

**DURHAM HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022, 2022**  
**9:00 AM**  
**Council Chambers – Durham Town Hall**

Members Present: Chair Kitty Marple, Administrator Todd Selig, Dr. Janet Perkins-Howland, The Rev. Richard Belshaw

Members Absent: Business Manager Gail Jablonski

Others Present: Bart Crawford, CEO and Senior Playologist, Crawford Collaborative Consulting, Inc; Tara Flippo, consultant, Crawford Collaborative Consulting, Inc. *(both participating via Zoom)*  
  
Charlottee Hitchcock, HDC member *(via Zoom)*; Larry Brickner-Wood, HDC Chair; Paul Rasmussen, Planning Board Chair; April Talon, Town Engineer; Randall Trull, Assistant Fire Chief; Rene Kelley, Police Chief; David Holmstock, Deputy Police Chief; Police Captain Jack Dalton

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Kitty Marple called the meeting to order at 9AM and introductions of members present were made.

Chair Marple noted that she had attended the grand opening for the new Oyster River Middle School on Tuesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. She said that Paul and Denise Pouliot, leaders of the leaders of the Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook Abenaki People, blessed the new building, which she thought was very nice.

**II. Land Acknowledgment Statement**

The Rev. Belshaw read the Durham, New Hampshire Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgment Statement:

*The town of Durham, New Hampshire wishes to acknowledge the spiritual and physical connection maintained by the Pennacook, Abenaki and Wabanaki peoples to N'dakinna (homeland), aki (land), nibi (water), lolakwikak (flora) and awaasak (fauna). New Hampshire has been home to these Indigenous people for thousands of years. The residents of Durham acknowledge the ongoing hardships endured by our Indigenous neighbors after the loss of their unceded homelands which we now steward, and we will work to foster relationships to support the well-being of Indigenous people who carry forward the traditions of their ancestors.*

**IV. Genesis of \$10,000 grant and proposal for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice training**

Dr. Perkins-Howland said that the Durham Human Rights Commission has been focusing on matters of diversity, justice, and inclusion; topics that have been discussed by the commission relating to race, gender equity, etc. She said that applying for and receiving the \$10,000 grant from the NH Charitable Foundation, and any other monies the Town may receive, affords a great opportunity to provide Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) training and examine how Durham is doing as a community, and going forward, determine how the community can examine these issues in the context of the Town's boards and committee members and the Town's leadership.

Chair Marple introduced Tara Flippo, a consultant for Crawford Collaborative Consulting, Inc.

Ms. Flippo said she had been speaking with Dr. Perkins-Howland and Administrator Todd Selig since the spring of 2022. She was pleased that Durham received the grant and was on its way to bringing an important educational resource to its employees and volunteers. She said this educational opportunity is a chance for self-discovery and building off of the welcoming and inclusive environment that Durham is known for.

Ms. Flippo provided a brief background regarding her education and employment relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion. She said she was a former employee at UNH and left in 2022 to become a full-time consultant. She said she has known Bart Crawford, CEO and Senior Playologist of CCC, Inc. for a number of years and has had the opportunity to do a lot of training throughout the United States in conjunction with his company. She then introduced Mr. Crawford.

Mr. Crawford said that he is a certified executive coach and works with individuals, teams, and groups around various issues that they have in interacting and working together. He said that he and Ms. Flippo were excited to be working with the Town in this effort.

**V. Scope of training – what can realistically be accomplished**

Chair Marple invited the board/committee members and Town staff that were present to feel free to ask any questions they may have as she felt this was a cooperative effort.

Board members and staff that were present were asked to introduce themselves at this time.

Ms. Flippo briefly highlighted the Workshop Description that she had prepared for the commission members and others as follows:

*In this interactive workshop, we will explore the concept of Implicit Bias on an individual level. Recognizing that we've all got bias, we will examine the most common bias traps and how to interrupt biases when they occur. During the workshop, we will use a Case Study model to explore biases that might occur in your work or with your board/committee/commission and the practices you can use to manage them when they occur.*

Workshop objectives:

- o Define Implicit Bias and understand why it occurs.*
- o Recognize that bias makes the workplaces and public service less inclusive & welcoming and less effective.*
- o Name common bias traps.*
- o Delve into a few case studies to apply theory to action.*
- o Explore tools to interrupt bias.*

Administrator Selig said that the word “bias” can mean so many things; (i.e., bias between religions, racial bias, gender bias, sexual bias, etc.). Therefore, he asked when one uses the term “bias” what do they mean?

Ms. Flippo replied that if one connects the term with social identity, that is on a systemic level where people experience discrimination, oppression, etc., there is more weight to it. She said that when it is a preference on top of systemic harms, it is a different situation. She said that she and Mr. Crawford would determine before going into the training what element of bias the Town would choose to work on.

Chair Marple asked Mr. Crawford when he conducts training sessions and suspects there may be those in the session that might be reticent of going through the training, has he found that afterward the training for most people was very effective?

Mr. Crawford responded that from his perspective, the training is as effective as people make it. He said that he and Ms. Flippo are attempting to work with people to connect the head and the heart in order to help participants better understand themselves and vocally share that with others. He said that he and Ms. Flippo's whole game plan is to make the training as interactive as possible, and they need to connect with the individuals that will be a part of the training so they can hear what their expectations are and what they feel would be helpful to them during the workshop around bias.

