



TOWN OF
AMHERST
MASSACHUSETTS

Office of the Town Manager
Phone: (413) 259-3002
townmanager@amherstma.gov

To: Town Council
Town Clerk

Fr: Paul Bockelman
Town Manager

Dt: October 30, 2019

Re: Human Rights Commission Appointment

Appointments

With this memo, I refer to the Town Council and simultaneously file with the Town Clerk, the following name of a person I desire to appoint as a member of the Human Rights Commission in accordance with Section 2.11(b) of the Amherst Home Rule Charter. Terms are effective July 1, 2019 unless otherwise noted.

Two-year term (1):
(expires June 30, 2022) Petua Mukimba, 700 Riverglade Drive

Matthew Charity, Romarin Speck, Benjamin Herrington, Deborah Neubauer, Gazit Chaya Nkosi, Sid Ferreira, Elizabeth Cahn, and Sophia Maldonado will continue as members. Sophia is also a student member and a student at Amherst College.

Profiles

- Petua Mukimba: Ms. Mukimba is a student at Amherst Pelham Regional High School (ARPS). She stated that she is interested in becoming more active in her community and has a passion for human rights. She participated in the Restorative Justice Youth Leaders Program; created the Community Youth Action Club whose mission is to promote youth advocacy, leadership and youth-led change; and is an active member of People of Color United (POCU), the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN), and the International Students Club. Ms. Mukimba has become a leader and connector at ARPS through her participation in these committees, by playing girls' varsity basketball, and being a role model and showing how students like her can be more socially active in the community.

Summary of Process

I reviewed those who had expressed interest in serving on the Human Rights Commission.

I assembled a team to conduct interviews. The interview team was comprised of Elizabeth Cahn of the Human Rights Commission; Jim Pistrang of the Residents' Advisory Committee; Jennifer Moyston, staff to the Human Rights Commission; and Paul Bockelman, Town Manager.

The interview team interviewed new applicants. All team members asked questions and contributed to the discussion about who to appoint at the conclusion of the interviews. At the conclusion of the interviews, we discussed and agreed on the candidate that should be appointed.

Background Information

Below is the relevant section of the Charter for your review. In addition to the posting on the Town bulletin board and an article in the Amherst Bulletin, an announcement was published on the Superintendent's weekly update and posted on the Restorative Justice bulletin board at ARPS and outreach was conducted by the Community Participation Officers and the ARPS dean and POCU advisor.

Section 2.11(b) of the Charter states:

Members of Multiple-Member Bodies: The Town Manager shall refer to the Town Council and simultaneously file with the Town Clerk, the name of each person the Town Manager desires to appoint as a member of a multiple-member body. Appointment of a member of a multiple-member body made by the Town Manager shall become effective on the 30th day after the date on which notice of the proposed appointment was filed with the Town Clerk unless approved or rejected by a majority of the full Town Council within the 30 days.

TOWN OF AMHERST
COMMITTEE CHARGE

Name: HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Appointing authority: SELECT BOARD

Type: Standing Committee

Town bylaw: Yes

Number of voting members: 9

Member appointment: 3 years

Voting members to include (where possible): Broad representation of the community.

Quorum: Four members shall constitute a quorum per vote of Town Meeting within Human Rights Bylaw.

Committee charge summary:

The Commission, in conjunction with the Human Rights Director, shall act to promote the Town of Amherst's Human Rights Policy, to insure that no person, public or private, shall be denied any rights guaranteed pursuant to local, state, and/or federal law on the basis of race or color, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socio-economic status, ethnic or national origin, affectional or sexual preference, lifestyle, or age for all persons coming within the Town of Amherst.

The Commission shall advise the Town and assist the Town Manager and Human Rights Director in the achievement of affirmative action/equal opportunity objectives, conduct and participate in educational activities related to its responsibilities, provide mediation, and review all matters brought to its attention by the Human Rights Director.

In conjunction with the Director, the Commission shall annually prepare a report of the State of Human Rights in Amherst with such recommendations as it deems appropriate concerning matters herein, taking reasonable precautions to protect the privacy of all involved parties.

On June 15, 1998, the Select Board voted to designate board and committee members as "special municipal employees" under the terms and conditions of G.L. c. 268A.

On Nov 8, 1999 Special Town Meeting voted the Human Rights Bylaw Art. 16 into effect.

On April 30, 2003 Town Meeting voted to increase the membership from 7 – 9 members.

[ARCHIVED] Town Manager Continues to Seek Members to Serve on Town Boards and Committees

The Town Manager is seeking volunteers to serve on numerous Town Boards. Boards and Committees that have or may have vacancies include the Community Preservation Committee, Affordable Housing Trust, Cultural Council, Agricultural Commission, Public Art Commission, CDBG Advisory Committee, Council on Aging, Downtown Parking Working Group, Design Review Board, Historical Commission, Human Rights Commission, Local Historic District Commission, LSSE Commission, Public Shade Tree Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee, and Water Supply Protection Committee.

In addition, the Town Charter calls for the creation of a Ranked Choice Voting Commission to develop and propose a measure to adopt and implement ranked-choice voting in Amherst. Three residents shall be appointed by the Town Council and three residents shall be appointed by the Town Manager. The Commission shall propose a measure to the Town Council by September 1, 2020. The Town is seeking individuals of diverse backgrounds to serve on this commission.

The Town Charter also calls for the creation of a Participatory Budgeting Commission to propose a measure to adopt participatory budgeting or other similar method of resident participation in the budgeting process in Amherst. Two residents shall be appointed by the Town Council and three residents shall be appointed by the Town Manager. The Commission shall propose a measure to the Town Council by September 1, 2020. The Town is seeking individuals of diverse backgrounds to serve on this commission.

The Town Manager seeks residents who have relevant expertise or experience. The Town Manager is especially seeking individuals of diverse backgrounds to serve on all boards, committees, and commissions.

If you are interested in volunteering to serve, please fill out a Community Activity Form at: www.amherstma.gov/caf

If you have questions, reach out to our Community Participation Officers at getinvolved@amherstma.gov

Updated 2/7/19 3:34 PM