

Minutes of March 20, 2023
Commission on Holocaust and Genocide Education
Next meeting: June 6, 2023, at 4:00 pm

I. Attendance

Name	Contact Information	Present	Absent
Senator Donovan Fenton	donovan.fenton@leg.state.nh.us NEED telephone number	x	
Brian Balke	Brian.balke@sau19.org 603-497-4818	X	
Dina Michael Chaitowitz, Esq.	dmichaelchaitowitz@gmail.com 603-235-0258/cell	X	
Elizabeth Curtis	ecurtis@sau81.org 603-759-1262	X	
Evan Roy Czyzowski	evanczNH@gmail.com 603-502-3233	x	
Robert Dunn, Esq.	rdunn@rcbm.org 603-434-4794	X	
Representative Arthur Ellison	Highland242@gmail.com 603-224-7425	x	
Dr. Yves Pacifique Gakunde	ygakunde@ci.keene.nh.us 603-357-9800		x
Ashley Harbel	aeharbel@gmail.com 860-908-9995	x	
Reverend Zachary Harmon	vicarstchristophers@gmail.com 603-329-4674	x	
Kathy Preston	hamp@tds.net 603-674-6734	x	
Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett	rabbijon@tbanashua.org 603-809-9736		x
Robert Trestan, Esq.	rtrestan@adl.org 617-406-6360	X	
Dr. James Waller	jwaller@keene.edu 603-358-2011		x
Tom White	twhite@keene.edu 603-358-2746	x	
Representative Dan Wolf	dan@hodan.com 603-763-5176 603-526-6997/work		X

II. Motions

Motion	Failed	Passed	Abstain
1. Motion to accept minutes of November 2022 meeting		X	1
2. Motion for Brian Balke to be Chair of Commission.		X	
3. Motion for Ashley Harbel to be Vice Chair of Commission.		X	
4. Motion to direct the chair to send information to cities, towns, and school districts		X	

1. The meeting started at 4:11 pm.
2. **Minutes.** Kati Preston moved to approve the minutes of the November meeting. Rev Harmon seconded. There was an abstention of a member who had not attended the prior meeting. Motion passed.
3. **Chair.** Ms. Chaitowitz moved that Brian Balke become the Chair; Tom White seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
4. **Vice Chair.** Ms. Chaitowitz moved that Ashley Harbel become the Vice Chair; Tom White seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Evan Czyzowski will have to take the lead on Best Practices Committee.
5. **Annual proclamation.**
 - a. The Governor signed the annual required proclamation prior to the meeting, and we discussed how to get the word out.
 - b. The Implementation Subcommittee had drafted a letter to the Municipal Association making suggestions for ways in which cities and towns could commemorate Genocide Awareness Month. Tom White suggested adding a reference to the resources available from the Cohen Center.
 - c. Senator Fenton will contact the Governor's office regarding his view on how to get the word out.
 - d. Ms. Chaitowitz moved to direct the Chair to contact cities and towns and school districts. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
 - e. Ms. Preston suggested contacting churches, and we discussed that a number

of Commission members (Robert Dunn of Diocese, Rev. Harmon of Council of Churches and Dina Chaitowitz of Jewish Federation of NH) have the ability to do some of that informally.

6. Best Practices.

a. Tom White reported that he is working on a webinar on the new law, and on teacher packages. Mr. White is also working on a webinar with Mira Hirsch, whose book, *Enacting History*, is a practical guide to utilizing drama (through first person accounts) to introduce and/or enrich teachers' Holocaust curriculum. It also provides methodologies and resources for teaching the Holocaust through a variety of theatrical means, including scripted texts, verbatim testimony, devised theater techniques and process-oriented creative exercises. Tom is working on an initiative for the five regions of the state on how to engage people on the topic of genocide through drama.

7. Implementation and Policy Subcommittees.

- a. We discussed how and when we might start to determine if schools are complying with the law, and whether compliance has any impact. We discussed the possibility of a survey but that might result only in boxes being checked, without much meaningful information being gathered. We want more serious feedback. We also discussed the possibility of a gathering of folks to ask people in an informal way how genocide programming is going. Mr. Balke suggested that Tom White and Evan Czyzowski might meet with curriculum directors a year from now. We agreed that we should invite Dr. Nate Greene from the Department of Education to speak with us about this topic. Questions to be posed to Dr. Greene might include: Does the DOE have any anticipated oversight? Is the DOE considering any sort of data collection? What sorts of questions will it consider asking school officials (what are they doing, what grade levels are they reaching, etc.)?
- b. In connection with the discussion about compliance, we discussed extending the Commission. If we determine that it is necessary to achieve effective oversight, we might want the bill recommending extension to say something about data collection. That bill would probably go through the education

committee. It would be great if the two House representatives and the senator worked on this legislation.

8. Next meeting: June 6th at 4:00 pm

9. Other:

- a. It was noted that so long as we have a quorum physically present in the room when we meet, others can participate via Zoom.

- b. Mr. Czyzowski had some suggestions: Perhaps we can do more with the NEA NH as there are 17,000 members on the list serve. Mr. Dunn and Mr. White are on the Board of NH Humanities which offers up to \$10,000 in grants; is there something we can do with this? NH Television also wants to help. Maybe district superintendents could be invited when Ms. Preston speaks to schools?

Meeting adjourned at 5:18 pm.