

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION

Joseph A. Curtatone
Mayor

Staff

Vicki Wairi
Program Specialist

Commissioners

Helen Corrigan
Jose Filho
Dennis Fischman
Rona Fischman

Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2017
Somerville Library
Conference Room
79 Highland Ave
1 pm

The meeting began at 1:07 pm.

Present: Dennis Fischman, Helen Corrigan, Joe Filho, and city staff, Vicki Wairi

Absent: Rona Fischman

1. New Business

- a. Minutes from the December 22, 2016 meeting were reviewed. One correction was noted: In item #6b it is written “The commissioners will obtain gift card donations from local banks as prizes. Helen Corrigan will approach local banks.” Change to read Helen Corrigan will approach one bank. Dennis Fischman made a motion to accept the minutes as drafted. The motion was seconded by Helen Corrigan and unanimously approved.
- b. Facebook update
 - i. Dennis reported that in the past month, no one single post stood out as a huge “attention grabber”.
 - ii. Dennis pointed out that he keeps in mind the seasons. He noted that in the spring there is an increase of interest of articles that relate to students. He said talking about seasonal housing keeps people’s interest if it is topical.
- c. Review of calls/issues/complaints
 - i. Vicki Wairi reported there were no new complaints since the last meeting.

- d. Conflict of Interest online training.
 - i. Vicki reminded commissioners that they need to complete the online training by February 28, 2017, per City Clerk John Long's email to board and commissions that she had previously shared
 - ii. Joe Filho said he had already completed the training as an employee of the Somerville Housing Authority and will forward to certificate of completion.

2. *Follow up from December Meeting/Ongoing Business Discussion*

a. AFFH (Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing) Next Steps

At the time of this meeting, Alex Bob, and Ithzel Polanco, also from the Housing Division who work in Inclusionary Housing, were attending a HUD-sponsored training on AFFH compliance requirements. Vicki will arrange for Alex and/or Ithzel to attend the next meeting. During the past two to three months, Rona Fischman had worked closely with Alex Bob to create a survey to obtain information from local residents regarding their opinions on challenges of finding housing in Somerville. Dennis Fischman and Helen Corrigan both offered to distribute the survey when it is finalized.

b. FHC candidate with update.

The person who Jose Filho had identified as a potential commissioner, Claudia DeAndrade, met with Mike Feloney and Vicki Wairi on Monday, November 28, 2016. Her candidacy was submitted to the BOA and was expected to be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee of Appointments.

Note: The committee has not met since Mike Feloney and Vicki Wairi met with Claudia, however she has been personally invited to attend the December and February meetings.

c. Poster contest for 2017 – “April is Fair Housing Month”

Vicki Wairi has been in contact with both the Argenziano and Healey Schools inviting them to participate in the poster contest. They have agreed and Vicki will work on finalizing dates and times to go to the schools to present to the classrooms.

Dennis confirmed that he has a copy of the book which we have used in prior years, “A Pig is Moving In” by Claudia Fries.

The commissioners will seek gift card donations from local banks as prizes.

Helen Corrigan will approach Winter Hill Bank.

A motion to adjourn was introduced by Helen Corrigan and seconded by Joe Filho, and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 PM.