



1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091

**MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA
OF THE
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**Village Hall – Broadcast only (Village Hall is closed due to the Village President’s
Declaration of Local Disaster and Public Health Emergency Order)¹**

**Thursday, April 29, 2021
6:00 p.m.**

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Minutes from the March 24, 2021 Meeting
- 3) Pride Month Recognition
- 4) Black History Month Contest
- 5) Community Engagement Forums: Structure and Purpose
- 6) Public Comments
- 7) Adjournment

Gerald Smith, Chair

If you are a person with a disability and need special accommodations to participate in and/or attend any Village public meeting, please notify the Village Manager’s Office at (847) 853-7509 or TDD (847) 853-7634. For additional information please call (847) 853-7511, the Village Clerk’s Office.

¹ This meeting will be held remotely by the Human Relations Commission and will be recorded as required by law. The meeting will be broadcast live at <https://www.youtube.com/user/villageofwilmette/live> and on Channel 6 and then published on the Village’s YouTube website. Members of the public may submit a comment in advance of the meeting by emailing their comment to publiccomment@wilmette.com. All emailed comments received two hours prior to the start of a meeting will be provided, unredacted, to the Human Relations Commission. Emails received at any time within two hours of the beginning of the meeting until its adjournment will be included in the draft minutes of the meeting. Public comments may be made during the meeting through YouTube Live which will be read aloud during the appropriate portion of the meeting. There is also the option to make a public comment during the meeting via PC, mobile device or phone. For complete details and instructions on joining or participating in the meeting, please [click here](#).



1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

**MEETING MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY, March 24, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

**VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – REMOTE MEETING
(VILLAGE HALL CLOSED DUE TO THE VILLAGE PRESIDENT’S DELCARATION OF
LOCAL DISASTER AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER)**

Members Present: Gerald Smith, Chair
Swath Mothkur
Malaika Myers
Ann Dronen
Van Gilmer
Eric Hellige

Members Absent: Mark Teasdale

Staff Present: Erik Hallgren, Assistant Village Manager
Jeff Stein, Corporation Counsel/Assistant Village Manager
Alex Arteaga, Management Analyst

Guests: Cindy Fey
Laurie Goldstein

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 6:08 P.M.

Erik Hallgren informed Commissioners that due to the remote meeting, all votes would require a roll call. Mr. Hallgren provided a roll call vote to take Commissioner attendance, Commissioners Smith, Mothkur, Myers, Dronen, Gilmer, and Hellige were in attendance.

II. APPOINTED OFFICIALS LEGAL PRESENTATION

Jeff Stein provided the Commission with a legal presentation regarding the laws that Commissioners will have to abide by as members of a public body. Mr. Stein’s presentation covered the Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act, Gift Ban Act, and Prohibited Political Activities (Ethics Act).

Regarding the Open Meetings Act (OMA), Mr. Stein covered the numbers of Commissioners that constituted a quorum, requirements for setting meeting dates/locations, agenda and public information, public comment procedures, how the Act impacts electronic communications, and how the Act has adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Next, Mr. Stein briefed the Commission on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), noting that the majority of this Act will not impact the majority of the work of Commissioners. Mr. Stein covered how this Act relates to requests made by members of the public for documents and other information, how the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Acts in tandem during public meetings, and best practices for Commissioners to ensure they are not in violation of OMA or FOIA laws.

Mr. Stein then covered the Gift Ban Act, noting that generally, employees/officers of governmental entities are prohibited from accepting gifts of any value. Mr. Stein noted that gifts can take many forms, and that Commissioners should trust their gut and check in with staff liaisons or Mr. Stein himself if they are ever unsure about the gift giving actions of others.

Last, Mr. Stein covered Prohibited Political Activities (Ethics Act). He briefed the Commission on their rights regarding personal political activities and where those rights may infringe on the Act when matters of personal political opinion are crossed with public organization resources.

III. HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ACTION PLAN DISCUSSION

Mr. Hallgren discussed the possible paths that the Human Relations Commission will take in the coming months, Mr. Hallgren first focused on community forum events that the Commission hopes to host. Mr. Hallgren talked about how equity and inclusion are facets of nearly all segments of society and used the example of a conversation that he had with Chair Smith regarding equity in the COVID-19 vaccine distribution to show that Commission's work is meaningful and over-reaching. Mr. Hallgren suggested that having Commissioners introduce themselves and discuss their backgrounds would be a great way for Commissioners to get well acquainted and to express which issues and communities they hope to represent as part of the Human Relations Commission.

