

Human Relations Commission Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Present: David O'Connor, Sridhar Kadaba, Leslie Ohta, Isabel Rolfe, Lori LaCapra, and Sharri Tanguay.

1. **Election of Officers.** Mr. Kadaba motioned to elect Ms. Rolfe as Secretary. Ms. Ohta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).
2. **Approval of Minutes June 7, 2022.** The minutes were approved unanimously (6-0-0).
3. **Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Affirmative Action/Recruitment Report** - Sherri Tanguay

Ms. Tanguay presented the proposed Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) Placement Goals for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. Ms. Tanguay asked the Commission members to vote on the resolution which will then be forwarded to the Town Council for approval. Ms. Tanguay went over the eight job categories outlined in the report. The categories include Officials & Administrators, Professionals, Technicians, Protective Services, Paraprofessionals, Office & Clerical, Craft and Service. Ms. Tanguay noted that the placement goals do not prescribe hiring quotas and instead focus on recruitment efforts in order to narrow and ultimately close utilization gaps. She explained that dispatchers do not fall under the category of protective services and are actually classified under clerical. Ms. Tanguay noted that technicians are classified as agents and detectives.

The Commission members discussed the figures and percentages in the report. They also discussed how to narrow the gap in three of the fields: Paraprofessional, Office & Clerical, and Craft. Ms. Tanguay explained that some of the technician jobs were initially misclassified, which resulted in an inaccurate report on the number of females in that field. The information was updated, and it now reflects that women are not underrepresented in that field. Ms. Tanguay noted that they have worked really hard to hire and recruit women and minorities in the Protective Services field. Ms. Ohta noted that more affordable housing will help bring in more women and minorities. Ms. Ohta asked if the paraprofessionals hired at schools are included in the report. Ms. Tanguay explained that the Board of Education is separate from the Town.

Mr. Sridhar suggested offering more work from home and hybrid schedules to attract more women and minorities into the underutilized fields. He noted that it works for financial analysts. Ms. Tanguay noted that the craft area is underutilized and the job requires on site work. Ms. Tanguay suggested that the Town look into the creation of an internship program with a technical school that will bring in minorities and women. She noted that sometimes job categories feed into other job categories and explained that a craft job may lead into a position in the service field. The Commissioners liked the idea of creating an internship program that will lead to more diverse hires. Ms. Ohta explained that there was a similar successful program with a \$60,000 grant that introduced women to careers that are normally dominated by men. The

Commission members discussed approving the motion with an added line on narrowing and closing the gap.

Motion by: Mr. Kadaba

Seconded by: Ms. Ohta

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Human Relations Commission adopts the Affirmative Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 as set forth in the document dated, August 31, 2022 and attached hereto, with the objective of narrowing and closing the gap as discussed at the December 6, 2022 meeting.

Result: Motion approved unanimously (6-0-0).

b. Human Services Report - Lori LaCapra

Ms. LaCapra explained that the ongoing pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of an increasing number of students in the Glastonbury school district. She noted that there are about 30 kids on the waitlist to see a clinician. Ms. LaCapra explained that there is an influx of parent calls. She noted that long COVID and the lack of socialization has an impact on the mental health of children. Ms. LaCapra detailed that they are seeing more kids with separation anxiety, regression, and aggressive behaviors. She explained that there is an increase in referrals from the High School level to Youth and Family Services.

Ms. Ohta noted that the Naubuc School has done a great job in assisting children from low-income households. Ms. LaCapra stated that they are doing the best they can to keep up with the referrals. She explained that they are understaffed and have had two unfilled positions since May. Ms. LaCapra remarked that there has been an influx in truancy and increased parent calls. Mr. O'Connor noted that it is an intense field and thanked Ms. LaCapra for the great job she is doing. Ms. LaCapra noted that the understaffing is a resource issue and not a funding issue. She explained that it is difficult to find staff to do the work in person. Ms. Tanguay remarked that the events in the world have been stressful and have had an impact on kids. Ms. LaCapra explained that they have put in articles in *The Citizen*, recruited parenting groups, planned for community conversations, and are doing their best to help kids and their families during this time. The Commissioners thanked Ms. LaCapra for her work. Ms. Ohta suggested increasing the salary for the vacant positions. Ms. Tanguay stated that they are looking into that.

4. MLK Mural Project – Leslie Ohta

Ms. Ohta informed the Commission that she spoke to the Town Council about a proposed mural paid for by RiseUp for Arts, a group founded by Matt Conway. RiseUp will cover the payment to the artists and the insurance costs. A six-page contract was presented to the Town Council and requires the signature of the Town Manager. Ms. Ohta reiterated that there will be no cost to the Town and tax payers. She explained that she was asked to get feedback from the community regarding the proposed MLK mural. Ms. Ohta noted that many towns have partnered with

RiseUp and have murals. West Hartford has an MLK mural. One of the goals is to get 39 towns to participate in the MLK mural to honor the 39 years of MLK's life.

Ms. Ohta noted that, once the contract is signed, RiseUp will arrange for the community events. She added that the mural will have an anti-graffiti surface. Ms. Rolfe inquired whether a location for the mural was selected. Ms. Ohta said that nothing has been decided yet, and added that a Republican member of the Town Council suggested for the mural to be put on one of the walls inside of Town Hall. Mr. O'Connor suggested an exterior wall of Glastonbury High School. He explained that this will be welcomed by many families.

Ms. Ohta informed the Commissioners that she had to leave the meeting and asked Mr. O'Connor to write an email that states that the Human Relations Commission endorses the concept of the mural. *Ms. Ohta left the meeting at 6:52 pm.*

Mr. O'Connor stated that he will send an email of support on behalf of the Human Relations Commission to Ms. Ohta. Ms. Tanguay noted that the Town Manager will need to sign off on the contract. Mr. O'Connor suggested that the white wall behind Panera may be a good place for the mural. The Commissioners unanimously approved the idea of exploring the possibility of an MLK mural in Glastonbury.

5. Martin Luther King Report - David O'Connor

Mr. O'Connor noted that there will be a Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative Event held at the Riverfront Community Center on Wednesday, December 7, 2022 at 6:30 pm. He also noted that the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is planning a big birthday Celebration for MLK on Sunday, January 15, 2023 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at Smith Middle School.

6. Housing Authority Report -

Ms. Tanguay distributed the updated report.

- The GHA launched its new web page on August 17, 2022. www.glastha.org
- GHA has engaged a consultant, EJP Consulting, to help staff review the opportunity to reposition the Welles Village property. Repositioning Welles Village will allow Welles Village to continue to serve low-income households and provide them a formula rent/sliding scale rent while enhancing the long-term sustainability of the property. Once a clear path has been confirmed GHA will engage with the Welles Village residents to seek their input and inform them of the opportunity to reposition the property.
- Parks & Recreation is running a Skyhawks basketball camp in the Welles Park which is free to Welles Village residents. Flyers were directly distributed by GHA staff to families with children between the ages of 7-12.
- Youth and Family Services ACEs program in Welles Village will start on September 14, 2022 and run through the school year. ACEs is a program that runs on Wednesdays for Welles Village residents in grades K-5. See GHA web page for more information.

7. Old business - none

8. New business - none

9. 2023 Meeting Dates

- March 7, snow date March 9
- June 6
- September 5
- November 14

The 2023 meeting dates were approved unanimously.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev
Recording Secretary