



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE DEPARTMENT**

SOMERVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

Wednesday, May 21st, 2025

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. (Virtual Meeting)

Agenda published on May 19, 2025, at 3:19pm

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Somerville Human Rights Commission, may be conducted via remote participation. We will post an audio recording, audio video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of these proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the City of Somerville website and local cable access government channels.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84000831066?pwd=spErssNOqiaFYF6NgV8SV6aIV9lrR2.1>

Meeting ID: 840 0083 1066

Passcode: 182049

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,84000831066#,,,*182049# US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,84000831066#,,,*182049# US

By phone:

• +1 301 715 8592 US

• +1 305 224 1968 US

Meeting ID: 840 0083 1066

Passcode: 182049

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

- Roll call and welcome
- [Proposed by Brian Sokol] Status update on new commissioners

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes from April's meeting

3. Reports

- Standing Committee reports and requested actions
- Task Force reports and requested actions

4. Organizational Structure and Governance

- [Proposed by Brian Sokol] Update on legal review of Organizational Structure and Procedures
- [Proposed by Brian Sokol] Committee and Chair assignments
 - Review of Commissioner survey results
 - Discussion of next steps
- [Proposed by Brian Sokol] Election of Commission Chair
- [Proposed by Brian Sokol] Strategic Planning Discussion
 - Defining Commission priorities based on survey feedback

5. Strategic Initiatives and Program Proposals

A. Subcommittee & Strategic Initiatives Update

Presented by Elyse Best

1. Ageism Project & FY2026 Budget
 - Status update: Key dates and cost breakdown
 - *Motion:* Provisionally include Ageism Project in FY2026 budget (vote)
2. Special Education Parent Collaboration
 - Update on discussions with Liz Eldrich, SSEPAC Chair and Ward 2 School Committee candidate
 - *Motion:* Invite Liz Eldrich to participate in a future HRC panel discussion (vote)
3. Executive Director Position Proposal
 - Discussion on advocating for a new staff role to support:
 - Fundraising
 - Commissioner logistics
 - Advisory Council & public engagement
 - Human rights data/reporting
4. Public Comment Period Proposal
 - *Motion:* Add a standing Public Comment period to future HRC meetings (vote)

B. Program Planning and Observances

Presented by Christopher Spicer-Hankel

1. Finalizing Invitations for Engagement Programs
 - Confirm participants for:
 - Focus Groups
 - Narrative 4 Trainings (Suelin, Primrose, Pao)
 - Reference: Proposal approved at previous meeting
2. Review of LGBTQIA+ Inmate Data (Middlesex Prison)
 - Data analysis for discussion at:
 - *Facing Structural Racism in the MA Prison System*
 - May 24, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM @ Connexion (ticketed event)

3. Nomination for Salem Human Rights Award
 - o Discussion: Should the Commission nominate a Somerville resident?
4. May AAPI Heritage Month Recognition
 - o *Proposal*: Issue a public condemnation of Executive Order 9066 (Japanese Internment)
 - o Discussion of reparations and legal history (Korematsu v. United States, Trump v. Hawaii)
5. May Jewish-American Heritage Month Recognition
 - o Note: Temple B'nai Brith event on May 28
 - o Featuring: *Turning the Pages* by Aliza Arzt, honoring Rabbi Isador Signer

6. Public Comment Period

(If adopted under Item 5.A.4)

- Open floor for members of the public

7. Other Business

- Discussion and vote on tabling at Carnaval on June 1, 2025.

8. Adjournment

Next Full Commission Meeting: Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 6:00 pm

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