Commissioner Myers introduced herself and briefed the Commission on her and her family's time in the Village. Commissioner Myers mentioned that she joined the Commission because she wants to help make Wilmette safe and welcome to all. Commissioner Myers mentioned that upon moving to the Village, her family realized that they were one of the rather few minority families in the Village, she hopes the work this Commission will do will make for a more welcoming and inclusive community for families (regardless of background) who move to Wilmette.

Commissioner Dronen introduced herself and informed the Commission on her circumstances for moving to the Village from Chicago. Commissioner Dronen mentioned that her daughter has intellectual disabilities and is part of the transition program at New Trier High School. Commissioner Dronen mentioned that while she has knowledge and experience with some disabled communities, she's looking forward to learning more about the lives of all Wilmette

residents through the work of this Commission.

Commissioner Hellige introduced himself and provided background information for him and his families move to Wilmette from Chicago. Commissioner Hellige and his husband are the parents of two adopted and biracial children. Commissioner Hellige discussed what it was like to try and find a home that was in an inclusive and welcoming community and mentioned that they had a concern with the lack of diversity within Wilmette. Commissioner Hellige mentioned that one of his main goals on the Commission was to highlight and uplift the existing diversity that can be found within the Village, and that he hopes to grow that diversity to welcome future families to the Village.

Commissioner Mothkur introduced herself and provided background information for her and her families move to Wilmette from Indiana. Commissioner Mothkur mentioned that Wilmette schools were the main reason for their move from Skokie to Wilmette, and diversity in the Chicagoland area was their main reason for moving to Skokie from Indiana. Commissioner Mothkur mentioned that as a first-generation immigrant, she had experienced prejudice at times in her life, and by moving to Wilmette, she hopes that her daughters do not receive similar treatment. Commissioner Mothkur mentioned her families welcoming to the neighborhood was lukewarm, she hopes that by serving on this Commission, Wilmette will become a more welcoming place to residents of all backgrounds and cultures.

Commissioner Gilmer introduced himself and provided background information on his time in Wilmette. Commissioner Gilmer mentioned that he has a unique perspective because he grew up in a time where segregation was still ongoing, he mentioned his experience in the engineering field through the US Navy and his work as an equal employment officer and recruiter of diversity talent in the engineering field. Commissioner Gilmer mentioned that he came to the Village of Wilmette through his relation to the Baha'i Temple and that he hopes to help make Wilmette a more diverse place. Commissioner Gilmer mentioned that he looks forward to the meaningful work that lies ahead of the Commission.

Chair Smith introduced himself and provided information on his history of serving on the Human Relations Commission. Chair Smith acknowledged the difficulties that he has had with starting meaningful conversations within the Village regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives (DEI). Chair Smith mentioned that through his experience and time in Wilmette, he thinks the overwhelming majority of our community is now open to having these conversations and making significant changes as necessary. Chair Smith asked his fellow Commissioners to have an open mindset when approaching this Commission's work and that he thinks the Commission is well equipped to make significant strides within the Village.

Chair Smith and Mr. Hallgren noted that more opportunities for community engagement initiatives will be available as COVID-19 vaccines become more widespread, and as such, Commissioners need to start to chart an action plan that can be followed to make strides towards establishing a more inclusive community. Mr. Hallgren noted that one of the first initiatives of the Commission should be to start exploring the possible options for community engagement sessions, he asked if Commissioners had any ideas as to what type of events they would like to see planned and how they want to structure the planning and partnerships that

will be necessary to host effective listening sessions.

Commissioner Dronen mentioned that the HRC is looking to support many segments of the community, and as such, should approach listening sessions for individual groups. By learning more about the various disenfranchised groups that call Wilmette home, Commissioner Dronen mentioned that this focus on certain groups could lead to understanding similarities and differences in the experiences that different cultural groups have within the Village.

Commissioner Myers agreed that listening session formats should focus around how the HRC can go about supporting groups existing within the Village, and noted that the HRC needs to include all members of the Village within these conversations, not just members of various disenfranchised groups.

