentes, commented about the importance of becoming a Sanctuary City. He said that in Bucks County, PA and Mercer County, NJ, the I254 forms are treated as orders not requests. The Police Director commented that Hunterdon County has 26 municipalities and they maintain a low profile. The only interest is saving money.

Members of the H.R.C. present felt the need to educate ourselves about the complexity of these issues, we need to find partner organizations who are already doing some of this work to educate us, we need to find effective ways to educate our immigrant populations about their existing rights, we need to find effective ways to improve inclusion of our immigrant peoples in the wider community.

Ronnie Todd Marino pointed out that most immigrants do not know this or don't trust that it is true. She informed the members of the public present that Fisherman's Mark

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has printed a “Rights Card” for those who do not speak English to give to a police officer to inform them that they would like to be represented by an attorney. Fisherman’s Mark handed out cards to those present.

The Police Director stated that he does not have the resources to do IC’s job.

Sara representing the Anti-Discrimination Racism Coalition commented that the H.R.C. may want to consider a statement of inclusion to include everyone.

Other items discussed included the purpose and advisability of Lambertville becoming a Sanctuary City or Welcoming community. There seemed to be some consensus that Lambertville & NJ already fulfill many of the protections that Sanctuary Cities do. That moving in this direction might create a backlash that would not benefit anybody and only create another divide, with no substantial change to the existing situation. Discussion to continue.

**FISHERMAN’S MARK – RONNIE TODD, LOS PUENTES**

Ronnie Todd Marino of Fisherman’s Mark informed the members of the board present that Fisherman’s Mark started Los Puentes to connect, bring people together and create a larger network to work on issues concerning immigrants. Los Puentes means bridges.

She informed the members of the public present that fear keeps people from benefits. How do we address current fear and make connections? Events and activities are great but they still need a blanket message and a concerted effort.

**SOUTH HUNTERDON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Dan Seiter, the President of the South Hunterdon Regional School District commented that he was debriefed by the Parent Advisory Committee which includes representation from Fisherman’s Mark. They have fifteen parents, twenty students, who are working on a committee to address issues raised by ESL students.

Susan Lex from Hunterdon Helpline suggested that the H.R.C. investigate Bishop Harry Torres, who is a clergyman who sponsors Latino Evangelical programs.

Sara from Anti-Discrimination Racism Coalition informed the members of the public present that the ACLU was hosting a webinar on Thursday from 3 to 4:30 pm on the federal policy. She said she would forward the information to John Woods because participants needed to pre-register for the webinar.

Susan Lex from Hunterdon Helpline commented that there is fear on both sides of the at-large population. She felt that we needed to celebrate diversity and promote ESL Spanish/English programs

Mrs. Ege commented that we should use the 2010 Census to help determine the mix of populations for full inclusion.

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Mr. Woods asked the H.R.C. committee how to move forward. The H.R.C. members discussed monthly meetings. Mrs. Kuhl commented that it would be a hardship for her to attend a monthly meeting and she felt it was also a hardship for others based on the attendance for this evening's meeting.

Dan Seiter said that we need clear and definitive goals with a list of about four or five.

Sara from the Anti-Discrimination Racism Coalition invited everyone to an event on February 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm with performers from Meta.

**2017 MEETING SCHEDULE**

The 2017 meeting schedule was reviewed and amended.

**City of Lambertville  
Human Rights Council  
DESIGNATING MEETING SCHEDULE”**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Human Rights Council of the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4 6 et seq., that the following is the regular meeting scheduled for 2017:

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

Tuesday, November 28, 2017

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that all meetings will be held at the Justice Complex, 25 South Union Street, Lambertville at 7 p.m.; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that notice of this schedule shall be published in the February 6, 2017 issue of The Times.

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ADOPTED: January 24, 2017

Dan Seiter made a motion to approve the amended meeting schedule. The motion was seconded by Helen Kuhl. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

**MEETING MINUTES.**

The 09-27-16 Meeting Minutes were approved with a motion made by Dan Seiter and seconded by John Woods. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

**OLD BUSINESS.**

Ideas for Focus Areas for the HRC.

Helen Kuhl suggested that the members of the Human Rights Council host a table at the annual Shad Festival. Beth Caruso will work on a banner for the event. The City Clerk will ask for a table from the Chamber of Commerce.

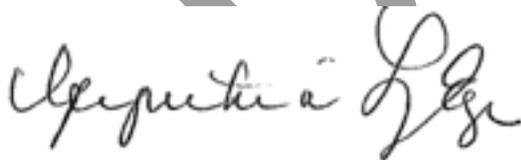
**CORRESPONDENCE** – none.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – none.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m. with a motion made by Dan Seiter and seconded by Bruce Cocuzza. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia L. Ege  
CMR, RMC, City Clerk