

Report of Chelsea Human Rights Commission January 2019 – December 2019

Commissioners: Susan Morrel-Samuels, Chair; Dan Kaminsky, Vice-Chair; Rod Anderson, Secretary; Joanne Ladio, Commissioner, Debra Hockersmith, Commissioner

Council Liaison: Cheri Albertson

Chelsea Community Survey Presentations

The Human Rights Commission prepared a slide presentation that gives an overview of Chelsea's non-discrimination ordinance, the duties of the Commission and the results of the Community Survey. HRC members shared the presentation with several local organizations. These presentations generated questions, discussions and suggestions for enhancing community assets and addressing concerns. The presentation is also posted on the City's website.

- City Council, January 22nd
- Community Presentation at Chelsea District Library, June 25th
- Chelsea High School Principal Michael Kapolka, August 5th
- Chelsea Chamber of Commerce Board, August 15th
- Chelsea Rotary Club, October 22nd
- Sylvan Township Board, December 3rd

Invited Speakers and Outreach

The Commission invited several speakers to its meetings to gather information and establish connections with groups and governmental organizations concerned with Human Rights issues.

- Wendy Rampson, Director of Programs and Outreach at the Michigan Association of Planning, spoke about the impact of housing on diversity and provided suggestions for resources.
- Ed Toth, Chief of Police, spoke about Chelsea Police Department's non-discrimination training and policies.

- Alize Asberry Payne, Washtenaw Equity Officer, discussed Washtenaw County Equity policies and current and planned activities of the Equity Office.
- Kathie Gourlay, Friends of Restorative Justice, spoke about the concept and practice of restorative justice and current initiatives supporting its use in Washtenaw County.
- Commissioner Dan Kaminsky made two visits to the Ypsilanti Human Relations Commission to learn about their operations and to explore possibilities for connections.

Recommendation to City Council

The HRC passed a motion to recommend that the City Council approve a resolution to support H.R. 5 Equity Act. A draft resolution was submitted to Council for review. The resolution was not adopted.

Inquiries and Complaints

- No formal complaints were received by the HRC in 2019.
- One citizen inquiry was made concerning Chelsea Police Department's policies about identifying the race of suspects in its police reports. (Police Chief Toth addressed the HRC concerning the Department's reporting policies.)
- A resident contacted the HRC concerning a landlord/tenant problem. The individual did not wish to file a complaint and was referred to a tenants' rights organization.