Commissioner Hellige briefed the Commission on two thoughts he had prior to the meeting. Commissioner Hellige mentioned that yard signs that read inclusive messages such as “Black Lives Matter” or “Love is Love” can go a long way in terms of making a community feel more welcoming. Commissioner Hellige mentioned that these types of displays were common in various Chicago neighborhoods and other suburbs and thinks it’s a simple step the Village of Wilmette could take to make for a more inclusive environment. Commissioner Hellige also added that the Village could examine Wilmette history and highlight stories that represent diversity and inclusiveness, trying to show how the community has grown over time and in what avenues it can still grow.

Commissioner Mothkur noted that she supports the history of diversity idea within the Village and mentioned that the Village could find ways to “digitalize” such history. Commissioner Mothkur also supported the notion of supporting different racial and ethnic cultures within the Village, mentioning that an event along the lines of the “Taste of Wilmette” including foods and drinks from various cultures could be a fun way for others to explore different cultures. Commissioner Mothkur mentioned that it will obviously depend on the situation regarding COVID-19, but is interested in exploring this type of celebration.

Commissioner Gilmer added that he realizes the work of this Commission will prove difficult, and that he hopes through the various community organizations he is a part of, that the HRC and Village can determine ways to actually increase the BIPOC population within Wilmette. Commissioner Gilmer added that celebrations and events are meaningful, but that the Commission needs to take concrete steps to increase diversity within Wilmette’s residents. Chair Smith added that the work will be difficult and changes will not be achieved overnight, but that he and the Commission looks forward to starting this journey. Mr. Hallgren added that the importance of these community engagement events are immense, and that depending on the public feedback they receive at such events, it will influence the two year action plan that the HRC will present to the Administration Committee of the Village Board.

Mr. Hallgren added the comments that Commissioner Teasdale sent prior to the meeting since he was unable to attend the meeting. Commissioner Teasdale inquired as to whether community engagement sessions should have specific prompts and audiences for various sessions, and mentioned that Commissioners should start to consider how they will use the

data and information that is received at such listening sessions. Last, Commissioner Teasdale suggested that the HRC consider how the experiences of different disenfranchised groups intersect, noting that we the Commission should be mindful of how these experiences are similar to and different from other cultural groups.

Mr. Hallgren added that him and Mr. Arteaga will work on compiling the suggestions that Commissioners provided at the meeting today and will start to explore how other neighboring communities have approached similar topics and work within their own communities, adding that at the next meeting, Commissioners can start to determine the logistical information for these future community listening sessions.

Commissioner Hellige added that considering COVID-19, the utilization of social media and technology to promote or conduct listening session events will be absolutely crucial for the success of said listening events. Commissioner Dronen added that considering the limited diversity within the Village currently, future listening sessions should focus on what proactive steps the Village can take to recruit residents from diverse backgrounds. Commissioner Mothkur added that when her husband's family, who are of Indian descent, were first looking for a home in the Chicagoland area decades ago, they asked to see homes in Wilmette but were denied by their realtor. Commissioner Mothkur noted that the lack of diversity within the Village seems to have been intentional, and that housing is directly correlated to the Village's history in regards to resident demographics, noting that it is a complex issue. Chair Smith added that these are important conversations to start and should guide the work of the HRC. Commissioner Gilmer noted that real estate continues to constantly evolve and move within the Village, and that a lack of diversity continues, so understanding the complexity of the current Village demographics will be crucial. Commissioner Myers agreed with Commissioner Dronen regarding being conscious of the limited diverse groups currently within Wilmette, so working and partnering with various cultural organizations to provide a myriad of information and resources will be absolutely crucial.

IV. BLACK HISTORY MONTH STUDENT CONTEST

Mr. Arteaga provided the Commission with background information over the Village's Black History Month Student Contest, including how the contest was promoted and how it compared to previous contests. Mr. Arteaga mentioned that this project was a staple of the Human Relations Commission in years past, and through conversations with Chair Smith and Mr. Hallgren, they agreed that this contest would serve as a great jumping off point for the reinvigorated Commission. Mr. Arteaga displayed the projects that were submitted as part of the contest and provided a brief background on the students who were responsible for the submissions. Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of awarding all student submissions with a contest prize.

Commissioners Hellige and Myers added that it would be a good idea for the Village to promote these student submissions through Village social media channels as a reward and to contact the individual schools to let them know that the students participated in the contest and received recognition.

