



Somerville Human Rights Commission

Proposal for Minutes

Monthly HRC Meeting

Date: October 29, 2025.

Time: 6:30 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. Virtual Meeting)

Meeting Commenced: 6:35 P.M.

Present: Brian, Salma, Jovana, Jenny, Lauren, Primrose, Elijah, Elyse, Christopher

Absent: Pao, Jason

Old Business

1. Commission Priorities

- a. **Approved:** Priorities through June 2026
 - i. Immigrant rights
 - ii. Food rights (looming SNAP cuts, etc)
 - iii. Housing rights
 - iv. Countering dehumanization in Somerville
- b. **Measures of Success:** Outreach impact and complaint tracking



- c. **Next Step:** Jovana will draft a letter requesting an update on open complaints and clarifying RSJ vs. HRC roles.

2. HRC Mission Statement

- a. **Approved:** Draft a new mission statement using ideas from the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.
- b. **Next Step:** Brian, Jenny, and Elyse will draft; Jovana will edit.

3. Budget

- a. **Confirmed:** Annual budget of **\$3,000.**
Community Agreements
- b. **Approved:** Adopted the Community Agreements shared by Suelin.

4. Trainings and MLK Event

- a. **Discussion:**
 - i. Reviewed U.S. Institute of Diplomacy & Human Rights training (\$100/person).
 - ii. Decided not to fund \$1,100 for full-commission training at this time.
 - iii. Expressed interest in sponsoring a young person for the MLK Day event.
- b. **Approved:** Tabled until further discussion until November meeting.
- c. **Next Steps:**
 - i. Christopher will gather more details about the MLK event and training.
 - ii. All commissioners will complete the *Narrative 4* training.

New Business

1. Open Commission Seat

- a. **Decision:** Wait until after the mayoral election to fill the vacant seat.



- b. **Next Step:** Elijah will confirm when and how the process can begin, and whether past applicants can be contacted.

2. Subcommittees

- a. **Update:** “Information & Advocacy” renamed to “Information, Advocacy & Engagement.”
- b. **Membership:**
 - i. Jovana joined three subcommittees: Promotion of City Diversity, Information & Engagement, and Rights Response.
- c. **Action:** Chairs will schedule meetings (to be posted publicly at least 48 hours in advance).

Subcommittee Chairs:

- d. Administration – **Elyse**
- e. Compliance & Training – **Brian**
- f. Information, Advocacy & Engagement – **Christopher**
- g. Promotion of City Diversity – **Jenny**
- h. Rights Violation Response – **Jason**

Meeting adjourned: 7:58 PM

Minutes prepared by: Elyse Best and Salma Kazmi

Summary

The Somerville Human Rights Commission met in October to plan its work for the coming year and review ongoing projects. Members set priorities through 2026, focusing on immigrant, food, and housing rights, as well as addressing dehumanization in the community. The



Commission approved new community agreements, confirmed a \$3,000 annual budget, and approved to draft an updated mission statement. Members also discussed upcoming training and events, the open commission seat process, and subcommittee planning to strengthen outreach and coordination across the Somerville Human Rights Commission work.

Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e. CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville or to attend meetings, should contact Adrienne Pomeroy in advance, at 617-625-6600 x2050 or Apomeroy@somervillema.gov.