

**City of Lambertville
Human Rights Council
7:30 PM Monday October 12, 2020
VIA ZOOM
MINUTES**

MISSION: To promote and protect human rights at the local level. Together city representatives and resident members ensure that Lambertville remains a place of acceptance and love.

WELCOME by Roni Todd-Marino

ROLL CALL by Roni Todd-Marino

(10) LHRC members:

Roni Todd-Marino - President

Beth Asaro – City Council rep, Secretary of LHRC

Lt. Bob Brown – Police Dept rep

Filomena Hengst – Board of Education rep

Bambi Kuhl – Public Assistance rep

David Gardiner – Resident Member

Bruce Harris – Resident Member

NOT PRESENT - Scott Elliott – Resident Member

OPEN POSITION – Resident Member (previously Effie Castro)

OPEN POSITION – Library Rep – (previously Emily Carone)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 14, 2020 minutes will be voted on at 11/9/20 meeting

CORRESPONDENCE – None

PUBLIC COMMENT

- This session of the LHRC was dedicated to a single topic. The LHRC invited feedback as we review safety and policing in Lambertville. We recognize that the nation is examining the role of police in communities and re-evaluating public services and budgeting. Feedback from Lambertville residents is vital to this process.
- Members of the public were given an opportunity to share their thoughts, concerns, praise and ideas.
- Speakers were officially given 3 minutes to share, however, given the handful of residents who made comments, the time was extended.
- Shaun Ellis expressed his dissatisfaction with the time constraints regarding the timeline the LHRC has set for providing initial recommendations to the city council. He asked the LHRC to extend their study. He asked the LHRC to expand their representation into LPS, Fisherman's Mark and other orgs in town to gather input from

Latinx population. He spoke about slavery and colonialism. He expressed the opinion that police funding should be redirected to social safety nets.

- Benjamin West expressed a goal for everyone in the city to feel safe and that armed police officers do not make everyone feel safe. He talked about the KKK, Jim Crow, red-lining and other racial issues and spoke about historical truths. He expressed opinion that it is not acceptable to leave the police budget as is, or to recommend interventions that would add to the budget.
- Shara Durkee expressed her dissatisfaction and concern with the Class III Resource Officers in our schools. She does not believe that these resource officers, or any armed personnel, should be in our schools for numerous reasons. She relayed statistic on school shootings and expressed the opinion that adding Class III Officers reflects policy driven by fear rather than data.
- Chris Register expressed his desire to reallocate police funding for the hiring of social workers for our city and our schools to help vulnerable populations. He recommended reaching out to Fisherman's Mark to get additional input.
- Kelly Bolding expressed dissatisfaction at the LHRC's approach and process towards building an initial recommendation to present to the city council. She believes the LHRC should take much more time. She believes 'community policing' does not work. She believes we should reduce the police budget, not increase it. She believes that there should be no police representation on the LHRC and also in this review process.

A discussion of next steps was held.

ADJOURNMENT

Bruce Harris made a motion to adjourn, Beth Asaro seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9pm.