V. COMMUNITY CARETAKERS PROGRAM

Mr. Arteaga provided the Commission with information over the Village's Community Caretakers Program, including program goals and how the program has operated recently compared to its initial purpose. Mr. Arteaga discussed how the initial role of this program at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was to assist vulnerable residents with services like grocery delivery and how over time and as COVID dragged on, service requests slowed. As vaccines became more available at the start of this year, Village leadership determined that reinvigorating the Community Caretakers Program to help with scheduling vaccine appointments would be a great way to serve the elderly and vulnerable population within Wilmette. Mr. Arteaga explained how this iteration of the Community Caretakers program was a partnership between the Village and the Wilmette's Woman's Club. Mr. Arteaga noted that the program had received an outpouring of volunteer support, and mentioned his belief that the widespread support is an example of how the HRC can count on having an engaged and caring Wilmette community for future Commission initiatives.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cindy Fey provided a public comment via YouTube Live asking for Commissioners to draft a statement condemning acts of racism and violence against the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, and to craft the statement at tonight's meeting. Mr. Hallgren explained that crafting a statement would not be possible at this meeting due to it not being an agenda item, but allowed Commissioners the floor if they had any comments. Commissioner Mothkur added that she was unsure of the precedent for crafting such a statement as the HRC as a whole, but would like to explore creating such platform that would allow the HRC to make such kind of statements as necessary. Commissioner Myers noted her support and backing of the AAPI community, and thought that a statement made by the Village Board of Trustees would serve as a great message to the community. Commissioner Hellige added his support of the AAPI community as well, and noted that proactive communications by the Village should be prioritized for future similar situations. Chair Smith added his support for the AAPI community as well and asked staff if the Village could develop such a statement, Mr. Hallgren answered that staff will work on drafting a statement and charting a plan that will allow the Village to adequately respond to the request of Ms. Fey.

Laurie Goldstein provided a public comment through the Teams app. Ms. Goldstein thanked the Commission for the work they will embark on and agreed with previous discussion that the Village should do more to understand how the Village's history impacted our community makeup and how the Village can work to attract a more diverse community base in the future.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Myers moved to adjourn the meeting and Chair Smith seconded the motion. Mr. Hallgren provided a roll call on the motion to adjourn the meeting, all Commissioners present voted in favor of adjourning the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 P.M

Respectfully Submitted,
Alex Arteaga
Management Analyst, Village Manager's Office



Date: April 29, 2021
To: Human Relations Commission
From: Alex Arteaga, Management Analyst
Subject: Pride Month Recognition

LGBTQ+ Pride Month is celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan, New York. Today, celebrations include pride parades, picnics, parties, workshops, symposia and concerts. June 2021 will mark the 51st anniversary of annual LGBTQ+ Pride traditions. With the recent reinvigoration of the Humans Relations Commission and the upcoming celebration of Pride Month, Village leadership wanted to ensure that Wilmette recognized the significant celebration.

Recognition and Resources

The Village intends to recognize Pride Month in several ways, including a proclamation at a Village Board meeting in June 2021 and through the Village e-news and social media tools. Such efforts are intended to recognize the contributions to our society that have been made by members of the LGBTQ+ community and to bring attention to this important event. See below for examples of pride month proclamations:

- [City of Chicago 2019 Proclamation](#)
- [State of Illinois 2020 Proclamation](#)

In addition to a Village proclamation, Wilmette can make a meaningful contribution to the celebration by promoting resources and materials that are beneficial to members of the LGBTQ+ community. See below for examples of pride month resources and materials:

- [City of Evanston LGBTQ+ Resource Webpage](#)
- [City of Evanston Virtual Pride Month Celebration Activities and Resources Article](#)
- [Skokie Library Pride Month Materials](#)

Relevant materials will be promoted through the Village's social media channels, Village website, and weekly e-news newsletter. A hub of LGBTQ+ resources will be contained on the Village's website that would be beneficial to our Village's LGBTQ+ community.

Staff is seeking feedback from the Commission on the resources to publicize as well as other ways to recognize Pride Month (keeping in mind current COVID-19 restrictions).



