

January 13, 2021

To: Julie Blanchard, Town Council Chair

RE: Re-instatement of Human Rights Commission

This memo serves as a follow up to discussion in the Town Council meeting 1/4/2021 regarding the re-instatement of the Human Rights Commission. It was so moved that Carol Kent was appointed to the Human Rights Commission on 1/4/2021, expiration 1/1/2023.

The Human Rights Commission fosters mutual understanding and respect among people. Encourages equality of treatment of all people, regardless of race, color, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, civil union status, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, genetic information, age, economic status, lawful source of income, national origin or ancestry, or present or past history of physical, mental or intellectual or learning disability including but not limited to blindness.

There would be a minimum of five members to the Commission who serve a two year term*.

It was discussed that the primary objectives would be a four prong charge:

1. Education
2. Resource for Discrimination
3. Community Needs Assessment
4. Review of Ordinances & Policies

The 2021 initiative would lead with Community Conversations – joint collaboration with Coventry Board of Education surrounding School Choice. The first planning meeting occurred on 1/12/2021 with CREC, Bd.of Ed. and Human Rights Officer/Human Services Administrator.

*Supporting documentation:

From Ordinance #185:

“That the Human Services Administrator, acting as the Human Rights Officer, will be responsible for receiving claims of discrimination and assisting the person(s) claiming discrimination with processing their claim with appropriate State and Federal agencies, the Human Rights Officer will report annually or as needed to the Human Rights Commission. The commission shall assist the Human Rights Officer in developing, approving and implementing outreach programs and activities which promote the understanding and enforcement of human rights and opportunities.

AND FURTHER, that the Human Rights Commission will refer complaints to the Human Rights Officer and assist in developing and implementing a feasible equal opportunity plan and keep the officer informed of any changes or additions to human rights laws, they will meet on a yearly and/or on an as needed basis.

AND FURTHER, be it resolved:

That the Coventry Town Council shall appoint five members of the community to serve two-year terms on the Human Rights Commission. It shall be the duty of the commission to enforce this ordinance.”

Respectfully submitted: Annemarie Sundgren, Human Rights Officer / Human Services Administrator