Planning Board Chair Paul Rasmussen said he has seen two specific biases as he goes through his work with the Planning Board. First, the Durham community has a strong

bias against college-aged individuals, and second, that the Town's Zoning Ordinance has a lot of structured economic bias built into it. Mr. Rasmussen said that if the training did not address either of these types of biases, then it would not be serving any purpose for the Planning Board and its members.

Larry Brickner-Wood, Historic District Commission Chair, asked the following questions:

1. If this a training blending volunteers and employees, how will that work as there is a much different context for the two groups?
2. Will the scope of implicit bias with the notion of privilege be introduced and be a part of the discussion?
3. Is this meant to be part of an ongoing training?

Ms. Flippo said they could make the case studies diverse so they could fit a variety of situations to fit both volunteer and employees. She felt there was a benefit to having a mixed group of multiple departments and volunteers to hear different perspectives.

Mr. Crawford said that he and Ms. Flippo typically like to work with groups of around 15 to 20 people so that they can have an opportunity to connect.

Responding to Mr. Brickner-Wood's second and third questions, Ms. Flippo said that the agenda for the training is yet to be developed and it will depend on what the Town chooses to focus on as the session times will be limited and given the limited amount of grant funding.

Mr. Brickner-Wood said he felt the training has value, even if it may only occur one time. However, he said it would have even more value if it is part of a committed program that the Town will conduct every year. He said it was important that the leadership take part at the top for the scope of commitment to such a program.

The Rev. Belshaw said that as an ordained minister, he has been through a lot of sensitivity and bias training over the years and has become more aware of where he is as a person of privilege and a white person in this society. He said that as open as he believes he is, he still runs into situations where he thinks or says the wrong thing. He felt it was important to have a dialogue after the training to be able to gauge where Durham is in terms of these issues.

Chair Marple asked the police and fire staff in attendance if they had anything to add with regard to benefit of refresher training sessions in the future, especially since they have had training with this subject matter. The Rev. Brayshaw added that he would like to know what training these departments have already had.

Police Chief Rene Kelley said that up until the George Floyd incident, the department did not receive any training with respect to bias, de-escalation, ethics. After that incident, the Governor created a task force that came up with a number of recommendations on policing and challenges. The state then implemented a mandatory set number of hours per year that each officer must attend training to maintain their certification, including 2 hours each of bias, de-escalation, and ethics training. Chief Kelley said he was pleased that the Town was making bias training available and that he would make it mandatory for everyone in his department to attend.

Assistant Fire Chief Randall Trull said he was likewise excited to see this type of training made available. He felt that everyone has some type of bias and that for his department, he thought it would be good to have a better understanding of what that is. He said that because the Fire Department encounters many kinds of people and situations, the better its members understand bias issues the better they will be able to handle certain situations.

Planning Board Chair Paul Rasmussen noted that the Planning Board is a government agency, different from corporations and CEOs. The process that the Planning Board follows, especially around public hearings, is a scenario where its board members are being “talked at” by others and it is inappropriate for board members to respond as they are legally bound by certain criteria.

Deputy Police Chief Dave Holmstock commented that he believed the most important component to any training session of this nature is that it needs to be conversation-based.

Mr. Selig asked if these sessions would be held in person or via Zoom. Ms. Flippo replied by Zoom. Mr. Selig also asked about transparency and whether it would be appropriate to broadcast the sessions. Ms. Flippo responded that it would not be appropriate to broadcast or tape employee and volunteer training since it is intended to be a setting where individuals can freely express their perspectives. However, she could certainly make any educational resources available to the community.

Consensus among the group was that a blending of staff and board/committee members would be the best approach to the training.

Responding to an earlier question from Dr. Perkins-Howland regarding whether the training should be made mandatory, Mr. Selig said that he would create a strong expectation that people are to attend, whether it is Town departments or boards/committee members. Mr. Selig said that if 4 or 5 sessions were offered at different times of the day, it would provide more opportunity for staff and board/committee members to attend.

## **VI. Outcomes-Measurement**

Dr. Perkins-Howland asked if there would be a free survey for participants to take after the training. Ms. Flippo responded that there would be a post evaluation of the training but deferred to Mr. Crawford to respond to the question in more detail.

Mr. Crawford said if the group wanted a free survey, it would just be a different set of circumstances. He said they are going to have participants do the Harvard bias evaluation at the beginning and maybe they could do that at the end as well. However, he was not certain how realistic trying to assess the change in such a short period of time would be. He said they would be open to creating an opportunity for participants on an individual level to check themselves out in that regard, and hopefully that information will be in the post evaluation.

## **VII. Timeline, budget, questions, concerns, next steps**

Mr. Selig suggested spending the next few weeks trying to clarify what the actual focus of the training will be, work to set up dates and times, and then begin to advertise them. He did not feel it would be effective to begin training sessions until sometime in mid or late September as people will be busy with the opening of school and finishing up activities/vacations for the summer. He said discussion still needs to occur around how many training sessions can be accomplished within the \$10,000 budget.

## **VIII. Other Business**

Next meeting of the Human Rights Commission: September 13, 2022, 3 – 5PM.

## **IX. Adjourn**

*Dr. Perkins-Howland MOVED to adjourn the meeting. The motion was SECONDED by The Rev. Richard Belshaw and PASSED unanimously, 4-0.*

The meeting **ADJOURNED** at 10:31 AM PM.

Prepared by Jennie Berry, Administrative Assistant