Date: April 29, 2021
To: Human Relations Commission
From: Alex Arteaga, Management Analyst
Subject: Black History Month Student Contest Update

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) goals and purpose includes several objectives for the HRC to accomplish. One of these objectives is to promote cultural awareness in the community by participating in nationally recognized cultural recognition months and operating educational programs. Black History Month is observed in the U.S. throughout the month of February. The HRC promoted cultural awareness by holding a Black History Month student contest for Wilmette elementary school (K-8) students. Students submitted entries in the following categories: poster, essay/poetry, and multimedia music.

Student Contest Update

At the HRC's March 24 meeting, staff presented the student submissions that were received as part of the Black History Month Student Contest. Based on the submissions, the HRC voted unanimously in favor of recognizing all student submissions with a certificate and award.

In addition, members of the HRC requested that the Village promote these student submissions through Village social media channels and to contact the individual schools to let them know that the students participated in the contest and received recognition. As such, Village staff will promote the information through the Village's website and social media and will reach out to the families and schools regarding this recognition.

Recognized Submissions

The Village received four project submissions, all student submissions are attached:

- Max Soohoo, a kindergartner at Ronald Knox Montessori submitted a poster.
- Kathleen Richards, a second grader at Central Elementary submitted a poster.
- Alexa Geiger, a fourth grader at Harper Elementary submitted a poster.
- Nora and Mary Claire Richards, seventh graders at Wilmette Jr. High submitted a song.

Documents Attached

1. Student Participation Certificates

2021 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONTEST PARTICIPANT

This certificate is presented in recognition of participation to:

MAX SOOHOO

Presented by the:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF WILMETTE

Gerald A. Smith

Gerry Smith, Chair
Human Relations Commission
Village of Wilmette

April 29, 2021



2021 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONTEST PARTICIPANT

This certificate is presented in recognition of participation to:

KATHLEEN RICHARDS

Presented by the:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF WILMETTE



Gerry Smith, Chair
Human Relations Commission
Village of Wilmette

April 29, 2021



2021 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONTEST PARTICIPANT

This certificate is presented in recognition of participation to:

ALEXA GEIGER

Presented by the:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF WILMETTE

Gerry Smith

Gerry Smith, Chair
Human Relations Commission
Village of Wilmette

April 29, 2021



2021 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONTEST PARTICIPANT

This certificate is presented in recognition of participation to:

NORA RICHARDS

Presented by the:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF WILMETTE

Gerry Smith

Gerry Smith, Chair
Human Relations Commission
Village of Wilmette

April 29, 2021



2021 BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONTEST PARTICIPANT

This certificate is presented in recognition of participation to:

MARY CLAIRE RICHARDS

Presented by the:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF WILMETTE



Gerry Smith, Chair
Human Relations Commission
Village of Wilmette

April 29, 2021





Date: April 29, 2021
To: Human Relations Commission
From: Alex Arteaga, Management Analyst
Erik Hallgren, Assistant Village Manager
Subject: HRC Community Engagement Forums: Structure and Purpose

The Village's reinvigorated Human Relations Commission (HRC) held its first meeting on March 24, 2021. One of the Commission's first tasks is to hold community engagement discussions on racism, social equity, and community building. With acts of racism against Asian Americans on the rise nationwide, the HRC is planning to conduct its first community discussion with a focus on the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. These discussions are intended to listen to the concerns of our AAPI community and identify ways that the Wilmette community can support them in a meaningful and impactful way. To plan the Village's first community engagement session, there are a variety of decision points from HRC that need to be made regarding the structure for the engagement session and the goals and purpose of such sessions.

Community Engagement Structure

Audience and Participants

It's important to engage all stakeholders in our community during the planning and implementation of community engagement sessions. In order to do so, the Village must promote and advertise all planned community engagement forums to members of all relevant constituencies including but not limited to residents, businesses, public organizations within the Village, and educational institutions.

In addition to promoting the sessions to all relevant stakeholders, Village staff will contact a variety of social and cultural groups that represent the AAPI community to ensure that any resources they have available will be included in Wilmette's community forum events.

There are two concurrent aspects of the community engagement process that need to be determined. These discussions are iterative, and each discussion will help to clarify purpose and structure of future community engagement sessions. While the Village is confident that these HRC led community forums will lead to meaningful conversations and action steps, our understanding and approach to conducting effective forums will evolve over time. Accordingly, Village staff and Human Relations Commissioners should be willing to re-develop and revise community forum formats and structures in the future based on feedback from participants.

Organizing and Determining Purpose

The first aspect that needs to be considered by HRC is evaluating what are the goals and purpose for such events. Goals may be broad or specific to community needs, examples of the goals of a community dialogue include:

- To build new relationships
- To better understand other cultures
- To open up new economic possibilities
- To work on a community project together
- To bring youth together to reduce the chance of violence/harassment

Ultimately these goals can help the HRC determine a community vision and help Commissioners articulate what lasting actions will be implemented through community forums. In order for the HRC to be adequately prepared for forums, it would be worthwhile for all Human Relations Commissioners to consider the following:

- What's taking place in our community that a dialogue on diversity, equity and inclusion can address?
- If there were such a dialogue, what would be our goals?
- Who should be included in the dialogue?
- What format should we use?

Structure and Planning

The second aspect that needs to be considered by the HRC is how the first community forum will be structured. Based upon the decisions of Commissioners, Village Staff will coordinate the scheduling, logistics, and marketing of the community engagement sessions. Important considerations include the following:

- When will the first community engagement session be hosted; considerations include the month, day of week, and time of day.
- How will the first community engagement session be hosted; considerations include in-person, virtual, and hybrid models.
- Where will the first community engagement session be hosted; considerations include Village Hall, Park District facilities, or the library.

The last critical component of the structure for the discussion is the format to the engagement sessions. Commissioners need to determine which methodologies will be utilized in order to foster conversation and the role as to how Commissioners will be involved. Popular formats for community dialogue events include:

- One-on-one conversations
- Small group discussions/facilitated conversations
- Town-hall style whole group discussions
- Keynote speakers/presenters
- Panelist formats

In line with the format decision point, there are options for professional facilitation services for community engagement sessions from professional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) organizations.

Regardless of format, an effective community forum event should center around four phases as laid out by the Department of Justice, "The dialogue design presented here contains four phases that have proven useful in moving participants through a natural process from sharing individual experiences to gaining a deeper understanding of those experiences to committing to collective action. Whether meeting for one dialogue session or a series of sessions,

participants move through all four phases, exploring and building on shared experiences.”¹

These four phases include:

1. Who are we?
2. Where are we?
3. Where do we want to go?
4. What Will We Do, As Individuals and With Others, To Make a Difference?

¹ DOJ. 2003. “Community Dialogue Guide.” United States Department of Justice.
<https://www.justice.gov/archive/crs/pubs/dialogueguide.pdf>

From: [NT HEROS](#)
To: [Hallgren, Erik](#)
Subject: Letter to Wilmette Human Relations Commission
Date: Monday, April 19, 2021 3:53:11 PM
Attachments: [HEROS Letter to Wilmette Human Relations Commission 4-19-21.docx](#)

Your attachments have been security checked by Mimecast Attachment Protection. Files where no threat or malware was detected are attached.

Dear Erik,

Attached please find a letter from HEROS to the Wilmette Human Relations Committee.
Thank you for your care in forwarding it.

Warm regards,

Healing Everyday Racism in Our Schools
<https://heros.community/>



April 19, 2021

Dear Mr. Smith and Members of the Wilmette Human Relations Commission,

We would like to introduce you to our organization, Healing Everyday Racism in our Schools (HEROS). We are a group of residents of New Trier Township who self-organized in 2018 in response to concerns about the school environment. In particular, we focus our efforts on examining and healing both the overt and hidden patterns of racism found in our local schools.

Some examples of our efforts include raising awareness of race-based inequities in our schools, fostering interracial insight and understanding, advocating for an anti-racist curriculum and a more diverse workforce in our schools, and supporting the building of more affordable housing on the North Shore.

While HEROS is ostensibly focused on our local schools, we recognize that our schools do not exist in a vacuum and that increasing diversity in our population is critical to improving the underlying inequity in our Township. For this reason, we are sincerely in support of efforts to create a more welcoming environment in New Trier Township.

Accordingly, we are pleased that the Human Relations Commission has been reinstated and we congratulate each of you on your appointment to serve on this Commission. We are grateful to you for your service to our community, and we look forward to working closely with the Wilmette Human Relations Commission to pursue our common goal of building a diverse and equitable society on the North Shore.

Sincerely,
The Coordinating Committee of HEROS